

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

Remix stands up to sports science centre test



The Chelsea Academy in London

Bracknell-based bricklaying contractor, Rosedale Brickwork, has chosen Remix Dry Mortar to supply factory-produced dry silo mortar to the new Sports Science Centre building at the Chelsea Academy, Lots Road, London.

Under main contractor Wates Construction, Rosedale's £1 million contract involves constructing the masonry element of the new five-storey building that will provide classroom accommodation to replace temporary accommodation located in nearby Hortensia Road.

The scheme has been designed by London-based architects Archial Group. The Remix technical department has worked closely with the design team to ensure the right mortar selection to complement the masonry units being used. Remix has supplied two 35-tonne capacity mortar silos containing hydraulic lime mortar to cater for the 300,000 65mm Mystique facing bricks and 75,000 100mm Hanson Fenlite and Stowells medium density 7N blocks being used.

Rosedale managing director Lee Mackin said 'We have specified factory-produced dry silo mortar from Remix as we have a stringent specification to adhere to as well as aesthetic considerations in



what is a striking building. Hydraulic lime mortar is being increasingly used in new build work and will accommodate slight movement in the building caused by settlement or thermal shock without cracking. This enables unsightly expansion joints to be eliminated helping to create unbroken sweeping brick and block elevations. The Remix material has sympathetically complimented the facing brickwork and its use has allowed the architects to realise the vision they anticipated at design stage.'

Remix commercial manager Mark Levenson said: 'We are delighted to be associated with this project and help Rosedale bring the masonry element of the contract in on time, to specification and within budget and to vindicate their decision to use a factory-produced mortar over other methods of providing the material on site.'



Detail of the brickwork at the academy

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
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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