

Acquisition News

In April, Van Elle announced the acquisition of ScrewFast, the UK's leading helical piling and steel modular foundations company.

Established in 2000 and with a 15-year track record in highways and 19 years in rail, ScrewFast offers a full, bespoke service of design, fabrication and installation.

Flagship projects in recent years include the temporary foundations for venues at the London 2012 Olympics, foundations work on Crossrail, the Leeds Flood Defence system and numerous highways and Smart Motorway programmes.

ScrewFast managing director, Dan Dye, will host an introduction to ScrewFast during our next Lunch & Learn session on 5th May.



Gary Payne,
Rail Head of Civils

Rail Division appoints new Head of Civils

Ahead of anticipated growth in the second half of Network Rail's CP6 programme, the Rail team have appointed Gary Payne as Head of Civils, as part of a plan to further expand our specialist rail offering to include ancillary civil engineering works. These are typically services our customers welcome as a natural add-on to our piling and geotechnical works, potentially reducing interfaces with other contractors.

Gary joins with an impressive 25-year career with Siemens, Morgan Sindall and Carillion to his name.

Gary said: "I'm really pleased to have joined Van Elle, the business has a great reputation for innovation and going the extra mile for their customers, which is something I am looking forward to supporting."

Long Service Awards

Congratulations to three members of our team who have just celebrated their 20th year within the business.

Estimating Director, **Chris Downs** and Specialist Piling Foremen **Kris Purdham** and **Ian Mitchison** were presented with long service certificates and letters of thanks recently to mark the occasion.

Chris, Ian and Kris join an elite group of 26 colleagues who have been at Van Elle for more than two decades.



HS2 update

We have recently delivered our first rail piling works at Curdworth in partnership work with Balfour Beatty Rail and Pod-Trak, safely installing 44 no. circular hollow section (CHS) piles to extremely precise tolerances to allow steelwork to be installed ahead of the next phase of the project.

The foundations allowed for a temporary fence at the site, ensuring further HS2 work could continue alongside live Network Rail lines, where trains can travel up to 120 mile-per-hour.

This follows our vibro ground improvement works for the Skanska Costain Strabag joint venture and Strata, who are now active across the northern part of HS2, are supporting the ongoing ground investigation works.



M42 case study

Our piling works on the M42 at Junction 6 in Birmingham are now completed thanks to a collaborative project with Skanska. Our work involved the installation of bored piles for the new Church Lane Footbridge which will span this very busy section of the dual carriageway.

The improvements are part of a £300m package from Highways England which will improve connections to Birmingham Airport, the NEC and the new HS2 Interchange Station, whilst improving connectivity for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022.

Safety first, production second

The rollout of our Safety Golden Rules is well under way, with toolbox talks, divisional briefings on H&S at work day on 28 April and the graphic displayed across the business.

In addition to the introduction of our Safety Golden Rules, we recently held a safety briefing session at Kirkby with Siemens. During the day both Van Elle's and Siemens' Health and Safety teams presented their respective health and safety rules.

Stephen Pick, Project Director at Birmingham Siemens Mobility, said: "It was a great opportunity to engage with Van Elle and observe the importance they place on the safety message with their workforce.

"Good to see some really open discussions on how to improve safety and ensure the message is understood, that everyone is empowered to stop work if they believe safety is compromised."

OUR SAFETY GOLDEN RULES

Always



Make sure you are fit for work



STOP if anything changes



Ensure exclusion zones are in place around all plant and machinery



Have a daily briefing and diligently follow the method statement, lifting plan or permit

Never



Use plant or equipment that is unfit for purpose



Stand in a position of potential danger



Walk by and ignore a hazard or unsafe act



Undertake a task for which you are not trained or competent

Lunch & Learn - sharing best practice and insights

Our popular Lunch & Learn sessions on Teams returned in March and have informed more than 120 people on topics as diverse as bid writing, the remediation of concrete structures and the rail division's emergency works at Newington.

JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING LUNCH & LEARN SESSIONS, INCLUDING:

- 5th May – An introduction to ScrewFast by Dan Dye
- 12th May – CPD session on structural and rail products by Tim Fields from Ibstock Group
- 9th June - Social media posts & quality photos by the marketing team
- 14th July – Thermal image profiling by Pile Dynamics Inc

Grouting team achieves record growth

The Drilling and Grouting team, part of Van Elle's Specialist Piling division, has reported record growth, just three years after a full review of the sector and business plan.

In the financial year ending 2019, the department stabilised its turnover with breakeven margins. However, the predictions for this up coming year end reveal that the department will have almost tripled its turnover in just two years, with profits in line with market expectations.

Moreover, the team has more than doubled in size, recently took receipt of two new rigs and has work booked in for the next five months. In fact, there is so much work booked in that the team has had to hire in additional resources.



FAREWELL GARY AND ANGELA



We would like to take this opportunity to wish H&S colleagues Gary Levers and Angela Blakesley well as they depart Van Elle to take on new challenges elsewhere within the industry.

Among his many achievements as our Health & Safety Manager, Gary has helped us deliver CITB Site Safety Plus training courses and ISO certifications. He has worked tirelessly to reduce our accident rate and improve behavioural safety across the group through the 'Think Safe, Act Safe' programme. Meanwhile, Angela has been instrumental in implementing our mental health support and training.

The whole team wish Gary and Angela the very best of luck in their new roles.

Our new Head of HSQE will be Colin Williams; an experienced industry professional who will join us from the SB3 Bachy Soletanche/BBGE joint venture in June.

