

insideout

the journal of the Higgins Group

issue 8



Welcome to InsideOut

We would like to acknowledge the recent changes in the leadership of Higgins Construction, which provides strong foundations for the Group going forward.

“As I begin my new role I am really excited about moving the business on to its next level.



Things are going to be challenging, but I am confident that we have the right people in the business to see us through what is to come.”

Steve Leakey
Managing Director of Higgins Construction

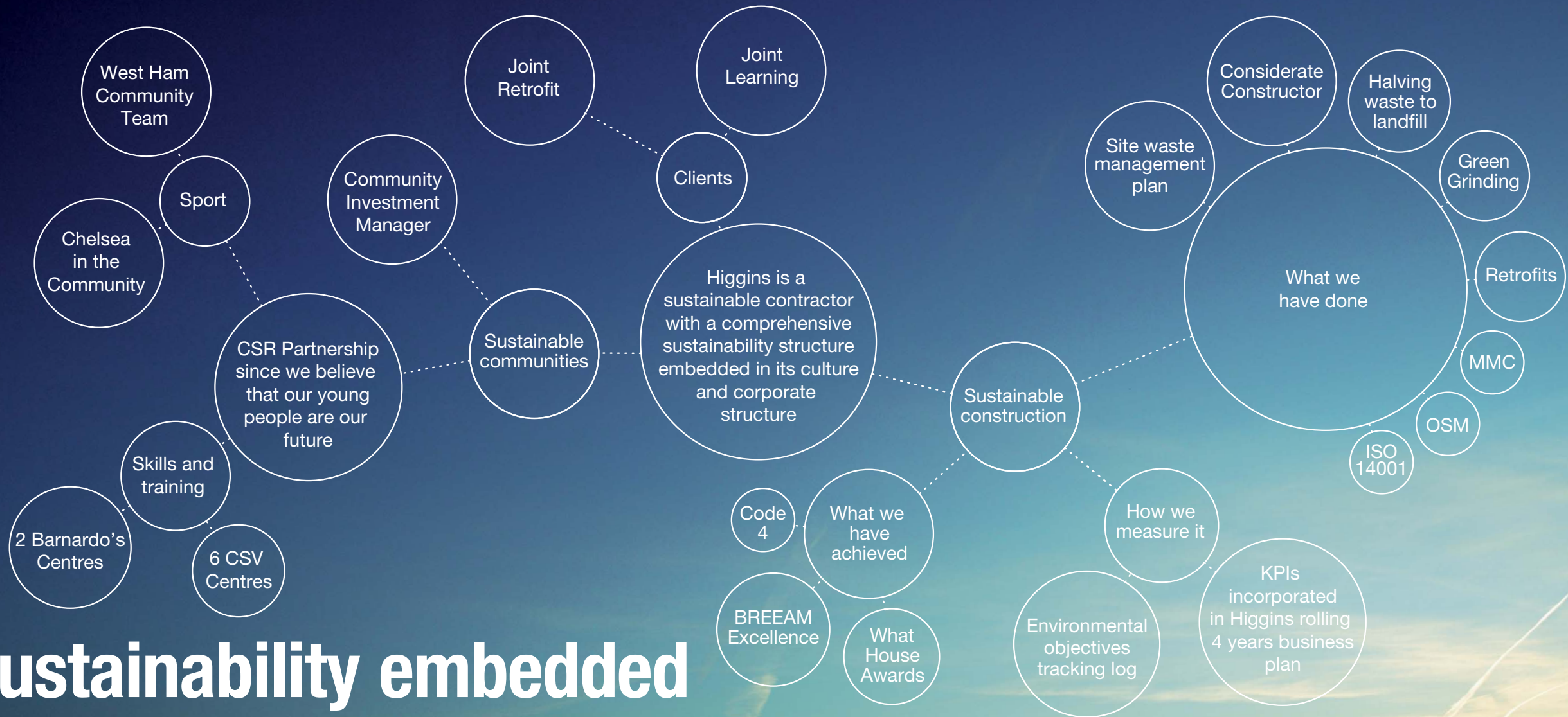
“Providing a holistic approach to sustainability, whether that be for new buildings, existing stock or communities as a whole”



On the cover

Solar thermal panels sustainable developments
See page 4

Sustainability embedded throughout the organisation



Sustainability is only truly delivered when there is a commitment to developing sustainable construction within sustainable communities

In this environmentally and socially aware culture Higgins combine the best construction standards along with reducing our carbon footprint. We provide many opportunities to develop skills and training for the local communities we work with, ensuring that we leave a lasting legacy for future generations. Sustainability is embedded at the core of the organisation and flows through all areas of the business.

All of Higgins projects have Site Waste Management Plans, which are developed throughout the design stage, ensuring the construction methods and component selection takes into account waste minimisation.

We operate ISO 14001 EMS, which ensures that waste is minimised or recycled wherever possible. All of our sites are regularly monitored by Contracts Managers, independent Environmental Auditors and the Considerate Constructor Inspectors to ensure that we minimise site waste and maximise recycling.

We are the first organisation to use the 'Green Grinder' on an Essex site. This is a ground breaking recycling and waste management innovation for 'new build' construction and housing refurbishment that can turn up to eight skip loads per day into reusable material, saving 30% over traditional skips.



1. Forest Road, Islington
The roof incorporates 8 wind turbines, which allows 6.8% saving on Co2 emissions

2. Green Grinder
30% saving over traditional skips. 80% on-site recycling waste diverted from landfill cuts down on traffic reduces sites carbon footprint

3. Shoeburyness High School, Southend-on-Sea
Grey water recycling services the students' toilets at this High School

4. New Woodland School, London Borough of Lewisham
Designed to provide good levels of natural daylight whilst minimizing excessive heat gain through solar shading - BREEAM Excellent rating

Delivering exemplar projects testing new standards

Providing a holistic approach to sustainability, whether that be for new buildings, existing stock or communities as a whole.

The future retrofit market is developing and being led by the Government's legal commitments and the RSL Clients drivers of reducing energy costs and the resultant issues of fuel poverty.

If you ask anyone involved in asset management they will agree that the task of achieving the Governments 80% carbon reduction target by 2050 is a costly and daunting task. With in-house expertise Higgins Construction PLC is embracing this challenge and is on track to deliver two successful retrofit projects, being the first BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment in the UK on time and within budget.

Working as a team on these pilot schemes, with Greenfields Community Housing and Swan Housing Group in two different locations, we deliver cost effective improvements in the property performance to reduce water and energy consumption, reduce carbon emissions, improve standards of living and reduce energy and maintenance costs.

By developing an approach based on improving the fabric performance and incorporating renewable energy and environmental improvements, along with promoting wellbeing of the residents and communities, we can demonstrate the successes achieved and feedback from on-going monitoring. These pilot schemes will provide valuable information regarding the challenges, options cost and on-going benefits of carrying out retrofit works that can be used in future decision processes.

Higgins and Greenfields Community Housing

The pilot property is located on a large housing estate in rural North Essex. The house is semi-detached, constructed in the late 1940's and is a good example of post war traditional building. The aim is to achieve an 80% carbon reduction retrofit model that can be rolled out to existing stock and most importantly combat fuel poverty.

Higgins and Swan Housing Group

Working together to upgrade an existing Victorian end of terrace property in East London, to accommodate a resident with mobility needs, to ensure that initially Decent Homes Standards are met and then add retrofit enhancements to deliver improved environmental performance.

To truly deliver these environmental houses we give training and advice to residents to assist with maximising the benefits and reducing the running costs of their new home.

On both sites we have carried out a series of tests and assessments before any of the works commenced and again upon completion to measure the performance improvements that are achieved as a result of the retrofit works. These include;

- Air pressure tests
- Ecology reports
- SAP 2005 and SAP 2009 Assessments
- Thermographs to show heat loss
- Sound tests
- Carbon saving calculations
- Energy Performance Certificate Ratings
- Predicted and actual water and energy bill costs

The benefits

- BREEAM Excellent rating
- Improve existing wall U value from 0.58 to 0.18 w/m²k
- Improve air permeability to under 3
- Reduce carbon emissions by over 80%
- Improve SAP ratings from 49 to 95
- Improve EPC rating from E to A
- Reduce fuel bills by in excess of 60%
- Thermograph visual evidence improvement in heat loss

These projects are being used by the BRE to help develop its new BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Assessment Tool.

Talk to us now about how we can work together to deliver your requirements - call Allan Ronald on 0208 508 5555

SMART Homes System



Retrofit works: SMART Homes System

Smart meter combined with a real time display helps residents understand fuel consumption by showing exactly how much energy is being used in the property.

Micro-CHP

Groundbreaking technology that generates both electricity and heat from the same source, providing efficient gas central heating and hot water and producing up to 1kW of electricity.

Fabric first solution

Focusing on internal and external insulation of the property combined with fitting triple glazed A rated windows, thermal efficient doors, loft and floor insulation and low energy fittings throughout.

Solar thermal panels

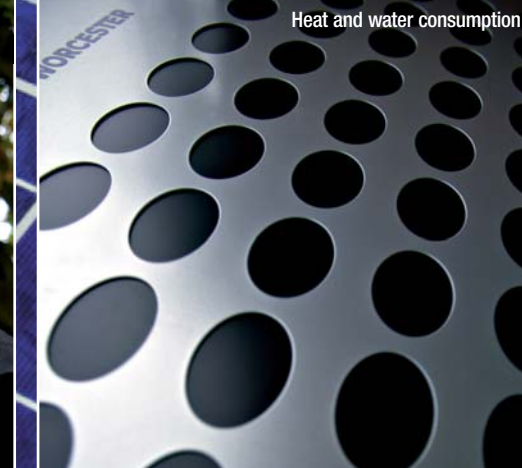
Providing renewable energy contribution of 15%

Heat and Water consumption

Replace water fittings with low water consumption type including dual flush cistern, taps with spray heads and shower fitted with restrictor. Install wireless heating control system to all new radiators

Providing ecological enhancements...

such as bird and bat boxes and wildlife attracting planting that is indicative to the area.



Best environmental practice is incorporated into our developments with innovative solutions delivered to minimise any adverse impact on the environment.

From slow worms to Green Grinder

Higgins Construction is working in partnership with Swan on Craylands, a new development on a greenfield site that is to form a major new residential development in predominantly timber-framed construction. These homes are being developed using Off Site Manufacturing and will achieve a minimum of Code 3. The new homes and local infrastructure is part of a major long-term regeneration project.

It was necessary to protect existing wildlife on this greenfield site and, following a report from a specialist environmental organisation, in excess of 600 slow worms were re-located from the site, reinforcing our commitment to the local habitat.

The forward thinking construction management team have commissioned the 'Green Grinder', to be trialed on this site -the first time it has been used on an Essex construction site. This is a ground breaking innovation in the recycling and waste management for both 'new build' construction and the housing refurbishment industries.

The 'Green Grinder' can turn up to eight skip loads per day of new build construction waste, such as blocks, brick and gypsum through to pallets, woods and shingles, turning it into reusable material. This results in the following key benefits:



Green Grinder

- 30% saving over traditional skips
- 80% on-site recycling
- reduces the sites carbon foot print
- cuts down on site traffic
- contributes to a cleaner, organised and safer site
- waste diverted from landfill

Utilising local suppliers has minimised construction traffic with most deliveries coming from within a 12 mile radius of the site and 18% of the workforce has been sourced from the local area.

Each dwelling will have reduced water consumption by incorporating the latest water efficiency measures such as flow-restricted taps and showers, low energy flush toilets, small baths and external rainwater harvesting.

Before development work commenced we undertook several consultation events with local residents to ensure that what was being delivered would be sustainable for the community's needs. Events on site safety and residents' choice were held and regular residents' newsletters are produced to communicate key



Encouraging apprenticeship in the local community

messages and events.

We are also working in partnership with West Ham Community Team, and have committed to a 10 year programme, to bring benefits to the local community on Craylands, providing support for a sustainable future.

This site is monitored by the Considerate Constructors scheme and always achieves a 'high level beyond compliance' or above on its reports.

To discuss how we can deliver sustainable solutions for you please contact Allan Ronald on 0208 508 5555

£10m worth of sales



Computer generated image of Aqua Vista, Bow Common Lane

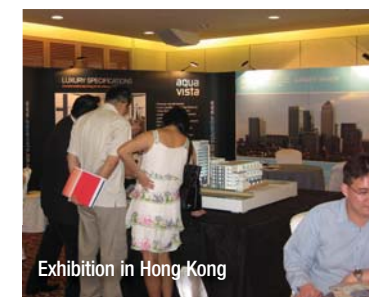
With the UK housing market still facing challenges, concerns about the economy and the lack of mortgage finance, Higgins Homes has embraced new ways to secure advance sales and has developed a fresh approach to the marketing of Aqua Vista, Bow, E3 development in the Far East. Aqua Vista is being developed by Higgins Homes and constructed on their behalf by Higgins Construction.

With property sales 'cooling off' in the UK Higgins Homes recognised the potential of markets in Singapore, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur as a unique opportunity to achieving an early level of income generation.

This proved an extremely successful strategy that has resulted in a massive 39 plots being reserved, with most contracts already exchanged.



Exhibition in Hong Kong



Exhibition in Hong Kong

We take sustainability seriously

As already mentioned, sustainability is key throughout the Group and Higgins Homes is reconfirming this commitment with initiative being introduced on new developments. The 'Streetcar' scheme is available at The Old Hospital in Maidstone, Kent. This means that a car will be permanently based on site for residents and others to use, as and when they need it, at a fraction of the price that it would cost to retain a personal vehicle.



The Old Hospital

Leading by example



Our Head Office was designed and constructed by Higgins to achieve low energy usage and reduce CO2 emissions.

There are solar shading louvres to the south east and south west elevations - tracking the sun path and closing automatically on sensing sun. This maximizes the use of daylight and reduces solar heat gain, reducing cooling systems load and lighting load.

Also included in this environmentally conscious building is;

- high performance glass - to reduce solar gain to internal space
- narrow floor plan - to maximize and benefit from use of natural daylight

- lighting control system - automatically dimming lights to compensate for natural daylight and switching off lights to areas not in use
- under floor displacement ventilation system - delivering full fresh air with air handling plant to benefit from heat recovery arising from exhaust air
- building benefitting from free cooling for up to 65% of the year
- variable speed drives on all pumps and fans - to reduce power consumption
- BMS controls operate and monitor the plant to ensure efficiency

Does Building Partnerships work? - yes it does!

In the last year Anthony Gibbons has become a father, bought a car, built up a tool kit and is living proof of what can happen with the right attitude.

Anthony was introduced to Higgins Construction PLC by Lambeth Building Partnerships in 2009 as part of a regeneration initiative which encourages local people to gain employment locally. Working for Higgins Construction PLC on the Vale St Development between April 2009 and July 2009 he carried out his work placement whilst attending college to achieve a NVQ Level 3 in Carpentry and Joinery. Anthony showed great potential, attitude and commitment and he impressed the carpentry foreman

from Nicholson Carpentry Ltd.

Anthony kept in touch with Building Partnerships and the Higgins Community Development Manager; so when a position became available as an Adult Improver on Stockwell Park Estate, Anthony became one of the seven trainees recruited. He rejoined Nicholson's Carpentry Ltd where it was evident that his hand-skills, speed, effort and workmanship



From left to right: Paul Robbins from Nicholson Carpentry, Mark O'Lone from Higgins, Anthony Gibbons and Andrea Blackman from Lambeth Building Partnership

improved greatly and four months later he is now employed as a full-time carpenter with Nicholson's on a self-employed basis.

Barnardo's and Higgins delivering opportunities



We are delighted that Barnardo's have asked the Higgins Group to be the principal Training Partner at 'The Hub Construction Skills Centre' in Stepney Green. This training partnership will provide fantastic opportunities for young people to be trained in construction skills and associated City and Guilds qualifications. The experience and qualifications that can be obtained will provide opportunities for trainees to be selected for placements on site and potentially a career for the future.

For further information please contact Paul Cooke on 0208 508 5555

Race the Sun



Paul Lewellen, Group Finance Director and Mark Francis, Financial Controller completed their charity "Race the Sun" team challenge. This involved a cycle - 50 miles, hike to the summit of England's second highest mountain - Helvellyn at 3,116ft and a canoe challenge - 2.5 miles. Starting the challenge at sunrise and attempting to finish by sunset - racing the sun!

They were delighted that they beat their target time, finishing in 9 hours 36 minutes and they would like to thank all those who have helped to raise over £4,000 for Action Medical Research.

Recognition for our sustainable commitment



Quadrant

As an organisation we continually look to improve our corporate sustainability challenges and use new technology that will help the environment. We are very proud that our efforts in this area have been recognised by key awarding bodies.



Granville New Homes



Britains homes are responsible

for a huge proportion of the UK's carbon dioxide emissions and this is why all new homes will have to meet tough new zero carbon standards by 2016, along with ensuring that carbon emissions of existing stock are maintained to these standards. The Sustainable Housing Awards celebrates the projects and organisations at the vanguard of housing sustainability best practice and Higgins Construction were recently shortlisted for 'Sustainable Social Housing Contractor of the Year'. This was a fabulous achievement, as entries were extremely high, and we were placed alongside many national housebuilders.

RIBA  RIBA Awards are given for buildings that have high architectural standards and make a substantial contribution to the local environment. These annual awards have been running continuously since 1966 and we were honoured when our development 'Granville New Homes' was announced in the 2010 awards.



At the Considerate Constructor Awards two of our developments received awards

and were noted for their exceptional achievements in environmental responsibility.



'Standards of performance have again continued to rise over the past year and Award winners have demonstrated the very highest levels of consideration towards the public, the workforce and the environment. I should like to congratulate all winners for their hard work and commitment'

Robert Biggs, Chairman Considerate Constructors Scheme Ltd.



Printed on recycled paper. Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished with it.

Higgins Group

One Langston Road, Loughton. IG10 3SD
telephone: 020 8508 5555

