

GROUND

News and updates from Van Elle | March 2023 | comms@van-elle.co.uk | 01773 580 580



Primary School children get a lesson in Ground Engineering

Earlier this month, colleagues visited schools in Leeds to educate and entertain over 160 children during STEM sessions, to attract and inspire them to consider their future in construction.

Over the course of two days Jono Wright, Senior Engineering Manager and Robert Crnca, Placement Student delivered eight sessions across two schools in partnership with Keltbray.

These sessions form part of our joint efforts on community engagement in the area, where we are supporting the delivery of the M621 improvement scheme for National Highways.

Children were given a brief introduction to the role of an engineer and the importance of engineering in our daily lives.

They also learnt about various ground conditions and what's best for building roads. This was then demonstrated through an interactive play session using fun materials such as jelly, sand, and Lego.

They also explored slope stability and the inner workings of slope failure, learning how to engineer a safer design using piles or soil nails in order to make the bridge safe.



Safety Coin presented to Strata team

Two of our Strata cable percussion drillers, Scott Dunthorne and Ryan Hayes, received a Safety Coin from AECOM in recognition of safe work practices.

Safety Coins are award coins given to employees who follow safety best practices and encourage employees to be more conscious of their safety in the workspace.

Ryan and Scott were recognised for removing a faulty piece of equipment, (a Standard Penetration Testing rod with deficient thread) from service and for consistently maintaining a high standard of housekeeping around their work site.

AECOM noted that if the rod had continued to be used, the condition of the thread may have deteriorated, and it could have ultimately failed.

As our company ethos is to always put safety first and production second, it is a great accomplishment to be commended for ensuring a safe working environment.



Mental Health is a Priority

Earlier this month, six of our Van Elle employees completed their Mental Health First Aider course.

The construction industry is one of the worst affected for people experiencing mental ill-health and the issue is well-publicised in the industry.

As an employer of more than 600 people, most of whom are site-based, we understand that there is a duty of care that goes beyond physical health and safety.

Mental health is a big priority for our business, and we recognise the importance of supporting our colleagues.

We now have a total of 32 Mental Health First Aiders within the business to support our colleagues.



Celebrating our Apprentices during National Apprenticeship Week 2023

During National Apprenticeship Week (7th – 11th February), we joined others across our industry in celebrating the value, benefits, and opportunities that apprenticeships bring and the positive impact they make to communities, businesses, and the wider economy.

We currently employ 22 apprentices across a range of disciplines, levels and specialisms, some of whom came straight from school and others who accessed the scheme after changing careers or wanting to upskill.

Our apprentices are currently undertaking qualifications in industry-specific areas such as piling, civil engineering and quantity surveying, through to areas such as HR business administration and IT.

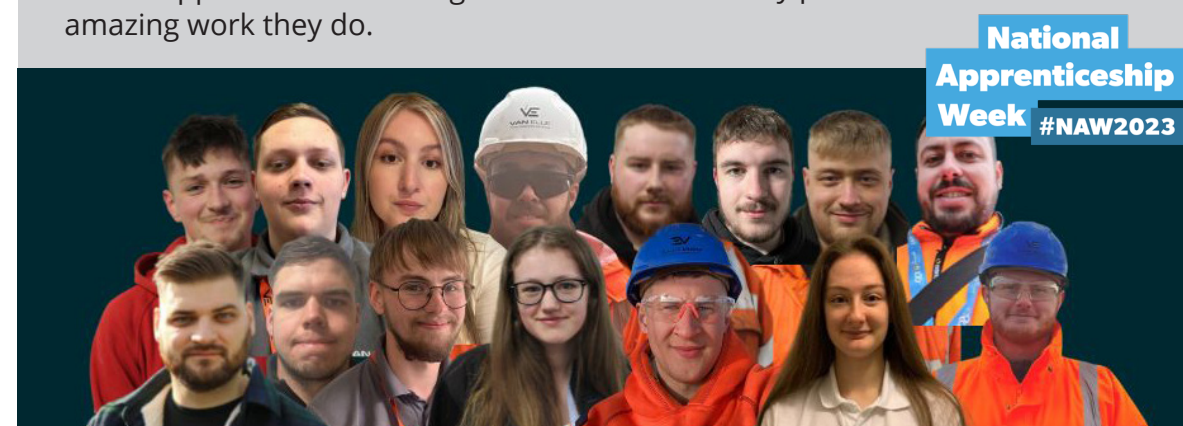
Throughout the week we celebrated our 22 apprentices and recognised the amazing work they do.

During the week, we reached out to some of our apprentices across the business to find out what they have to say about their apprenticeship experience.

Anne-Marie Cutler, our talent advisor shared why she believes apprenticeships provide skills for life and are the answer to the UK skills shortage.

We shared a piece on our Property Maintenance apprentice Luke Murfin, who has followed in the footsteps of his dad and grandad, becoming the third generation of his family to work at Van Elle, and the second to become an apprentice.

We also heard from Karl Drayton, one of the first cohorts of Piling Apprentices at Van Elle and the first apprentice to successfully pass.



Inspiring the next generation of women and girls in Geology

International Day of Women and Girls in Science took place on the 11th of February.

International Day of Women and Girls in Science is a day for celebrating women in science and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects.

To mark this, we asked our Assistant Geotechnical Engineer, Shannon Wade to share her experience in the hope she can inspire others to pursue a career in geology.

STEM subjects are at the core of our business. Every day, our teams apply their STEM skills to our operations, inspiring innovation and solutions.

However, it's a well-known fact that the demand for these skills is not reflected in the number of people taking STEM courses. And attracting young people, especially women, to these careers is difficult.

During an interview, Shannon talked to us about her role as an Assistant Geotechnical Engineer, what inspired her to choose a career in Geology, how we can encourage more women to join the industry and advice she would give to the young women and girls of the future.

You can read Shannon's full interview on our website.



Van Elle commits to setting science-based targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions

We are delighted to announce that we have signed the commitment letter for the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) and will begin the process of defining near term targets to reduce our climate impact.

Science-based targets provide a clearly defined pathway for companies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, helping prevent the worst impacts of climate change and future-proof business growth.

Developing our Science Based Targets will allow us to shape our decarbonisation strategy to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement goals, limiting global warming to 1.5°C and ultimately achieving Net Zero by 2050.



Ground Investigation works completed on the A46 Newark Bypass

Our Strata Geotechnics team have completed ground investigation works on the A46 Newark Bypass, ahead of major improvement works for National Highways.

The A46 Newark Bypass is an important route connecting the M1 and Leicester to the A1 and central Lincolnshire. This project will provide a more reliable and resilient road network.

The ground investigation works included surveys and assessments to help develop the design of the preferred route further.

The drilling teams used a combination of ground investigation techniques and equipment in order to get more accurate results ahead of the major road infrastructure project.

To help them complete the work, the team used windowless sampling, cable percussion, rotary sonic/coring and cone penetration testing using CPT rigs. Down the hole geophysical testing was also carried out within nine of the boreholes.

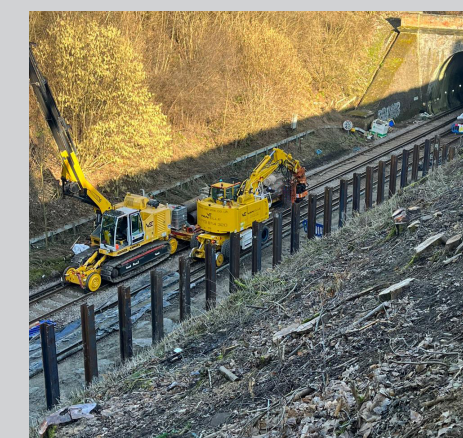


Rail team supports Faversham to Dover Prior £3m improvement

Our rail teams recently completed ground engineering works on the Southeastern line between Faversham and Dover.

The crucial ground engineering work, supports a £3 million Network Rail improvement project to reduce the chance of future slips which affect train services and passenger safety.

The team installed a king post retaining wall, consisting of 31 No universal columns at lengths of up to 11m. The piles were constructed to depths of up to 7.5m using the continuous flight auger (CFA) piling technique.



Employees share their career journeys for National Careers Week

During the week we took the opportunity to get more people talking about their careers at Van Elle and the range of routes they've taken to get to where they are, in the hope we can inspire more young people to consider the construction industry.

As well as shining a light on possible career options, experiences, and paths available, we highlighted that career paths don't always follow a straight line and can include a number of diversions or crossroads that can help you learn, develop, and grow.

We spoke to several of our employees across a range of roles within our business.

