A difficult 2016 but looking forward to 2017

2016 did not work out as we forecast or planned. It has proved to be a very difficult year and that is mainly down to events outside the North East region.

Our main problems in 2016 was in the Yorkshire region hopefully these are now behind us and we will be focusing on 2017 with a new structure to our Yorkshire operations now taking shape.

The North East has again produced a strong performance and that will allow us to present a respectable year end result albeit disappointing.

The main point is that we are a very strong business that is able to manage the types of problems that come along in the construction industry, we aim to be open and honest, learn from experiences and improve as a result.

2017 should be about the market place and our ability to compete for work across the diverse sectors where we work. Civil Engineering has been strong and we see it remaining so into 2017. Social Housing awaits news as to government support which could kick start it again. Commercial Build is being affected by Brexit uncertainty in terms of EU funding and this needs to be resolved. Meanwhile in our developments side we are still transiting between our Duselm Homes operation to Esh Homes and this will continue in 2017. We should not forget our specialist businesses who are strong performers in 2016 and making significant contributions.

The other main area of focus is our “Project Gateway” which has started well but is now moving into a critical period of installation in 2017 which will be so important to the Group. Our new IT platform (Business Transformation) can massively help us avoid some of the problems we have faced in managing our business during its expansion over the last 5-10 years.

I just want thank everyone for their hard work in 2016 and stress that the directors and shareholders see a positive outlook going forward. That possibility can be seen in the massive investment we have made in Bowburn and the continued support to our teams in Cumbria, Scotland and Yorkshire.

I am looking forward to reading about the hard work and many good news stories across Esh Group in Kaleidoscope.

Thanks, Brian
North East

In 2016 Lumsden & Carroll Civil Engineering delivered solid results despite a difficult market. Esh-MWH is gathering strength, and it’s now one year since we earned a place on Northumbrian Water’s £15m-£25m per year AMP6 framework. Already the joint venture has a turnover of more than £12m and the ten year Framework project is the cornerstone of that. The majority of staff have now moved into the new working environment.

The relationship with Northumbrian Water is bearing fruit elsewhere too, as we’ve been awarded a contract to build 17 new lodges at Leaplish Waterside Park, Kielder. It follows our involvement in a new show lodge at the park. It’s gathering strength, and it’s now one year since we earned a place on Northumbrian Water’s £10m-£15m per year AMP6 framework. Already the joint venture has a turnover of more than £12m and the ten year Framework project is the cornerstone of that. The majority of staff have now moved into the new working environment.

Esh Training Solutions is installed in the newly completed Academy building, with its high specification training facilities, including study areas, offices and outdoor training space for construction plant and materials handling. From now on it will be the home of Esh Group’s apprenticeships and staff development programmes.

In last year’s Kaleidoscope we highlighted Esh Build’s work on Durham County Council’s £2.7m Wharton Park renovation. We’re pleased to report the historic park opened to the public in time for the summer holidays. In October His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent officially opened the park, which was donated to the people of Durham in 1858 by William Lloyd Wharton, then chairman of the Great North Eastern Railway and High Sheriff of Durham.

We also completed £1.6m Galley Hill School works for Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and a £490,000 project at Columbia Grange SEN School for Sunderland City Council. The schemes were part of NEPO Framework, which continues to be a source of high profile contracts. Now we’re focused on fire station builds for Northumberland County Council in Alnwick, worth £5.2m and Hexham, worth £2.1m, both schemes are progressing well.

High profile flagship work also included Cleveland College of Art & Design’s new £6.4m premises, the £10m supported housing development of Eston Community Village for Thirteenth Group, and Durham County Council’s £5.4m Waste Transfer Station. These projects are fantastic assets for Esh Build’s portfolio and demonstrate our continued ambition to take on significant commercial builds in the North East.

Demand for housing gave us reason to feel confident, particularly as we completed key schemes for some of the major housebuilders such as Taylor Wimpey North East & North Yorkshire, Persimmon Homes, Bellway Homes and Lindab Homes. All indicators point towards that trend continuing.

Local Authorities continue to release works across the North East meaning our general civil engineering teams are on site with major schemes such as Sunderland City Council’s £7.5m Enterprise Zone Phase 2 and £1.6m Investment Corridors as well as Stockton Borough Council’s £2.6m dual carriageway works at Myton Way, Ingleby Barwick. We also secured places on the new NEPO Framework for Engineering & Infrastructure Works across all 15 lots we tendered.

We’re particularly proud of the Fellgate Flood Alleviation Scheme. The scheme won the North East Constructing Excellence Awards’ Sustainability category; the Institute of Water’s Innovation - Northern Area Award and Northumbrian Water’s GEM Environmental Sustainability Award.

Fellgate also picked up recognition at awards nights by the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association, Constructing Excellence National and Construction News National Awards. The scheme which protects 250 homes threatened by flooding was commissioned by South Tyneside Council and Northumbrian Water with work on the ground by Lumsden & Carroll and MWH.

2016 was a successful year and with a number of key strategic projects and frameworks in the pipeline the momentum is expected to continue into 2017.

We started 2016 with a strong set of results behind us from 2015 and some substantial private and public sector projects to tackle.

At home in Bowburn, Esh House extension was completed along with the refurbishment of the existing headquarters. The majority of staff have now moved into the new working environment.

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Despite challenging market conditions we’ve shown we can tender competitively and deliver quality for clients. The team has pulled out all the stops to become Building Information Modelling (BIM) Level 2 qualified and gain our PAS 1192 accreditation – a key specification for information management in the delivery phase of projects. It’s work that shows our commitment to collaborative working, from the pre-tender stage through to construction.

As our ‘under £1m works’ team has been able to identify new opportunities for Esh Build, this means we’ve got new workstreams that are helping to grow the business.
We’ve done a lot of adjusting to changes in the property market this year. Social and private housing has endured an unpredictable time, not least because of the political impact of Brexit, changes at the top of government and the fallout from last year’s change to social housing rent formulas.

For our clients, it means reduced incomes but the continued need to provide housing for sale.

Now our aim is to secure positions on the many frameworks currently operating in the sector. Over the last 12 months we’ve already had some successes that mean we’re well placed for upcoming opportunities.

We’ve secured places on the following new build frameworks:

- Broadacres
- Abbeyfield
- Cutting Edge
- Thirteen Group

We’ve also secured places on the following refurbishment frameworks:

- Fusion21
- NFP
- Procure Plus
- North Star Housing Group
- Procurement for Housing
- London Housing Consortium (LHCC)

Within the Group, Homes by Esh is due to release a new batch of schemes that will boost our portfolio. Schemes at Salutation Road and Eastbourne in Darlington are just two of a string of significant projects.

Recent tender successes mean we hope to start work on 16 homes at Newbiggin Hall in Newcastle, 8 plots at Stanthorpe Avenue in North Tyneside, 12 plots at Redcar and 54 plots at Ruby Road, Hartlepool. Refurbishment schemes for housing associations such as Castoria, Thirteen, Two Castles and Riverside have also been secured.

New schemes in Gateshead, Perkinsville in Chester-le-Street and planned maintenance for North Star, as well as Accent framework tasks, have all been completed. Our new build work at schemes such as Daisy Hill in Newcastle and sites in Stocksfield and Blyth are all completed and look great. Projects at Whitby and Hesleden are also progressing well.

The first six months of 2016 may have been difficult, but Esh Property Services has a lot to be pleased about. Despite the challenges we’ve built a stable position from which to secure opportunities in the short term and for the next four to five years.

Our exciting joint venture with design partners MWH launched in 2016. It’s already proving to be a success, with several flagship schemes delivered alongside planned maintenance projects.

Esh-MWH was formed to secure a place on Northumbrian Water Group’s AMP6 Framework, which is worth between £10m - £15m per year. During the 5+5 year framework, the joint venture will deliver short-term flood damage mitigation and significant long-term, large-scale capital projects that will protect Northumbrian Water Group’s infrastructure.

Led by Dave Pratt, the Esh-MWH business is an innovative step for Esh Group and shows we’re committed to partnership working.

The past year has seen us develop our customer-centric, collaborative operating model. Work with our framework supply partners Run2 means customers are always at the heart of every project we deliver.

In fact, we’ve taken steps to develop the Joint Venture Innovation Forum – a working group of young professionals who aim to develop innovative and collaborative team-working initiatives across the joint venture. The Forum aims to develop four key areas of the business, including professional development, wellbeing, community and legacy. It’s all part of our efforts to deliver industry-leading customer service during AMP5 and beyond.

2017 will see us continue to work with Northumbrian Water Group, embedding their core values into our operations throughout AMP5 and further projects. As always, our goal is to leave a lasting legacy in the communities in which we work.
Our outlook for 2017 is extremely positive.

In Yorkshire we’re due to deliver the Kirkstall Forge Waste Transfer Station for Leeds City Council, on time and to budget. At Birdwell the ongoing delivery of the M1 Junction 36 signalling scheme for Bamsley Metropolitan Borough Council has promoted a further opportunity worth £1.5m with the authority. Both pieces of work have increased exposure for Lumsden & Carroll (in the region) and boosted our reputation among potential customers there.

Our existing framework agreement with North Yorkshire County Council continues to provide opportunities, as does the YORcivils framework. We have a strong pipeline of work in addition to projects already in hand for 2017.

More recently we’ve submitted bids for a flood alleviation scheme at Filey and sea defences at Runswick Bay. We’re waiting to hear the outcome of those bids along with the formal confirmation of our appointment to a £2m pumping station scheme with Osue and Humber Drainage Board.

All this growth comes at the same time as some key appointments to the Lumsden & Carroll Yorkshire team. Michael Sheard and Christian Verity both joined us as Senior Project Managers, while Jonathan Haran became head of Business Development - Yorkshire. He will focus on winning work for Lumsden & Carroll in the regional market.

The YORcivils 2 framework continues to be a target for us as it’s a source of work issued by most of the local authorities in Yorkshire. While some delays in the procurement exercise in this framework have been frustrating, we’ve held talks with the YORcivils framework. We have a strong pipeline of work in addition to projects already in hand for 2017.

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Business has been varied throughout 2016. Social housing has presented challenges due to the significant change in the funding available to Registered Providers. We’ve been appointed as one of four partners to the Home Group Developer Framework in Cumbria. The last quarter of 2016 brought a number of opportunities, as this framework identifies key projects in the delivery of Home Group’s programme. We’ve also submitted a tender for the Cutting Edge and Places for People frameworks.

In the early part of the year we earned a place on the Cumbria Council Capital Schemes framework. Our appointment to all Lots, comprising two for building and two for civil engineering projects, has delivered a steady stream of opportunities for us to tender.

In the social housing sector we’ve built new homes for: Yorkshire Housing at Reid House, Ingleton; Riverside Housing at Ashness Drive, Carlisle and at Ladsyate, Longtown; Twin Castles Housing at Grange over Sands and Kendal; and South Lakes Housing at Kirkby Lonsdale.

Commercial build projects include the completion of a new dementia care home in Barrow for Cumbria County Council. We finished the partially-built design and build scheme after the original contractor went into administration. There have also been high profile projects for the Lloyd Motor Group at various sites in Carlisle, including a valet, advanced vehicle preparation centre and archive unit at the BMW site; a new extension and refurbishment of the Volvo dealership. We’re now nearing completion of an extension and refurbishment of the Vehrs dealership; and an internal and external refurbishment of the Honda dealership. We’re now nearing completion of an extension and refurbishment of the BMW dealership.

We have also delivered two Projects for Carlisle United after the Football Ground suffered severe damage in the Storm Desmond January Floods that devasted Carlisle and other parts of Cumbria in January 2016.

In the latter part of the year, we moved from our offices in Kendal and Carlisle to new premises in Penrith. Consolidation at this single location means we can make best use of resources and serve our clients across Cumbria.

In 2017 we have a growing pipeline of opportunities. We’re currently in the last stages of agreeing the final costs of the Barrow Primary Care Facility, on which the team has spent considerable time working with our client, eLIFT Cumbria. That project looks likely to commence in the early part of next year, which will add to our portfolio in the Furness Peninsula.

In Scotland

Esh Border Construction has made great strides this year, thanks to some great projects secured and several new recruits joining the business.

In last year’s Kaleidoscope we talked about the opening of the Livingston office. Well, we’ve moved again. 2016 also saw the closure of the Esh Border’s Earlston office, which served the Scottish Borders market, and the extension of the Finlays office at Galashiels to accommodate both businesses.

We’re not short of opportunities in the Borders, particularly thanks to a large land-led social housing scheme. As with all land-led schemes it will take some time to know if this will come to fruition, but we have outline agreements in place and planners on board.

The social housing sector in Scotland is buoyant at the moment as the Scottish Government continue to provide substantial support for new schemes. We’ve secured several frameworks and as a result we can see a significant pipeline of opportunities emerging across the central belt of Scotland, Fife and the Borders - our core areas.

The commercial sector remains strong and we’ve secured one of the most iconic projects within Edinburgh: Calton Hill Observatory. The scheme includes some renovation works and a new build. All eyes will be on this project, which has the potential to raise our profile in Scotland.

Along with new recruits to the team, the growth of our Building My Skills and STEM programmes and our shortlisting among finalists in the Scottish Business Awards for CSR - we’re making excellent progress in Scotland. We have been awarded a silver accreditation with the Investors in Young People programme, a Scottish-based initiative within the Investors in People body and several members of the team are going through higher and further education.

Overall it’s been a great year for building foundations. In 2017 we’re going to add to the superstructure and drive steady, incremental growth based on strong delivery.

In 2017 we have a growing pipeline of opportunities. We’re currently in the last stages of agreeing the final costs of the Barron Primary Care Facility, on which the team has spent considerable time working with our client, eLIFT Cumbria. That project looks likely to commence in the early part of next year, which will add to our portfolio in the Furness Peninsula.
The first buyer has moved into their new home at Eden Vale, Wetheral. Garth House Gardens at Brampton is nearing completion and there have been two sales. We are delighted to have won Sustainable Developer of the Year at the recent WhatHouse? Awards. Hexham Gate at Hexham is our newest scheme and in September we opened a show home which attracted more than 100 visitors, who came to see for themselves the innovation, design and energy efficiency behind these homes.

ESH Homes is focused on looking for small and medium sized affordable housing land. We continue to support our sister companies Esh Property Services and Esh Border Construction as they grow throughout the north east, yorkshire, cumbria and scotland. Our affordable rural exception sites at Hexham and darlington in the pipeline. The highly sustainable execution behind these homes.

2016 was a transitional one for Homes by Esh. We completed our developments in Blyth, Seaham, carew and Stanley and now we’re making plans to re-launch the brand with new developments at Scholars Park, Darlington and Suttle House, Carlisle. More schemes will follow as we move through 2017. Along with Esh Developments, we’re focused on sourcing and buying new land for homes by Esh. Next year will also see our team move into Esh House.

As the housing market gradually improves we continue to find land and secure planning permissions for our affordable, mid-market and executive house building needs. Emily Scott has joined the team as apprentice business administrator. She will support the growing demand for land-led affordable housing opportunities and sites required for both Esh Homes and Trivselhus by Esh.

Our joint venture with Swedish company Trivselhus is well underway and we’re currently on site at Wetheral and Brampton, with further sites at Hexham and Darlington in the pipeline. The highly sustainable Trivselhus is constructed using a Swedish timber-framed closed panel system, which offers home buyers zero regulated energy bills.

As for strategic development, we’ve now completed a change panel system, which offers home buyers zero regulated energy bills.

Planning has been approved at our mixed use development scheme in Chilton, County Durham which includes commercial units and 135 homes. We hope to start work here next year.

We’re pleased to have secured contracts for Gentoo Construction and Partner Construction, which should contribute to a positive start to 2017.

Following a period of transition our electrical division has emerged on a strong footing. We strengthened the service for existing clients, which resulted in new contract wins and the successful conversion of Longhirst Hall, a grade II listed building, into executive homes.

Our renewables division is involved in the delivery of 16 Trivselhus by Esh homes at the Hexham Gate project. It’s an opportunity to re-ignite our renewable technology services. The project involves installing underfloor heating, Myson Ulow radiators, air source heat pumps and solar PV & MVHR systems. When up and running alongside Trivselhus’ highly insulated timber framed shell, the technologies will provide home owners with dramatically reduced energy bills.

Looking to the future we continue to invest in our people. In September Tom Punshon and Ryan Cebellos joined the business as plumbing apprentices after successful trials.

Back in April 2014 the Coal Authority, on behalf of the Environment Agency and DEFRA, was commissioned to run a feasibility programme to investigate the potential of different technologies to remove metals from waters affected by abandoned non-coal mines within England. The aim was to develop a series of different techniques that would successfully remediate these waters. The trial was project managed by the Coal Authority. Remedios used two different methods for the brief, including the use of waste products from the distillation process. The BARTRAM WALKER team contributed to another successful year and a positive set of results. We’ve even invested in a fleet of four new Mercedes vans.

The plumbing market continues to be competitive, but we still enjoy strong relationships with numerous national house builders, including Avant Homes, Taylor Wimpey and Keepmoat Homes. We’re pleased to have secured contracts for Gentoo Construction and Partner Construction, which should contribute to a positive start to 2017.

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Specialist Businesses

BARTRAM WALKER

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Remedios continues to provide environmental and geotechnical services to various clients throughout the UK.

Back in April 2014 the Coal Authority, on behalf of the Environment Agency and DEFRA, was commissioned to run a feasibility programme to investigate the potential of different technologies to remove metals from waters affected by abandoned non-coal mines within England. The aim was to develop a series of different techniques that would successfully remediate these waters. The trial was project managed by the Coal Authority. Remedios used two different methods for the brief, including the use of waste products from the distillation process (DRAM) and treatment with a chemical compound to achieve metal removal.

We successfully completed the trial, with a contract value of £254,000, towards the end of 2015. Laboratory analysis of the water samples collected at Killhope showed a significant reduction in the amount of zinc dissolved in the treated water compared to that of the untreated water. Following the success at Killhope the Coal Authority and the Environment Agency indicated that they would find a suitable site for a further trial to confirm the success of the DRAM treatment.

We hope the test container will be back on another site soon to confirm the previous success, and that a full-sized treatment system will be cleaning up one of our rivers in the not too distant future.
Deerness Fencing and Landscaping Ltd has once again exceeded its own expectations during 2016.

In the 40th year of trading, Deerness Fencing & Landscaping Ltd has continued to expand and grow as a business as a result of our dedicated professional and experienced staff who have adapted to numerous changes enforced as a result of this drive to expand and meet client requirements. We have re-structured internally and externally due to this increase in turnover as well as development across the different business arms, which have meant a number of changes to positions and the need to bring in new faces to the team.

Richard Teasdale was promoted to Operations Director in June 2016, Adam Crook and Tim Crow were promoted to Quantity Surveyor and Estimator, Janine Maddison was promoted to Office Manager, Colin Hall and Andrew Clark were promoted to Senior Contracts Managers, David Hind Jnr was promoted to Contracts Manager – Landscaping, and Anthony Mulligan and Mark Fish were promoted to Contracts Supervisors on the Fencing and Landscaping respectively. New additions and faces to the Deerness team included; Kelly Wheateley – Commercial Administrator, Nick Reynolds – Senior Estimator, Neil Stewart – Contracts Manager – Fencing, Colin Joyce – Customer Care Supervisor, Jordan Hall – Apprentice QS, and Dave Lovat – Senior QS.

We have developed relationships and partnerships with a number of new clients throughout the social housing and new build sector such as: ISOS Housing, Cesta Housing, Barratt Homes, Gentoo Tolent, Sirius Remediation, Seneca Homes, and Keepmoat Homes/Regeneration. At the same time we have maintained delivery with our long term clients and partners such as: Kier, Mears, Derwentside Homes, Thirteen Group, Avant Homes, Persimmon Homes, Dare Street Homes, Taylor Wimpey North East and North Yorkshire.

Throughout 2016 Deerness has been tested operationally by clients on a number of demanding schemes but each time we have met expectations and delivered successfully. In particular the Ferryhill Regeneration scheme for Mears Livin, where we were tasked with manufacture, supply and installation of 2700m of steel frame timber fencing to 300 properties which we were able to deliver over only a seven week period. The Prudhoe Hospital scheme for Gentoo (via Sirius Remediation) became the largest amount of fencing to be installed at one on a single scheme in recent company history. The task set was to supply and install 9.2km of temporary fencing (heras on timber posts) which was completed within a four week period. Another scheme which shows the ability of our workforce and teams to work in different sectors was on the ‘L Block’ in Hartlepool for Thirteen Group Ltd. On this scheme we were tasked to remove, supply and install 400m of new brick walls and completed this scheme ahead of the six week working programme. Deerness Fencing and Landscaping Ltd has for the fourth consecutive year managed to deliver on time and to budget another years programme for Kier North Tyneside Council which has seen our operatives take down existing fences and install new fencing to a total of (approximately) 50,000 linear meters.

2016 has seen considerable growth within the Landscaping sector of the business with an emphasis on new build landscaping and contracting which has seen an increase in turnover and we are well positioned to take things further in 2017. The grounds maintenance within the business is still a strong aspect and arm of delivery with a retained client base which provides repeat business each year due to the relationships and which also creates avenues for the other aspects of the business.

Deerness Fencing and Landscaping Ltd has been very successful in establishing a responsive maintenance department which is currently dealing with over 100 repairs a month. This range of work included fencing replacement/repairs, concrete repairs, brickwork repairs and landscaping projects.

In 2016 we have extended our service areas and been able to meet requirements for certain clients in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumbria and Scotland. We will look to develop in these regions and replicate where practicable the success of the business that has been built in the North East.
Since the last issue Finlaysons have created a new office within the garage workshop and amalgamated offices with Esh Border. This office now has all the modern facilities with bright open space despite being formed inside another building.

We now look to build on this and together with new vans and van logos, see an increased in enquires with our improved presence.

Despite changes we have managed to retain all our employees and have now seen an interest in ex-employees looking to return. We have taken on 3 new apprentices this year and during most of the year we employed a total of 5 apprentices (a great achievement for a company of our size).

Our award winning apprentice Arron Brunton has now progressed to becoming a Joiner with the company, showing the other youngsters that hard work and commitment from both parties can lead to rewards at the end.

In the past year we have retained our Term Maintenance Contracts with Scottish Borders Council, Berwickshire Housing Association, Scottish Borders Housing Association & Hanover. Together with our existing customer base we see a good future going forward. In fact our current workload has seen the best sustained number of enquiries and value of acceptances for the past 9 years.

Roofing is still our largest trade and we are consistently being seen as “the go to contractor” for clients looking for good consistent workmanship coupled with our ability to complete on time.

Painters saw success in the summer when they secured internal decoration valuing £35K in one large estate house. We have worked with the client before and secured the work on past performance and value.

Joiners are seeing a increased workload also securing a reasonable number of repeat jobbing contracts together with the construction of the new office it has been a busy year all round.

We would like to thank all the staff and employers for the ongoing framework agreement with iHc Group company activities. the Carbon Coach Course is a comprehensive skills programme designed to introduce the topic of carbon reduction and best practice energy management.

CARBON COACH PROGRAMME ARRIVES AT ESH

Esh Group is pleased to be implementing a new initiative known as the Carbon Coach programme. It is dedicated to improve the conservation of energy across our Group company activities. The Carbon Coach Course is a comprehensive skills programme designed to introduce the topic of carbon reduction and best practice energy management.

Our certified ISO50001 Energy Management System has been an excellent catalyst, for Esh as a company, to identify opportunities to implement energy efficiency across its projects and end users. This programme supports these objectives and seeks to contribute to carbon reduction overall. We strive to deliver schemes which are sustainable and sympathetic to the environment in which we build. Esh developed the concept for the programme which was well received by the CITB earlier in 2016 resulting in a national funding award. As this is the only online course of its type in the UK, once again, Esh has demonstrated it is at the forefront of sustainability.

Development of this programme provides both the background knowledge and practical skills which will equip the Construction Industry to respond to the Government’s 2025 objective ‘Driving Carbon out of the Built Environment 2025’.

The course has been produced online and is hosted on our new e-learning platform. It provides an opportunity to upskill apprentices alongside their core discipline as additional learning early in their career. The provision of the course will increase the accessibility to a well-researched bespoke standardised programme. Its aim is to influence behaviours in relation to energy efficiency both on and off site which will have a long-term impact for the industry.

The pilot of the course started in mid-January across our offices in the North East, Yorkshire, North West and Scotland and will initially be available to 50 apprentices. In addition, eight Esh suppliers have been identified to participate in the pilot. Through the intensive online programme and on-site experience the apprentices learn about climate change, energy usage and management, low carbon design. This will equip them with the skill to identify energy saving opportunities in their own projects. The course has many interactive activities and videos which provide an engaging learning experience.

Each learner also receives a supporting workbook which includes interesting additional background information. Upon completion, a personalised certificate is then downloaded to add to the individuals learning records.

Working in conjunction with Constructing Excellence North East the final programme will be launched at an event in May 2016 with several invited guests from the Industry.

If you would like any more information about the programme please contact rita.callender@esh.uk.com
Esh Group has won a coveted national award for its future-proof, low energy family homes.

We were successful in winning the Sustainable Developer of the Year category at this year’s WhatHouse? Awards for its Trivselhus by Esh development, at Garth House in Cumbria.

Esh’s team of sustainability experts brought the innovative Scandinavian timber-framed designs to the UK via a joint venture in 2015.

Judges of the WhatHouse? Awards visited the Garth House development, set in the grounds of a beautiful Grade II listed Georgian home, which is just one of four Trivselhus by Esh developments across the North.

The Holdener show home piqued judges’ interest with its living spaces bathed in natural light, flexible dining spaces and raft of energy efficient features that set it apart as a home of the future.

The off-site manufacturing approach not only produces highly sustainable homes but also creates cost efficiencies, for builders and homeowners alike.

Along with the energy saving technology, recyclable materials were incorporated into the building designs which produce refined, family living spaces.

Esh Group has been recognised for its commitment to being an armed forces-friendly operation. We recently signed a commitment to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant.

It sets out pledges ranging from helping former personnel into civilian work to supporting reservists and offering help to cadet units.

And now the Ministry of Defence’s Employer Recognition Scheme has handed the company a silver award for 2016.

As part of the Employer Recognition Scheme, Esh Group representatives were at a dinner for North East firms at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, attended by Prince Michael of Kent.

Chris Watson, Group HR director at Esh Group said: “We have been an armed forces friendly company for a long time, so we were more than pleased to sign the Covenant and outline our commitments.

“We seek to support the employment of veterans young and old, and advertise all of our vacancies to the forces’ Career Transition Partnership to establish a career pathway for service leavers.”

Esh also supports members of staff who choose to be reservists, and is offering to help local cadet units with work experience placements.

“We’ve also provided the armed forces with access to 1,500 students via our Building My Skills programme in all operational areas – they’ve delivered 19 sessions,” said Chris.

The company will also be supporting Armed Forces Day, and plans to add an armed forces charity to its volunteer efforts in 2017.

Brian Manning, chief executive of Esh Group, added: “It makes enormous sense for companies like ours to support our armed forces and the people who make them such extraordinary organisations.

“We look forward to continuing our work with the MoD to offer all the help we can.”
What is Project Gateway?

Project Gateway has been set up to review and transform our end-to-end processes across the group, starting with Business Development and Estimating, running through Procurement, Commercial, Operations and Customer Care; all processes are underpinned by a number of supporting services including Logistics and Plant, HR and Finance.

The Project Gateway icon has been designed to reflect the joined up processes within the Group and to show that everyone has a part to play in the success of the business transformation.

Why are we doing this?

Project Gateway has been established to ensure our end-to-end core business processes are joined-up, sharing the same information to manage our service delivery in a way that maximises value and minimises costs and risks.

We want our people to work in a supportive environment enabled by modern technology, working collaboratively to reach the highest levels of achievement in their respective roles.

How will we get there?

Project Gateway is a journey of transformation, going through a number of phases to ensure we:

- Get input from as many people across the business as possible to Understand Our Needs;
- Design the Future State that will sustainably support our business now and in the future;
- Build the Solutions including organisational and role changes, policies, procedures and technology;
- Test the solutions and prepare and train our people for Implementing the Change; and
- Embed a culture of Continuous Improvement.

From Autumn, Process Leads have been engaging with staff and stakeholders. We already have a sense of the opportunities to improve but we need to hear from the people who live these things day to day. We’re looking to better understand our problems, challenge how we currently do things and get as many ideas as possible about what we want the future way of working and adding as much value as we can gather before we move into the phase of designing the future state.

Project Gateway represents the most significant investment Esh has ever made in ensuring the way we all work can achieve sustainable growth for the Group and a supportive working environment for its people.

Part of the investment and commitment is a team of Process Leads, subject matter experts from across the Group who will work with staff and stakeholders to deliver the change necessary.

Selecting the right partner and technology platform for Gateway is a key decision. We have undergone a thorough process involving our Process Leads to find the right technology partner and Systems Integration Partner.

We will take all the inputs we’ve acquired in understanding our needs and, with our technology partner, begin to design new standardised processes that will remove our problems and deliver our new ways of working.

When we settle on new processes that meet our needs, we’ll play them back to staff and other stakeholders before they are finally agreed and we move into the phase of building the solution. As well as process and technology design during this phase, we’ll also be designing any changes that might be required to the organisation and people’s roles and we’ll begin to get a feel for how the underpinning technology will play its part in a new user experience for us all.

Building the solution will include the revision of policies, standard operating procedures, any proposed organisational and role changes and configuration of the technology. Process Leads will work with our Systems Integration Partner to supervise what will likely be an iterative build of the technology and we hope to be able to share the solution’s evolution as we progress.

It will also be during this phase when we begin to think about and start developing training plans and materials.

Displaying organisational change, role change, process change and new technology will likely be a lengthy stage of Project Gateway. We are committed to ensuring a high standard of consultation and training across the Group to make sure we are all ready to move and embed the changes. The sequence in which the changes are rolled out will need to be tightly controlled until we are well into the design phase but this will need to be done in a way that minimises risk to the ongoing business.

Process Leads will continue to support and work closely with our people during the implementation stage to ensure the changes are well supported and ultimately embedded.

We are always wanting to expand and improve our business potential, so a large part of Project Gateway will also be improving on our way of working once the new processes are in place. We will draw on the value of the transformation by installing an ethos of continuous improvement to ensure we are constantly fine tuning and improving our performance.

We will continue to support our staff in their personal growth and in turn they will help us further develop as a Group.

Meet the Project Gateway Process Leads

Project Gateway Process Leads

- Jen Anderson (HR Process Lead)
- Paul Greenwell (Procurement Process Lead)
- Gary Brown (Finance Process Lead)
- Mike Eeles (Estimating Process Lead)
- Steve Doran (Logistics Process Lead)
- Paul Watson (Commercial Process Lead)
- Paul Ansbro (CRM/Business Development Process Lead)
- Kevin Hayes (Commercial Process Lead)
- David Bussey (Procurement Process Lead)
- Stephen Makinson (Logistics Process Lead)

For more information go to www.eshprojectgateway.com/homepage or you can contact the team on projectgateway@esh.uk.com

Making sure we communicate with all staff and stakeholders in the right way and at the right time will be critical to the success of Gateway. We want everybody to be informed of the progress the project makes over its lifetime, it’s something we should all be proud of.
The third Esh Safe Awards presentation was held in September 2016 for the January to June 2016 period.

There are two awards periods each year, January to June and July to December which recognises the top performing site managers within each period. All nominated site managers are invited to the awards ceremony along with their relevant directors.

Congratulations to the following managers receiving awards in appreciation of their high health and safety standards and commitment to the Group Health and Safety belief—Everyone Safely Home.

### New Build & Refurb League

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<tr>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Sector</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John McManus</td>
<td>GOLD</td>
<td>Esh Build NE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Murgatroyd</td>
<td>SILVER</td>
<td>Esh Build Yorks</td>
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<td>Tom Wilkinson &amp; Glen O’Brien</td>
<td>BRONZE</td>
<td>EPS New Build NE</td>
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<td>Chris Old</td>
<td>SPECIAL RECOGNITION</td>
<td>Esh Build NE</td>
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### Infrastructure League

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<tr>
<td>Gareth Dawson &amp; Stuart Rand</td>
<td>GOLD</td>
<td>L&amp;C Civils NE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Jackson</td>
<td>SILVER</td>
<td>L&amp;C Runway 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony Hird</td>
<td>BRONZE</td>
<td>L&amp;C Housing NE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Boyd &amp; Paul Jones</td>
<td>SPECIAL RECOGNITION</td>
<td>L&amp;C Runway 2</td>
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Esh Academy

Apprentices are an important part of our culture, with many of our senior management teams beginning their careers via the apprenticeship route.

Esh Academy works to responsibly recruit apprentices according to business need. Managed by Esh Training Solutions, Tricia Mullen is supported by a team of training coordinators; Lisa Hudspeth, Lisa Collins, Ash Dunn, Ellie Fraser and Beth Swainston.

Following the commitment we made to recruit 150 apprentices, we recently welcomed our 150th apprentice Megan Lambert in September 2016.

Esh Academy offers a range of apprenticeships including; business & administration, bricklaying, carpentry & joinery, general construction operations, painting & decorating, plastering, roofing, fencing & landscaping, construction engineering, quantity surveying, estimating, IT and leadership & management.

Our aim is to develop apprentices into well-trained experienced and team members. All of our apprentices are supported by mentors and Esh Academy staff who are based in our newly developed Training Academy.

What our apprentices think...

“Being an apprentice for Esh has helped develop my knowledge of the construction industry. The training courses I have been on during this time have taught me how to work safely in the industry, gaining confidence and improving my practical ability.”

Danny McPherson, Roofing & Slating Apprentice

“My apprenticeship with Esh Construction has been great, over the past three years I have learnt so much through working with everyone and I look forward to continuing to improve my skill set.”

Terry Skeet, Bricklaying Apprentice

“I chose to do an apprenticeship after A levels as I believed it would be ideal to get more experience and learn on the job and I didn’t think University was for me. I am currently doing an NVQ level 3 and continuing to broaden my academic qualifications. I am really enjoying my time at Esh Group and have already been given several opportunities.”

Emily Scott, Apprentice Business Administrator

Ellie Fraser joined Esh Academy in 2014 as an Apprentice Training Administrator working towards a Level 2 apprenticeship in Business & Administration with Esh Training Solutions and soon became a valued member of the team.

In 2016 Ellie was awarded the Bob Wall Merit Award and the Award for Apprentice of the Year from Generation 4 Change. Ellie is now a training advisor for Esh Training Solutions and is mentoring Beth Swainston a Year 2 Esh Training Solutions apprentice.

“Since working at Esh I have been able to create a unique role for myself that not only do I enjoy but it has also allowed me to gain life experience.”

Ellie Fraser, Esh Training Solutions
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) is high on the government’s agenda and it is expected that engineering companies will need 182,000 people with STEM skills each year by 2022.

Launched in 2015 our “Get into STEM” community initiative has had a very busy and successful first year. Added Value has delivered “Get into STEM” presentations to over 90 schools throughout the north east, yorkshire, cumbria and scotland and engaged with over 3,500 children.

“Get into STEM” kits are fun and educational for young children and they support KS1 learning and objectives. They are delivered free of charge and introduce young children to the world of construction through play.

Following positive feedback from schools we are in the process of developing a “Get into STEM Water Kit” that will be launched in 2017. This kit will explore a range of water based activities such as the water cycle, filtration and water channelling.

Undergraduate Shared Placements

We’ve got a track record of facilitating successful undergraduate placements, recognising the benefits and positive impacts they bring.

In 2016 Emma Hancock, a Quantity Surveying student at Northumbria University was selected to participate in our second 12 week Shared Undergraduate placement with Northumbrian Water and Esh-AWW Joint Venture. Working as part of the Asset Delivery Team, Emma spent 4 weeks within each company gaining an understanding of the Water Industry putting her academic expertise into practice.

“I feel like it’s been a really worthwhile experience working for three major companies in the North East. I’ve been able to gain a view of the Water Industry from three different perspectives, from the client right through to design and then through to the contractor. This experience has been a real eye opener into a different side of the Construction Industry, which I haven’t been able to gain at university.”

Emma Hancock, Shared Undergraduate Placement Student from Northumbria University

Following the huge success of this year’s placement we’re looking to evolve this model for 2017, collaborating with likeminded businesses to give students a more rounded experience of the world of work in other business functions such as Accounting, Law, Information Technology and Marketing and Design.

Work Experience

Work experience is a great way to help people figure out what sort of careers they might be interested in and to give people an insight into careers, a chance to learn new skills and experience what it’s like working in construction.

Added Value arranges work experience placements throughout the year in a range of job roles covering all operational areas. The Added Value Team has organised 1,347 days of work experience.

We provide work experience placements from site to office based roles advertising opportunities with our clients, local schools, job centres and on our website.

For more information contact addedvalue@esh.uk.com
We have developed stronger links with the Careers Transition Partnership helping support service leavers and the spouses of military families.

We now have our own page on the Transition website which provides information advice, guidance and signposts leading service men and women to opportunities within the group.

We have a tailored career pathway for service leavers and offer employment to reservists, we also offer work experience and site visit opportunities to local Armed Forces Cadet units and have provided the Armed Forces Careers team access to over 1,500 students as part of our award winning Building My Skills programme.

A number of our colleagues recently visited Catterick Garrison taking part in an action packed team building day to find out more about the Reserve Service. Some employees participated in a 3 day ‘executive stretch’ designed to increase self-confidence, test determination, improve fitness and develop leadership skills.

We currently employ 31 veterans and 2 reservists and are keen to increase recruitment of high quality service personal who bring a broad range of skills and experience to our business.

Things to shout about...
- Received reaccreditation for the Business in the Community’s National School Partnership Award (2015)
- Piloting Building My Skills ‘Primary’ with 4 local schools and Building My Skills ‘Higher’ aiming to expand across North East universities
- Doubled growth following the first year in Scotland expanding from 6 schools and 600 students to 11 schools working with over 1,700 students

It has been a busy year for the Building My Skills programme and it’s about to get a lot busier!

During the 2015/16 academic year which ended in May, we worked with 71 schools and over 8,300 students from across 29 local authority areas, with 101 business partners delivering a grant total of 44,380 learner hours.

In September we launched the fifth instalment of the programme. In this academic year we will deliver 474 sessions to 10,600 students from 79 schools.

We are pleased to have welcomed 52 new business partners to the group including; Accenture, Lookers Group, Tesco, the CITB, Nestlé, Intu, Pirelli and Romex.

We have also increased our engagement with our supply chain working collaboratively with; Jewson, SIG, IME, Travis Perkins, FP McCann, Mediaworks and our PR agencies.

We thank all our business partners for their support of the programme as we continue to improve careers information and guidance to schools across the UK.
GOSSIP

Fundraisers swim, run and jump their way to charity success

Super fit Esh staff have cycled, swam and ran hundreds of miles - they have even jumped out of a plane to raise money for a wide variety of good causes this year.

They have tackled events ranging from the Great North Run to the Great North Swim and helped charities ranging from Alzheimer’s Research to Macmillan Cancer Support and two hospices.

Alistair Law from Esh Construction completed a 318 mile bike ride in two days, raising over £1,500 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Alistair managed to finish the ride in 23 hours and 17 minutes coming in two days, raising over £1,500 for Macmillan Cancer Support and the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The group worked closely with its regular ‘paired’ unit – the light dragoons, a light reconnaissance regiment.

The trip was part of a two-week expedition during which the regiment lived self-sufficiently from four vehicles kitted with rations, water and spares. Mick explained:

“We were operating in average temperatures of 35 degrees each day, in full kit with body armour. It meant we had to drink between six to nine litres of water every day.”

The group worked closely with its regular ‘paired’ unit – the Light Dragoons, a light reconnaissance regiment based out of Catterick Garrison with recruits from the North East and Yorkshire.

The Light Dragoons normally operate as four Troops, a squadron headquarters and supporting arms, as part of the 4th Infantry Brigade. The Queen’s Own Yeomanry operated as the 5th Troop, C Squadron, Light Dragoons.

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The trip was part of a two-week expedition during which the regiment lived self-sufficiently from four vehicles kitted with rations, water and spares. Mick explained:

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