

go beyond

autumn 2019

Upgrading the road network

Supporting Highways England

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vgc

Supporting Highways England

to maintain and improve
the road network

M20 junction 10a for client Vinci Construction JV

VGC is contributing to a wide range of upgrades and improvements to England's motorways and major roads.

Clients benefit from administration and technical professionals, skilled trades and labour provided by VGC. They also appreciate the excellent work of our HSQE teams, who arrange safety training and mental health support sessions.

Our teams are working on smart motorway projects on the M4, M27, M6, M62, M20 and M23 including vegetation clearance, drainage, retaining walls and profiling verges and banks. They also undertake piling works, construction of noise barriers and upgrading the emergency refuge areas and central reservations. We also construct bases and help install new gantries for the motorway signs and signals.

We are supporting Balfour Beatty Vinci on the longest smart motorway upgrade in the country - the upgrade of the M4 junctions 3 to 12 covering 32 miles. Our HSQE team also delivers regular face-fit testing and plant vehicle marshal training to the workforce on the project.

In Kent, having completed resurfacing works on the M20 between junctions 7 and 9 for client Balfour Beatty, our teams are now working on a new junction 10a and link road to the A2070 for client Vinci Construction JV, and upgrading the M20 between junctions 3 and 5 for client Kier.

We are also working on the M23 in Surrey, where main contractor Kier is involved in a major contract to improve the busy 11-mile section between the M25 and Gatwick airport. In Hampshire, we're working in partnership with Danny Sullivan and Reliable to supply people to client Bam Nuttall Morgan Sindall JV, upgrading the M27 between junctions 4 and 11.



"Thanks for the support. We have a real need to make sure we get this right, now and forever!"

James McCrossan,
Balfour Beatty's
HSE manager



HSQE manager Richard Wheeler and labour manager James Andrews deliver regular plant-vehicle marshal training to the M4 teams



M4 section foreman Christian Radu is face-fit tested by HSQE adviser Ben Keegan

Front cover: slinger Calvin Smith and supervisor John Cusworth working with the piling team on the M20 to create secure foundations for a new emergency refuge area

Client commendations



The HS2 enabling works programme delivery manager and lead senior general foreman thanked carpenter Filon Radu-Irinel and general operative Amnuel Hailu for their contribution to the pop-up Hampstead Road community garden. "A wonderful example of integrated working and team spirit."

CSJV's head of legacy invited skills and employment adviser Kimberley McGinty to attend the Ground Engineering awards because of her contribution to the skills employment and education legacy delivery for HS2.

In the Midlands, we have a large team working on the M6 smart motorway upgrade between junctions 2 and 4 for main contractors Balfour Beatty Vinci.

On the M62 in the Manchester area we are helping to upgrade the central reservation and install overhead gantries for client Bam Nuttall Morgan Sindall JV, which is improving a 9.8-mile section between junctions 10 and 12.

The £1.5 billion improvement to the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon ranks among the biggest arterial road upgrades in the country. Since work started in late 2016, we have been a key player in the integrated labour team (ILT), collaborating with Hercules Site Services, Danny Sullivan and Reliable to support the A14 Integrated Delivery Team of Balfour Beatty, Costain, Skanska, Jacobs and Atkins. In March 2019 the A14 ILT won an award from Highways England for 'improving employee engagement and behavioural change'.

Other major projects have been the A1 and A6 Manchester airport relief road for Morgan Sindall, and the M1 junction 19 Catthorpe reconfiguration for Skanska.



Multi-skilled operative Adam Ali won an environmental award from the A14 C2H Integrated Delivery Team – when he saw that a sweeper was leaking fuel, he stopped the driver from spreading it any further and instigated the spill protocol.

During a pre-work review, ganger Vasile Mihai realised that there was no local spill kit. With his supervisor's permission, he collected a spill kit from stores ready for work to start.



Adam Ali



Vasile Mihai



Motorway Mark

Mark Beer is VGC's labour manager on the M23 and M20 smart motorway upgrades in Kent and Surrey for clients Vinci Construction and Kier.

Known as 'motorway Mark' to friends and colleagues, he brings 18 years of construction industry experience to the role (as well as two hard shoulders!)

Starting in the construction industry straight from school, Mark joined VGC ten years ago and has worked on a wide range of projects.



Mark Beer

"I've enjoyed being part of the success of VGC; it's a great company to work for."



Launched in the autumn, the VGC Academy is our new approach to learning and development to ensure everyone can achieve their potential.

It is designed to help people create tailored development plans so that they can succeed in their roles and work towards career goals.

From apprenticeship level through to graduate development and people looking to go that extra mile, there's a wide range of opportunities.

The academy features a core and intermediate development programme which focuses on behaviours like innovation, adaptability, tenacity, resilience, client focus, teamwork and diplomatic sensitivity. It has been developed with HR and learning and development specialists to ensure everyone gets the support they need to achieve their potential.

All staff will undertake the core and intermediate programmes and there will also be a new management and leadership programme starting in 2020.

The Workforce Leaders programme aims to identify people to become workforce champions and workforce leaders with on-site responsibilities such as reporting health and safety concerns, close call reporting, promoting Be safe rules, delivering modern slavery presentations and promoting fairness, inclusion and respect.

Ciara Pryce, group services director, said: "Working with learning and development and HR specialists, we have set out a behavioural competency framework, designed to reflect our values and be relevant for everyone.

"It focuses on positive, values-led behaviours that transfer across all areas of our work and enable people to plan their goals, work well together and deliver results.

"VGC is defined by our values, by the things we believe are important.

"We plan to give all of our people the support they need to achieve their potential, whatever their role and wherever they started their VGC journey."

The VGC Academy aims to deliver

- **meaningful conversations about careers**
- **access learning opportunities that will help people to progress**
- **get constructive feedback on job performance**



Martyn Price MBE has joined VGC as our new workforce development manager. He will work with colleagues to plan the ongoing development of our workforce's skills.

Among Martyn's priorities will be a review of training processes combined with an assessment of the future skills needed in the construction and rail industries. He will also advise how people can develop their careers, including learning through apprenticeships.

He will work with partner organisations to develop new apprenticeship standards. As chair of the Cross-Industry Construction Apprenticeship Task force, and with experience of contributing to three previous

new training standards for carpentry, civil engineering and plant, Martyn is well qualified to ensure that we capitalise on our existing apprenticeship programmes.

Martyn has played a key role on industry and government boards including the CITB and the government's Apprenticeship Ambassador Network.

He helped the Department for Education to develop the new T level pathway for construction, and sits on the Skills for Londoners Construction Steering Group in support of the Mayor of London's Construction Academy. In 2012 Her Majesty the Queen awarded him an MBE to recognise his services to vocational skills.



Martyn Price

Client commendations



Safe work leader Andrew Donnelly and civils installer Ian Hendry were part of the team who supported passengers off a stranded train following OLE failure at Camden. The Network Rail programme manager and Siemens project director both showed their appreciation: "fantastic support" and "absolutely outstanding in very difficult circumstances".



The labour and rostering manager for Integrated Track Team complimented supervisor Mick McCarney for several examples of best practice, including ply-boarding an access point to protect the road surface and a good RRV exclusion zone. He and foreman Alex Mineopoulus were commended for excellent safe team work. Mick was also thanked for noticing a faulty lifting strap.

Integrated Track Team management also complimented key influencer and SPC Sean Kayser for good safe working practices and thanked the whole team for excellent site tidiness.

Carpenter and key influencer Denis Ahmed noticed that an oil drum next to a generator was starting to distort. He removed the drum, disposed of it and used a spill kit to clear the area.



The YouthBuild Ventures programme co-ordinator thanked skills and employment adviser Kimberley McGinty for delivering a careers in construction session in association with Tideway London. "Our learners left the session with a much better understanding of the project, the rationale behind it and the associated job roles they could apply."



Traffic marshal Sanjeev Gaddu realised that a member of the public had followed his vehicle into the works area on the M6 project. He stopped and reassured the driver before escorting them to a safe area. Sanjeev contacted his foreman and remained with the driver for reassurance until the foreman took over.



Traffic marshal Reg Okeke, working on C695 for client ATC, won a Crossrail observation award after he alerted nearby operatives that an excavator was creating concrete dust and they needed dust masks to protect their lungs.



Andrew Donnelly & Ian Hendry



Kimberley McGinty presenting at Youthbuild



Sean Kayser



Denis Ahmed



Reg Okeke

VGC's charity partner State of Mind Sport

State of Mind Sport is a charity that harnesses the power of sport to promote positive mental health, and ultimately to prevent suicide.

The charity was established in 2011 following the death of Terry Newton, a former Great Britain international rugby league player who took his own life in September 2010.

State of Mind Sport's founders were determined to prevent similar tragedies in other communities, by raising awareness of mental health concerns, tackling stigma, providing mental fitness education and resilience, and by signposting people to timely support during tough times.

Co-founder and trustee Dr Phil Cooper MBE said: "We have really enjoyed our partnership with VGC Group over the past months. It has enabled us to reach out and engage with lots of people.

"Sadly, the risk of suicide in the construction industry and building trade is 1.6 times higher than the UK average. By raising awareness, we hope to be able to encourage people to talk more openly about mental fitness issues.

"We are extremely grateful to VGC staff who have been raising money and awareness on our behalf this year. You are helping us to try to save the next life."

To date, VGC's fundraising has raised £12,652 for State of Mind Sport. All donations are welcome – please see www.justgiving.com/theresa-harrington1



Members of the workforce on Tideway East Greenwich pumping station thanked State of Mind Sport presenters Danny Sculthorpe and Ian Smith for their presentation, arranged by VGC

Innovative technology upgrade benefits clients and company

Thanks to hard work by our HR, IT and payroll teams, we have successfully completed the first stage of upgrading our IT systems to a new Salesforce integrated database. This will help us manage our large workforce of skilled people across the UK.

The new database, which is GDPR compliant, facilitates communications and transactions for people, clients and projects on one platform. Existing customers will be the first to experience the benefits, with improved selection and recruitment, response times and competency management, along with accurate and detailed reporting and financial monitoring.

Managers can run up-to-date reports on all aspects of our operations and workforce whenever they are needed.

Ciara Pryce, group services director, said: "We had two main objectives in investing in Salesforce: first, we wanted to make it easier to serve our clients to the highest standards, and second to ensure that our internal processes and systems are as efficient and effective as possible as we move to the next stage of our growth as a business."

Work on stage two of the upgrade will start shortly to incorporate time and attendance systems.



L to R: Laura Perry, HR manager, Elaine Burke, payroll manager, and Sudarshan Deshmukh, IT director, worked together to ensure the upgrade was successful.

New national rail framework with Balfour Beatty

Balfour Beatty and VGC have agreed a new five-year contract that involves supporting Network Rail throughout the country, including all of Balfour Beatty's rail projects and CP6 framework programme commitments.

Working from the country's major rail depots in Doncaster, Crewe, Preston, Peterborough, Birmingham and London, VGC will be part of the Central Rail System Alliance which will be responsible for track maintenance and enhancement work across the rail network.

The Integrated Track Team working on London Underground infrastructure, of which VGC has been a part since 2003, will be incorporated into the new arrangements, on a three-year contract.



"We are very pleased with this agreement," said Chris Ryan, operations director. "It builds on our previous successes on Network Rail infrastructure and provides sustainable work for our teams across the country."

VGC's new offices in Doncaster and Birmingham will play an important role in managing the workforce involved on the contract.

Thames Valley park and ride

On behalf of client Balfour Beatty, VGC Projects is turning an unwanted corner of waste ground into a park and ride facility.

Challenges on the project included restricted access between the river and the railway, a high pressure gas pipe, buried 132KV cables, and overhead electrified lines spanning the area, plus a varied ground terrain.

Based on a cut and fill survey, we reused excavated spoil as fill behind the 133m retaining wall which creates the higher level car parking area. The cantilever retaining wall (which we will make a 'living wall') allows for more parking places.

The drainage solution includes three large underground attenuation tanks, installed using proprietary trench boxes and a specially designed temporary works system (trench sheets and frames). These are connected with a network of deep drainage pipes interspersed with 12 inspection chambers and two oil interceptor units.

We will install and commission street lighting, ticket machines, electric vehicle charging points and CCTV before handover of the final 255 car parking spaces which will ease congestion in Reading town centre.



News in brief



M6 legacy community project a great success

VGC and Lynch Plant Hire worked in partnership to improve access to the Royal Oak Common allotments.

The volunteer team levelled the walking route and improved the drainage. They also created a bunded area to collect rainwater. Kim Wainwright, association secretary, said: "Many of the elderly allotment owners who used to struggle to visit their plots have come back and are now enjoying their time there."



A second chance: rehabilitating ex-offenders

'Go beyond the gates' is our programme to support ex-offenders into sustainable mainstream employment, reducing re-offending and helping them to live independently.

The scheme, led by Kimberley McGinty, skills and employment adviser, started in March 2018. By mid-October 2019, we had supported 952 offenders, with five volunteers visiting 15 prisons. We have now employed 19 ex-offenders on sites across the country.

Powerful role for VGC at Fareham

VGC provided skilled trades and labour to the Morgan Sindall labour desk for the construction of a new National Grid electricity sub-station at Solent airport in Hampshire.

Our teams worked on site drainage as well as building the substation's reinforced concrete foundations.

Morgan Sindall is supporting lead contractor ABB with the build of a HVDC (high-voltage direct current) converter station, which will be linked to its equivalent in France by a subsea cable.

More awards for VGC

VGC received a special commendation award for supporting Women into Construction at their celebration in September. "Your (VGC) excellent contribution has directly resulted in increased participation of women in the construction industry".

VGC has been shortlisted for the Construction News Talent award for Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year.

The award recognises companies that are working to improve the construction industry's reputation and standing in local communities.

VGC has been shortlisted for the IRP award for Best Corporate Social Responsibility Practitioner, by the Recruitment and Employment Confederation and Institute of Recruitment Professionals.

We are listed on the UK Social Mobility Awards Roll of Honour, celebrating organisations which are leading the way in recruitment practices and programmes that support social mobility.

London Construction Awards judges shortlisted VGC for a Diversity and Inclusion Award and also Kimberley McGinty, skills and employment adviser, for the Employee of the Year Award.

The London Construction Awards recognise achievements, developments and innovation within the capital's construction industry.

HSQE manager Richard Wheeler has won an Injury-Free Environment (IFE) safety award, presented at Skanska's Zero Accident Forum.

The award acknowledges Richard's work to keep everyone safe on several Skanska sites, including the Waterloo, A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme and HS2. The award citation reads: "Passion for and ongoing support of IFE, and his delivery of IFE orientations in a way that people relate to".



(L – R): Kimberley McGinty, VGC skills and employment adviser; Sarah Beale, CITB chief executive; Ciara Pryce, VGC group services director



Andrew English, Skanska UK managing director (L) hands the award to HSQE manager Richard Wheeler

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