

press release

NFB member celebrates success as UK's Most Considerate Site for 2011

NFB member company Bramall Construction Ltd has been voted the UK's Most Considerate Site in the Considerate Constructors Scheme National Site Awards 2011 for their social housing site at Oxcliff, Scarborough.

Despite intense competition from all around the country, including several high profile national projects, it was a relatively small site that claimed the top award for 2011, showing that initiative and effort are every bit as potent as resources.

The annual awards recognise the highest levels of consideration and care shown by construction company sites throughout the UK towards the general public, site staff and the environment. This year, only 78 out of some 8500 UK sites were judged to have achieved the Gold standard and only one of these was awarded the prestigious title of the UK's Most Considerate Site.

The Oxcliff estate in Scarborough is a mature social housing area with many problems. Crime and vandalism are at a very high level, and the many areas of discarded hypodermic needles pay testament to the drug and gang cultures which are prevalent. Almost all the shops are now boarded up. The steeply sloping ground had previously discouraged any new building on the site since the original homes were built back in post-war days.

Bramall's project was to erect ten new apartments, with prior piling required to allow construction on the sloping ground. The practical difficulties were compounded by an extremely restricted site area allowing virtually no adjacent materials storage. However, the potential problems of vandalism and general community hostility created the biggest challenges and these were met in a positive and highly productive way.

"Exceptional, unique and innovative measures abound at this particularly challenging project. The site team engaged with the community in so many ways, leaving a valuable and lasting legacy – the highest attainment for a considerate constructor." These words, from Scheme Monitor Bob Walton who was responsible for marking the site, sum up the key elements that brought the ultimate accolade to Bramall Construction for 2011.

Bramall's site team saw the project as one that would not only provide additional homes but also the opportunity to improve both the surroundings and the spirit of the community. Extensive clean-ups of all areas, including those well beyond the site boundaries, made an immediate impact and Rentokil were employed to get rid of sharps and other hazardous debris.

To encourage the maintenance of the newly-cleaned surroundings, the team established a Street Pride initiative and led the way by instigating a twice-weekly litter pick of all the adjoining roads. This was supported by a friendly and open approach to all residents, with plenty of direct contact supplemented by newsletters.

press release

All of this interaction not only produced a greater knowledge of the community and its problems, but the actual involvement of neighbors in the project itself.

One example of this was the employment of an elderly resident as a home-located night watchman, keeping an eye on estate activity and taking any necessary action. A further, and extremely innovative, example was the offer of 24 hour respite facilities on the site for the local police who were regularly called to the area. This not only saved them many repeated car journeys, but afforded useful extra security for the site itself as well as for the community. However, it was the many individual acts of care and support which really established the site team as one which was a force for good on the estate.

When a footpath had to be closed as part of the works, it badly affected resident access to a local convenience store. Following liaison with the store, the site team arranged the regular collection and delivery of shopping for many elderly residents. They also gave the store a coffee machine to boost trade, and got the ball rolling by buying coffees for the site on a regular basis.

A further example was seen when the wife of the resident doubling as a night watchman for the site became ill and the couple had to be moved to more suitable accommodation. The site team not only helped with the move itself, but bought and delivered new furniture and carpets to help the couple settle in.

Many other initiatives of varying degrees were in place, from staged fun days and help with a local playground project to the donation of site drawings and progress photos to a local BTEC construction lecturer. Environmental commitment through carbon offsetting and other routes was equally impressive. However, it was the willingness of the site team to really go the extra mile to get involved with community activity that most impressed the Scheme Monitor.

Commenting on the achievement, Neil Baxter, Managing Director of Bramall Yorkshire, said: "Winning 'Most Considerate Site 2011', as well as two silver and two bronze Awards this year, is a fantastic achievement for Bramall Construction and one of which we are very proud.

"As an organisation we strive to work closely with local residents and alongside our clients to ensure that we leave a long-lasting legacy in the areas in which we work. In this instance, we tried particularly hard to show the local community that we were being open and honest with them and working for their benefit. This led to the site team gaining respect amongst locals and to developing a positive relationship with people living around the site. In turn, this helped to prevent any negative feelings towards the build and reduced acts of anti-social behavior.

"The Considerate Constructors Scheme is now widely recognised as having a real and positive impact on the construction industry and is something that we are proud to be associated with. Winning an Award brings far-reaching benefits to us as a business, and it's fantastic that our site teams can achieve the recognition they deserve for their hard work."

press release

Julia Evans, Chief Executive of the NFB commented: 'It is excellent to see the Considerate Constructors Scheme continue to celebrate the fantastic work done by construction companies across the UK.

'Bramall Construction showed consideration throughout every stage of the Oxcliff project and we congratulate them on their success.'

For the Considerate Constructors Scheme, Chairman, Robert Biggs added:

"It's particularly gratifying to see a relatively small site win the top Award, and especially one that faced so many problems in its location. It shows clearly that forethought and commitment are the key elements in considerate construction success. This site team gave real meaning to the phrase 'community engagement', and I applaud their efforts wholeheartedly."

Details of all the 2011 winners can be found on the Consideration Constructors Scheme's website at: <http://www.ccscheme.org.uk/index.php/site-registration/awards2011>.