

**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)

**Cornish Lime Company 01208 79779**

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

**CPI Mortars Ltd 0845 850 9090**

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

**Hugh King & Co 01294 557515**

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

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

(Liverpool)

**Marshalls Premier Mortars 0345 3013030**

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

**Mortar and Screed Company Ltd**

**01952 224202**

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

**Remix Dry Mortar 01329 231200**

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

**RTU 02890 851441**

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

**Tarmac 03701 116 116**

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

**Watts Mix 01262 675383**

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

# Mortar industry coping with the pandemic

**Along with every other part of the construction industry, suppliers of factory-produced mortar have been working hard to meet the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic.**



## Think you know about mortar?

Think you know your way around mortar? Then go to [www.mortar.org.uk](http://www.mortar.org.uk) and take the Mortar Quiz posted on the home page.

Devised by Peter Roberts, lecturer at Moulton College in Northamptonshire, the series of questions covers various aspects of mortar and runs over 30 weeks.

Originally designed for Mr Roberts' bricklaying students, other colleges have now adopted the quiz. When completed, answers are returned to the college lecturer and the results become part of the term assessment.

Impact on the industry's output has been great with an estimated drop of over 60% experienced in the second quarter of this year compared to the first.

The construction industry recovered to about three-quarters of lockdown losses in July but it is difficult now to project future growth with economic projections suggesting a tail off of work towards the end of the year.

The mortar industry benefitted from a pick up in housebuilding, a sector helped by the cut in stamp duty which improved viewing numbers and gave housebuilders some confidence. However, continued understandable implementation of on-site social distancing will constrain future house building projects. A recent study by

Savills for Shelter predicted the building of 80,000 new homes which were planned to be built this year will be lost through the stalled construction industry.

Chairman of the executive committee of MPA Mortars, Stuart Russell said:

'As an industry we were hit particularly hard by the events at the end of March as most housebuilders shut up shop and stopped laying bricks. Since then all members have worked hard in order to reopen safely and satisfy demand as sites came back to life. New ways of working and social distancing measures have been introduced to safeguard colleagues, members of the public and customers alike and we are pleased to be back meeting the needs of the construction sector.'

## CPI meets mortar demand in Manchester waterfront project



Middlewood Locks development.

**Quality factory-produced mortar from CPI Euromix was specified for an apartment block within one of the biggest construction contracts outside of London, Middlewood Locks, Manchester.**

Close to Salford Central railway station, Middlewood Locks is a new waterside neighbourhood for both living and working. Taking advantage of its waterfront setting,

the development unites community spirit with the buzz of a bustling city, offering a welcomed destination for work and play in the heart of Greater Manchester.

CPI EuroMix supplied 1,060 tonnes of mortar to phase 1 of the development and 639 tonnes to phase 2. The factory-produced mortar enabled contractor, Cara Brickwork, a division of Cara Group, to erect the

apartment blocks within the New Maker Yards neighbourhood efficiently and sustainably.

To achieve the natural and light charcoal shaded mortar required across phase 2, the company used the latest spectrometer technology and software. CPI's colour design studio used on-site scanning to match the colour mortar to the required design, ensuring the apartment blocks complemented the surrounding environment.

CPI supplied silo mixing stations which can hold up to 35 tonnes of dry mortar. The system minimises waste as well as maintaining the mix and colour consistency which helps reduce the environmental impact of projects during construction.

Neil Allen from Cara Brickwork said: 'We were very impressed with the service and quality of CPI's mortar on this project and several other schemes. Dan and the guys at the Irlam depot have always accommodated our needs, especially coming out of the Covid lockdown period when Cara returned to site and needed deliveries of mortar. The Middlewood scheme is an iconic development in the North of England with phase 1 looking stunning. With phase 2 well underway along with phases 3 and 4 to still be developed, it looks like we will be here for a long time.'

## Faster route to success for apprentice bricklayers



NHBC has become an education and skills funding agency-approved provider of apprenticeships to help develop the next generation of house building talent including bricklayers.

Construction supervisor is the first apprenticeship on offer but NHBC says that will be quickly followed by one for bricklayers. The bricklaying programme will be front-loaded with an intensive, six-week study

period, equivalent to a year's day release at a college. This is to be followed by five, two-week teaching blocks as well as part-time working on site.

Learning will be hands on and practical, typically two hours in the classroom and six hours on the tools each day. Apprenticeship will be covered in 18 months, compared to the 24-30 months currently needed to achieve an NVQ level 2 qualification.

Darryl Stewart, NHBC's head of training and analysis, said: "This is an exciting new chapter for NHBC and we look forward to training builders of the future who will commit to high standards throughout their careers. Our apprenticeships provide a first rung on the ladder, along with a solid understanding of the issues and opportunities facing the industry."



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MPA Mortar is part of the Mineral Products Association, the trade association for the aggregates, asphalt, cement, concrete, dimension stone, lime, mortar and silica sand industries.