

**Producer members**

Producers offer mainland UK coverage unless otherwise stated

**Breedon Aggregates 01332 694000**

[www.breedonaggregates.com](http://www.breedonaggregates.com)

**CEMEX UK Materials Ltd 01932 568833**

[www.cemex.co.uk](http://www.cemex.co.uk)

**CPI Mortars Ltd 0845 850 9090**

[www.euromix.com](http://www.euromix.com)

**Hanson 0845 845 6699**

[www.hanson.biz](http://www.hanson.biz)

**Hugh King & Co 01294 557515**

[www.hughking.co.uk](http://www.hughking.co.uk)

**John Carr (Liverpool) Ltd 0151 2070067**

(Liverpool)

**Premier Mortars 0845 603 3406**

[www.marshalls.co.uk/premiermortars](http://www.marshalls.co.uk/premiermortars)

**RTU 02890 851441**

[www.rtu.co.uk](http://www.rtu.co.uk) (Belfast)

**Remix Dry Mortar Ltd 01329 231200**

[www.remixdrymortar.co.uk](http://www.remixdrymortar.co.uk)

**Smiths Concrete Ltd 01295 278177**

[www.smithsconcrete.co.uk](http://www.smithsconcrete.co.uk) (Oxfordshire)

**Tarmac Building Products 08701 116116**

[www.tarmacbuildingproducts.co.uk](http://www.tarmacbuildingproducts.co.uk)

**Learning about mortars**

The MIA has developed a series of learning texts to aid training in matters associated with the specification and use of mortars.

Subjects covered include an introduction to mortars, cementitious materials, aggregates admixtures and additives; brick and block manufacture; mortar specification, production and delivery; testing and quality assurance.

To download texts, go to [www.mortar.org.uk/resources/learning\\_texts.php](http://www.mortar.org.uk/resources/learning_texts.php)

# Housing market on the up



**New dawn for UK housing?**

**Experience of MIA producer members and hard statistics from the NHBC show that new house building is well underway again but commercial property development remains stagnant.**

According to the NHBC, the number of new homes registered in the UK increased by 14% for the rolling quarter December to February compared to the same period last year.

In total 29,557 new homes were registered from December 2013 to February 2014, compared to 26,004 for the corresponding period 12 months ago.

However, the latest figures reveal that the February total of 9,484 registrations was slightly down on last February (10,538). This could be a knock on effect of the bad weather experienced at the start of the year.

NHBC's commercial director Richard Tamayo said: 'Although the results for February in isolation are not particularly strong, the rolling quarter shows that the

number of new homes being registered continues to increase.

'Our latest statistics show there is still a way to go before the country starts seeing figures on a par with pre-recession registration statistics, but the new measures revealed in the Budget show that the government remains committed to boosting the house-building sector.'

MIA marketing committee chairman, David Stewart, said: 'We welcome the upturn in the housing market which is good news for the country at last although the present level of new housing is still well behind the levels government stated we needed from a couple of years back. Then it was said we needed some 250,000 new houses built each year. We still can't be expecting to achieve 150,000 in 2014.

'We also have some concerns about the shortage in the UK of bricks and blocks and hope that manufacturers can bring back on line some of the production units mothballed as a result of the economic turnaround since 2008.'

## Remix supplies mortar to Newport Magistrates Court contract

Southampton-based contractors, GP Masonry, chose Remix Dry Mortar to provide factory-produced dry silo mortar to the recently completed Newport Magistrates Court in South Wales, located close to the city's riverfront area.

The £13m scheme for client Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) required main contractor Wates Construction to deliver a 29,999 square feet three-storey building comprising three formal magistrates courts, one informal court, secure custody facilities and managed support accommodation. The masonry element of the project realised a contract value for GP Masonry of £500k and had to be completed within a sixteen-week programme.

The building's architectural and interior design was developed by London-based architects Fielden and Mawson. The Remix technical department worked closely with the design team made up of the client, Wates, Fielden and Mawson and GP Masonry, to ensure the right mortar selection to complement the masonry units being used. The team chose a designation iii natural light mortar, supplied in accordance with BS EN 998-2 via two 35-tonne capacity mortar silos to cater for the 2,000 square metres of Petersen Tegl Waterstruck bricks (product reference D49) and 1,200 square metres of Gryphonn medium dense 7n standard and paint grade blocks that were specified for the masonry works.



Newport Magistrates Court, South Wales

HMCTS Wales delivery director Luigi Strinati said: 'The court building has first class facilities including secure docks, external video links and has been wired to enable digital working for all criminal justice agencies including defence solicitors. The building provides superior accommodation and better facilities for victims and witnesses.'

GP Masonry managing director, Peter Crowson, added: 'The client stressed that a consistent, quality finish to the exposed masonry works was of paramount importance on this contract so factory-produced mortar for our material requirements was the only option. We needed mortar with a guaranteed cement content, controlled air and workability aid contents, contained within guaranteed mix proportions, which would provide us

with a durable mortar less susceptible to frost attack and exhibiting superior resistance to rain penetration which was vital considering the exposed location of the building. We were concerned that providing the mortar by other more traditional means would probably not allow us to achieve the finish that the client had stipulated.'

Remix commercial manager, Mark Leveson, commented: 'We are delighted that GP Masonry specified factory-produced mortar on the new Newport Magistrates Court and that Remix was chosen to supply the material. This is further recognition of the benefits of using factory-produced mortar which helped GP Masonry complete its order on time, within budget and to the contract specification.'

## Changes to Eurocode 6 - a summary

Changes have been made to the 2013 version of the UK national annex to Eurocode 6. Professor John Roberts ([www.johnroberts.org.uk](http://www.johnroberts.org.uk)) gives Mortar News a summary.

A new version of BS EN 1996-1-1 (Eurocode 6) was produced in 2012 but there were no significant changes that affect UK design. In producing the UK national annex to BS EN 1996-1-1, however, the opportunity was taken to respond to the limited feedback on its use to date and address some issues which resulted in poorer design outcomes than had previously been achieved from design to BS 5628.

Key changes made include:

- Reinforced masonry is now restricted to M 6 or M 12 mortar (does not include bed joint reinforcement used to improve lateral load resistance, for example)
- Lower partial factors for the flexural strength of wall panels are permitted when the removal of the panel would not affect the overall stability of the building
- The partial factor for wall ties was reduced from 3.5 to 3.0
- Footnote A, paragraph b to table NA.1 was updated to

give more guidance on site-mixed mortar

- A new column was added to table NA.2 to show the environmental condition in which the mortar is suitable for use (P, M or S)
- The following sentence was added to the end of footnote A to table NA.2: *For Class 2 of execution control, site compressive strength testing is not required for these traditional mixes and checking of prescribed mortars should only be done by testing the proportions of the constituents.*
- Table NA.3 dealing with cements was updated
- Table NA.4 dealing with K values used in the calculation of the characteristic compressive strength of masonry was updated to give better design results for concrete blocks
- In clause NA.2.4, the limit on the mortar strength was modified to indicate that it should not exceed the normalised strength of the masonry unit and the design of collar jointed walls was clarified
- In table NA.5, the column four heading dealing with thin layer mortar was adjusted
- Table NA.8 was updated for steel ties

- Clause NA.4 was updated with additional NCCI design guidance.

These changes have been incorporated in the three, free design guides available from [www.eurocode6.org](http://www.eurocode6.org)



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