

**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

## Tarmac mortars on track with McLaren



McLaren's executive chairman, Ron Dennis, outside the construction site

**Minimising waste was one of the prime considerations for the choice of Tarmac's factory-produced mortars in the construction of the McLaren Production Centre (MPC) at Woking, Surrey.**

Tarmac is supplying contractor Galostar with naturally coloured mortar via on-site silos,

allowing call off of material as required. Galostar is laying 10,000 square metres of fair-faced blocks for the new centre that will house production of a new range of high-performance sports cars being manufactured by McLaren Automotive. Use of silo mortar also reduces site traffic movements, an important factor in McLaren's stated wish to minimise construction traffic around its global headquarters.

McLaren's executive chairman said: 'We have approached the MPC planning and construction programme in the same rigorous, detailed and challenging manner as we would start a Grand Prix season or as we have managed the research, development and launch of the new McLaren Automotive car company.'

'Every detail has been considered and solutions resolved, whether that is on the production facility's timing and layout, the local sensitivities for the impact of the new facility, or how we deal with details such as keeping the site and surrounding roads clean and as traffic-free as possible.'

The company has set a tight timescale for the build, allowing a year from start of construction to production of the first sports car. When complete, the new facility is expected to produce up to 1,000 McLaren 12C cars in 2011. The company explains that its production process will introduce a one-piece carbon-fibre chassis structure, the MonoCell, the first time such a lightweight, safe and strong structure has been offered on a series production car in this market segment.

## 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.'



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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