

Producer members

Producers offer mainland UK coverage unless otherwise stated

C&G Concrete Ltd 01780 482000
www.candgconcrete.co.uk (East Midlands)

CEMEX UK Materials Ltd 01932 568833
www.cemex.co.uk

CPI Mortars Ltd 0845 850 9090
www.euromix.com

Hanson Premix 0845 845 6699
www.hanson.biz

John Carr (Liverpool) Ltd 0151 2070067
(Liverpool)

Premier Mortars 0845 603 3406
www.marshalls.co.uk/premiermortars

RTU 02890 851441
www.rtu.co.uk (Belfast)

Remix Dry Mortar Ltd 01329 231200
www.remixdrymortar.co.uk

Roadstone Dublin Ltd 00 35 31 4041200
www.roadstone.ie (Dublin)

Smiths Concrete Ltd 01295 278177
www.smithsconcrete.co.uk (Oxfordshire)

Tarmac Limited 08701 116116
www.tarmac.co.uk

Now we see it, now we don't

Demand fluctuations in the building and construction markets



New housing registrations dropped in August

Recent activity in the UK house building and general construction markets has been – at best – confusing, with reports of both drops and increases in activity.

New homes registered with NHBC in August dropped slightly from 10,638 in July to 9,954 but figures for the rolling quarter June to August 2010 – at 29,855 registrations – were significantly better than for the same period in 2009.

Chief executive of NHBC, Imtiaz Farookhi, said: 'The drop in registrations this month (August), and the general fluctuations seen over the last six months, are not significant in themselves but reflect a period of

ongoing uncertainty across the industry.

'It is difficult to predict how far spending cuts will impact housing and broader factors like employment and consumer confidence, especially in the north of England, appear to be holding back volumes. Availability of funding, both to developers for the construction of homes and in terms of mortgage finance on acceptable terms, is continuing to take its toll. Our figures suggest that the industry is essentially treading water at a level of activity which is still very low by historic standards.'

Director general of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), Richard Diment, has been more forthright about the potential effects of the government spending review. Speaking recently to the FMB's London regional council, he said: 'The government's big idea is that jobs lost in the public sector will be replaced by new job creation in the private sector. The problem is that public sector cuts are moving at a far greater pace than private sector jobs growth, leaving a massive employment gap in the middle. These cuts are not just direct public sector jobs, but also at firms whose business is supplying the public sector with the skills expertise and services it needs to deliver government priorities.'

Former MIA chairman retires

Former MIA chairman, Fergus Malone, is to retire. A staunch ally of the factory-produced mortar industry, Fergus is presently managing director of CPI Euromix as well as having overall responsibility for the Grafton Group's manufacturing operations in the UK and Ireland.

His MIA friends wish him a long and enjoyable retirement.



Construction industry awaits spending cuts announcements

CPI Euromix excels at ExCel



General view of the extension to the ExCel Centre

A range of natural and coloured mortars from CPI Euromix were specified for the extension to the ExCel exhibition centre in London, which is now the capital's second largest Olympic venue.

The extension was designed by Grimshaw Architects and built by main contractor Sir Robert McAlpine. The extension's structure features a number of different elements including a 5 m high brick base for which CPI provided mortar.

The company also supplied to specialist blockwork contractor Lyons & Annot 850 tonnes of mortar, including 600 tonnes of natural coloured. This was used on 30,000 sq m of paint grade and fair-faced blockwork and to create a cavity wall for the building's new extension. CPI provided 250 tonnes of coloured mortar for the high-quality internal and external brickwork.

All external blockwork is black grooved architectural block, for which CPI supplied

165 tonnes of black mortar as well as 85 tonnes of white mortar for the polished blockwork and grooved block used on both sides of the main thoroughfare.

CPI provided a silo mixing station for the project. This contained up to 35 tonnes of dry mortar and, connected to power and water, supplied accurately mixed mortar on demand. The system is also space saving and reduces the number of deliveries required, minimising traffic disruption.



Part view of the extension to the ExCel Centre

Adding sustainable colour to our lives

Sustainability and reliable sourcing are major considerations for producers, buyers and specifiers right through the supply chain and no less so for manufacturers of pigments – the companies that add colour to our mortars and concrete products.



Mortar News approached one of the world's leading manufacturers of synthetic iron oxide pigments, Lanxess and asked the company's UK managing director Kim O'Connor for his organisation's approach.

'Sustainable practises and responsible care towards the environment and society are an integral part of our corporate guidelines,' he said. 'Production processes have been designed to conserve resources and the environment and to be safe and sustainable. It is natural that Lanxess should comply with the 12 globally accepted principles of "green chemistry" published by P. Anastas and J. Warner in 1998 but let me here just focus on five of them.

'Firstly, it is better to prevent waste than to treat or clean it up after it is formed. This is effectively applied at all our sites to ensure efficient cleaning and recycling of process water.

'Secondly, wherever practicable, synthetic methodologies should be designed to use and generate substances that possess little or no toxicity to human health and the environment.

'Thirdly, the use of auxiliary substances (eg, solvents and separation agents) should be made unnecessary and innocuous when used. In the process employed by Lanxess to make iron oxides, the only solvent used is water, which is reused in several stages of the process before being fed into a special waste-water treatment unit.

'Fourthly, energy requirements should be recognised for their environmental and economic impacts and should be minimized. An outstanding example of this is the Laux production process at our German factory, which has the only industrial scale production facility for making iron oxides that does not use any energy at all during the actual synthesis.

'Fifthly, substances and the form of a substance used in a chemical process should be chosen so as to minimise potential for chemical accidents, including releases, explosions and fires.

'These are just five of the principles adopted by Lanxess to ensure top-billing in responsible sourcing for colour pigments for the UK and all our global markets.'



**mortar
industry
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MIA is part of the Mineral Products Association, the trade association for the aggregates, asphalt, cement, concrete, lime, mortar and silica sand industries