

December 2006

benchmark

A newsheet for Scotland & Ireland Staff



This quarter it's the turn of Susan Briggs, our Dublin-based Director, to highlight some of the more notable happenings within the Division over the past months. Inside we get the 'low-down' on what's going on in the various departments (or Mini Operating Units - MOU's) in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Belfast and Dublin.

Merry Christmas

Welcome to the December 2006 issue of the Scott Wilson Scotland and Ireland Division staff bulletin which, as you may have noted, has now changed its name to Benchmark in response to the desire for each Division to have its own uniquely-named publication. If you have joined us recently, welcome to Scott Wilson's Scotland and Ireland Division.

Benchmark is intended to provide regular updates and background information on matters of relevance to the Division. For various reasons this is the first issue since last December. However, Stephen Leckie in Glasgow and the Beechill House Business Development team have now volunteered to take over responsibility for producing Benchmark and we plan to issue it quarterly.

The biggest change for us all in 2006 has been the acquisition of Ferguson McIlveen, which has brought us whole offices of new colleagues in Belfast, Middlesbrough, Dublin, Derry and Glasgow. In terms of employees, the Division is starting to really look like a Scotland and Ireland Division (with a considerable and highly valued North of England presence bringing the requisite down-to-earthness to balance the Celtic tendencies) – but another noticeable change is that all the offices are becoming increasingly multicultural. We now have over 450 staff in total, representing at least 20 nationalities.

The challenge now for all of us is to take the best from our diverse backgrounds and work to make a

whole that is even better than the sum of the parts. This will require effort, trust, open minds and willingness to adapt, but I am confident we will succeed. Our inclusion on the Scottish Water Framework is a great start that would not have been possible without the skills and resources of the Middlesbrough and Belfast Beechill House offices.

Looking back over the last year, significant changes were apparent even before the acquisition of Ferguson McIlveen. In Scotland we have seen significant growth in the range and depth of environmental skills available in-house and the formation of a new building structures team in Glasgow. The long awaited A8000 and Dalkeith Northern Bypass projects are on site at last. In the north of England, both the M6 and A66 sites are up and running and the Newcastle office is consolidating its position in the local consultancy market.

In Ireland, the Dublin Sandyford office, which had only 3 Scott Wilson employees when we took it over in September 2005, has grown to 11 and the site team for the M8/N8 Cullahill to Cashel will soon be a similar size. The Stockman's Lane Office in Belfast, which was officially opened on 22 June already has a team of 9 working on several large highways schemes and we also have 6 people on the Employer's Agent's team on the M1 Westlink and M2 Widening PPP scheme in Belfast. These teams will work with the longer-established teams in the former



Ferguson McIlveen offices in Belfast, Dublin and Derry to implement the strategy for Ireland that is currently being developed. In due course, we will rationalise our accommodation in Belfast and Dublin.

On the subject of rationalising accommodation, and looking forward to 2007, the biggest event in the offing is the relocation of the various Glasgow offices, including part of Railways, to Citypoint on the north side of the City Centre. The move will take place early in the year and will be a major wrench for senior staff in Park Circus, some of whom have worked there for 30 years. However, there is general acceptance that the benefits of a single, modern office with good telecommunications and public transport access will outweigh those of the Park, ornate cornices and a temperamental boiler.

With plenty for us all to look forward to in 2007, may I take this opportunity to wish you Nollaig Shona or Merry Christmas.

Everything you always wanted to know about Ferguson McIlveen

(But were afraid to ask)

According to Irish folklore, Robert Ferguson, an Engineer, and Sam McIlveen, an Architect, first met on a muddy building site in Lisburn, Co Down which they had both been sent to survey. Both men soon realised that their collective aims would be best served if they pooled their resources, and so Ferguson McIlveen was founded. That was 84 years ago, since when the firm has expanded into nine offices throughout the UK and Ireland.

The second-most eventful moment in the firm's history was 1st November 2006 when Ferguson McIlveen became part of the Scott Wilson Group. The firm's offices in Belfast, Londonderry, Dublin, Glasgow and Middlesbrough are now part of the Scotland and Ireland Division, increasing staff resources by 215. So what does this move bring to Scott Wilson and how will it affect the future of the Division? Here's everything you always wanted to know about Ferguson McIlveen and no doubt some things you didn't.

Ferguson McIlveen was affectionately known to clients as Fergie Macs. This was probably because only a local can pronounce McIlveen. If you want to know how to say it properly, for a limited time only, you can ring the Belfast office and ask Maria the receptionist.

For the time being there will be two offices in Belfast – the SW office at Stockman's Way and the former Fergie Macs office. To avoid confusion, the FM office is commonly referred to as Beechill House. For the record Beechill House was designed by the firm and opened in 1972. At the time its open plan approach was considered to be cutting edge and its design has allowed us to squeeze 150 people in.

FM and SW first started working together in 1998, as a result of a major



investment in road construction in Northern Ireland. The SW/FM team are appointed to a framework for the Department of Regional Development Roads Service, who are responsible for the roads network in Northern Ireland.

FM has had an office in Londonderry since 1989. From here we work in the west of Northern Ireland and into County Donegal. Some people call the city Londonderry and some call it Derry, but don't worry few people will take offence if you use either name. It is also affectionately known as Stroke City, as in Londonderry/Derry.

Just like Scott Wilson, Ferguson McIlveen is a multi-disciplinary firm with the following disciplines available in-house:

- Architecture
- Civil Engineering
- Structural Engineering
- Landscape Architecture
- Town Planning
- Planning Supervision
- Quantity Surveying
- Project Management
- Building Services

The firm has worked in a wide variety of market sectors from healthcare to water treatment, from urban design to reservoirs. This spread of disciplines dovetails well with the Division's existing capabilities, expanding some disciplines and adding new skills. This is in accordance with the Group's strategic aim of expanding its portfolio into the four key sectors of transport, property, environment and natural resources.

Whilst FM has many strengths, it operates best when an integrated team works together on a project, with each discipline feeding into the design process from the outset. The firm's highest profile schemes, such as the award winning Belfast Cancer Centre, have brought together skills from all corners of the firm.

The firm is well known in Northern Ireland and parts of the Republic of Ireland. The aim is now to expand Scott Wilson's influence throughout Ireland, north and south. There are now also two SW office's in Dublin. The long term aim will be to amalgamate these but there are no immediate plans.

Ferguson McIlveen's Engineers in Middlesbrough have worked in water and sewerage treatment and general infrastructure. They played a key role in the recent Scottish Water framework success. The office also includes Architects, Landscape Architects, Building Services and Town Planners.

Ferguson McIlveen has had an office in Glasgow since 1996, from where we have worked on some high profile Landscape Architecture projects, such as Sauchiehall Street. The Landscape team in Glasgow will be moving to the Citypoint office to join their new Scott Wilson colleagues.

Another thing that FM is well known for is its friendliness. If you get the chance to visit any of the former FM offices you can be assured of a warm welcome.



Some things you wanted to know about the Citypoint move (and weren't afraid to ask)

Since the formal announcement in October that the Division's Glasgow Office was to move to Citypoint, arrangements have been moving on apace; all involved in the planning and implementation have been surprised at just how many aspects need to be considered to ensure that the new offices are fitted out to provide an appropriate environment to conduct our business as we move forward.

An external "Move Manager" was appointed in early November who has particular expertise in such relocations much to the relief of Stephen Leckie who toes were already bruised by the several balls he had dropped! Orders and contracts for the various fit-out elements have been on an are about to be placed.

You may have noticed that measurement of the existing filing was undertaken and in due course



section heads will be consulted regarding what's to come, what's to be archived and what's to be discarded. Regarding consultation, thanks is due to section heads and staff who have

channelled comments and requests on various aspects to the Directors in order to inform the ongoing decision-making process.

New Starts & Promotions

Welcome to all those that have started with us over recent months. We have had a considerable number of staff join us at all levels within the Division which is in line with our current growth plan.

We haven't had a news sheet since July's promotions so here's a reminder:

To Level 5.0 - Director

Susan Briggs

To Level 4.3 – Technical Director

David Wright
Nigel Hackett

To Level 4.2 – Associate

Simon Shillington
Tony Buckley

To Level 4.1 – Principal Engineer

Willie Withers
David Riach
Gordon Blair
George Laidlaw

To Level 3.2 – Senior Engineer

Andrew Gillespie
Philip McKenna
Joanna Gray
Nicholas Rey
Zoran Levi
Audrey Weir

To Level 3.2 – Senior Planner

Shelagh Brian
Steven Harding

To Level 2.1 – Technician

Mark Graham
Iain MacPherson
David Williams

Safety, Quality and Environment (SQE)

There have been a series of changes over the past few months in the way Scotland & Ireland division run the SQE systems. In mid June Stuart McPhaden was appointed as the divisional SQE manager with the purpose of combining our ISO 9001, ISO14001 and OHSAS18001 certified systems.

Since joining in June I would say there has been a steep learning curve both personally and professionally. Learning new systems is always 'fun' however I choice to complicate this further as my move to Scott Wilson coincided with the birth of my daughter (Cara) which was also our first child. I can assure you that the SQE manual is a very effective tool for getting both father and daughter to sleep!

Having now settled in, I have had most duties handed over to me and thank everyone for the help and guidance that they have given me (and hopefully that they will continue to do so!!). During the hand over stage and with me learning the system the audit programme did fall slightly behind. I have rescheduled this over the year and I am in the process of bringing this back on track. In relation to the audits these have changed to an integrated process-based approach that will look at all the S, Q and E aspects simultaneously rather than having three separated views of the overlapping systems. This will

streamline the process for both auditor and auditee ultimately increasing in fee earning time (!) and will provide a focal point for all SQE issues.

The 'internal audits' should also be treated as one on one training workshops, whilst compliance is the goal, it provides a time to talk through issues and concerns with the aim of ensuring that catching minor issues will minimise the risk of them escalating during project lifecycle. My aim is for project managers/directors to request audits on projects if they have concerns, and this offer has already being taken up by some.

Similarly, during job setup please give me a call and I can help at the early stages and provided guidance and best practice. On this subject I am currently reviewing the S&I division SWIMs level 3 content and collating both best practice information examples of good project workbooks. I will keep you all informed of the progress.

Stuart McPhaden

Paul Sartori Foundation Support

In August of this year, Daniel Neill, ecologist in MOU6, and a group of equally fanatical cycling enthusiasts decided to take on an epic journey by cycling from coast to coast across the French Pyrenees in eight days. The route started in Canet Plage on the Mediterranean coast and finished in Hindaye on the Atlantic coast, covering approximately 900km and taking in most of the major Cols in the Pyrenees, including such giants as Superbagneres, Col du Palheires, Col du Tourmalet, Col d'Aubisque, Col de Bagargui, Col du Peyresourde and many, many more.

Although the main reason for doing the trip was for pleasure and to ride the Cols where all the worlds' greatest cyclists have suffered, Dan also decided to use the trip as a way of raising some money for a hospice, which looked after his grandmother when she was terminally ill with cancer. The hospice is part of the Paul Sartori Foundation and Dan was proud to have raised almost a thousand pound for the foundation, to help continue to provide the care and support that so many other families need.



Dan in poetic motion!

Around the 'Old' Division

MOU 1

Structures - Glasgow

The Basement Boys (not a sexist remark, just the way it is) have remained busy over the past months and look forward to a healthy forward workload in projects of their own and in support of MOU's 2 and 4.

Our long involvement with the Trent Valley section of the West Coast Route Modernisation project has continued to tail off over the past months; however, the potential gap is more than being filled with similar bridge design work coming on stream through Scott Wilson Railways on the Edinburgh Airport Rail Link (EARL), Airdrie to Bathgate Line and Waverley Line projects. Musing on the workload transition Alan Baker was heard to say that the light he thought he'd seen at the end of the tunnel had in fact turned out to be a train coming in the opposite direction!



Having seen completion Phase 1 of the White Cart Viaduct refurbishment programme earlier in the year, much of MOU1's current effort is being applied to the design of the works for the complex strengthening and of the box girders, a very challenging task whose implementation and end result will, ironically, not be evident to the world at large!

We have also continued our involvement with MOU4's Sustainable Energy Team in undertaking design and design checks of turbine foundations for various wind farm

projects in Scotland, England and China. Danny Boothman and Andy Gillespie have been crunching the numbers assisted by others and obtaining advice from Geotechnics as required. Ewen Morrison, MOU4's Project Manager, has kindly been providing appropriate encouragement to the grafters to ensure that they get the sums right first time – see photo below.



"Not one of ours"

April saw the formation of a Building Structures Section within MOU1 a long-held Business Plan aspiration of the Division. Headed by Nigel Williams, known previously to several of the Bridges staff in a client role with East Kilbride Development Corporation, the section now has four staff members and has already been remarkably successful in obtaining commissions in the schools and residential sectors of the market. Willie Withers has apparently lost over a stone since he started having to climb the stairs after transferring from Kenny's team in Room 2 – part of his Mybenefits package. The other two employees are Praveen Padarthy and Alan Ferns, who, like Nigel, are newcomers to Scott Wilson.

Stephen Leckie

MOU 2

Roads - Belfast

The Firm's presence in Northern Ireland continues to grow and the Belfast Office is now a well established watering hole for the weary travellers who ply the trade routes across the Irish Sea. The establishment of the office was marked on the 22nd June 2006 was marked by an official opening celebrated in classic Celtic style (that is with a K not a C ...). The occasion was marked with a SW cake, an item whose specification in respect to icing thickness, consistency, etc. surprisingly did not seem to be covered by the firm's corporate guidelines. Nonetheless, I am sure that our senior SW guests, Geoff French and Ron Wall, took due cognisance. David Orr undertook the official "cutting" in his capacity as the forthcoming President of the Institution of Civil Engineers – and also representative of our largest Client, Roads Service. We have acted on the comments by Ron Wall on the new corporate office image; while the ambiance seemed to exceed expectations there was a lack of red walls. Steps were subsequently taken and a few strategic hand-painted red panels were introduced.





The staff complement continued to grow with some key signings including Karl Dorman who joined us from Roads Service. Other recent recruits include John "The Terrier" McBride who joined us from Jacobs and Pat Thornton from Roads Service. The staff are now integrating well with the various projects within the MOU as a whole demonstrating the successful application of flexibility.

The continuing involvement of the Division on the Roads Service DBFO Package 1 project has resulted in an expanding site team under the management of John Toal. Our role here is acting as the Department's Site Representative on this £130m DBFO Project. John has brought together a team comprised of Roads Service, Scott Wilson and Ferguson McIlveen staff. The SW staff include Paula Rooney who holds the project management process together, Alex

Paterson who forsook the delights of Africa to return to his native homeland, Douglas Hill who is a local as is Seamus Monan and Bridgeen Loughran. They are involved in a very exciting project that involves a wide range of major civil engineering activities within a very congested site in the heart of Belfast. Our Belfast and Glasgow offices are extensively involved in the review of the 900 plus design submissions.

Other major projects in the Province include the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass, the next DBFO project through the A1 Newry Bypass, the A2 Shore Road, the A6 schemes and the remainder of the A8 schemes. While all of these may seem to be demanding the next package of schemes loom on the horizon as Roads Service has announced a further £415m for additional schemes which SW should be well placed to undertake.

Kenny O'Hara



MOU 2

Roads - Glasgow

In common with our colleagues across the Irish Sea, the Glasgow roads team continues to be extremely busy. Recent months have seen staff and project numbers growing. Unfortunately (or fortunately?), the latter seems to be growing quicker than the former, resulting in increasing demands on already stretched resources.

The past few months have seen a number of notable wins and, taken together with ongoing and extended projects, the order book looks very healthy. Probably our most high profile success is the winning of the £28m A68 Dalkeith Northern Bypass D & B, formally awarded to Morgan Est in August, with Scott Wilson as named Designer. Dominic Murphy and his team are currently busy trying to ensure that the Contractor has something to build when he arrives on site on 9 October. This date will also see our 7 strong site team starting to mobilise. Other recent major wins have included the Inverness Trunk Link Road study for Highland Council and, in conjunction with SW Railways, the Edinburgh Airport Rail Link and the re-opening of the Airdrie to Bathgate railway.

Ongoing framework commissions also continue to bring in new projects. The most recent of these is the A82 Pulpit Rock scheme through the Transport Scotland Multiple Framework Agreement (MFA). This involves getting rid of the notorious traffic lights at Loch Lomond (but not until at least 2010). Good news, although it is understood the papers are disappointed that they will have to remove this “long standing scandal” from their quiet newsday standby box. Similarly the John Smith Business Park Link Road scheme awarded through the Fife Term Commission continues to grow in scope not to mention length.

This framework workload will continue to grow with our recent re-appointment to the Standard Advisers commission for Transport Scotland.

Long running schemes such as A9 Helmsdale and Fochabers Bypass also continue to keep MOU2 busy and this is likely to be the case for a year or two yet. Nevertheless the M9 Spur is proof that jobs do eventually get built; this scheme is now nearly 6 months into construction, keeping Bill Shearer and his team busy.

Thankfully this increasing workload is matched by continuing recruitment across the MOU. We have recently welcomed on board a number of new graduates (Iain Adams, Ayman Elnaseih and Richard Wight) and new trainee technicians (Darren Kerr, Ross Murphy and Scott McLean). It is good to see such an injection of youth, resulting in a significant drop in the average age of the MOU. We have also been glad to welcome Alan Blair and Graeme Reid back to Park Circus from extended periods elsewhere.



Ryan Hutchison

MOU 4

Edinburgh

Building Structures

Back to school – whilst our team in Edinburgh have been busy designing new high schools at Duns and Eyemouth, the building structures team in Glasgow have been designing the new high school at Earlston all as part of the £60m Borders Schools PPP project. The good news is that the project is nearing Financial Close and work is expected to commence on two of the three sites shortly.



To support our continued growth in the building structures market, we recently welcomed Darren McClure, an Edinburgh University Graduate, to our team.

Project Management

Behind bars – our project management ‘inmates’ have recently commenced 3 new projects at HMP Wakefield under the 10 year Strategic Alliance Framework with Her Majesty’s Prison Service. This prison was originally opened as a House of Correction in 1595 following an endowment of only £20 and is now ‘home’ to some of the UK’s most notorious criminals. For Pub Quiz enthusiasts, the Mulberry Bush, of children’s nursery rhyme fame, is located within the prison grounds – the rhyme is thought to have begun life as a song or chant by inmates as they exercised around the mulberry bush!

(Editor's challenge – a prize for anyone who can provide a photo of a mulberry tree before the next issue – originals only, no scanning from Ladybird books!)

We also welcome James Tunncliffe, a Heriot-Watt Graduate, to our PM team.

Andrew Aikman

Water

The Water Team in Edinburgh, led by Allan Hill and Nick Williamson, is seeing light at the end of the tunnel (pun intended) with the completion this month of the design for a £9M scheme to improve the management of stormwater at RAF Kinloss, on the Moray coast. Amec commenced construction on site in March, and hope to complete by February next year.

Scott Wilson had commenced the development of this project three years ago in association with the Ministry of Defence. The scheme was required in order to protect the sensitive wetlands and habitat of the Findhorn Bay, and included facilities to catch all stormwater runoff, divert it through large pipelines to a reed bed treatment plant, and from there by deepwater outfall pipes into the Moray Firth.

The Edinburgh team has been supported during the detailed design phase by the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering team in Scott Wilson's Mansfield office, as well as Process Chemistry experts from Basingstoke.

I don't think I've worked on a project that had so many unusual constraints. These included coping with buried World War II aircraft,

designing excavation techniques to keep the Moray dolphins happy, and discouraging geese from using the treatment ponds as a great place to hang out!

David Wright



MOU 6

Environment - Edinburgh

As many of you will know, the planning and environment team at MOU6 has been continuing to expand this past year with several new members of staff.

Mark Elliott has joined us as Principal Landscape Architect to lead to MOU6 landscape team. Mark has a strong background in public sector regeneration: designing, preparing contracts for, and managing the implementation of urban regeneration contracts. He also has extensive experience of urban design, streetscape renewal, housing market renewal, development control, regeneration and townscape strategies, hard and soft landscaping, and sustainable development. In addition, he is a registered Planning Supervisor. Mark has many interests in various sporting activities such as sailing, rugby, ski/snowboarding and cycling.

Martin Hendry joins the leisure and tourism team as an economist. He has experience in socio-economic impact assessments, housing market assessments and strategic policy reviews. Martin is a keen tennis player and is a former junior internationalist. This season his club in Glasgow Newlands won the West of Scotland Spring Singles, West of Scotland Premier League Doubles, Clydesdale Cup and were runners up in the Scottish Cup having won it the year previous.

Stuart Rennie is the landscape team's new graduate landscape architect. Stuart worked in Northern Ireland for a year before returning to Scotland and taking up his present post with SWS. He is skilled in CAD and other data/graphic manipulation, preparing photomontages and other images to accompany project documentation and for use in presentations. Stuart builds

on the sporting reputation of MOU6 and is a very keen golfer playing of a respectable 2 handicap at Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

Zoë McClelland has recently joined the planning team as a graduate planner. She has previous experience working principally on oil and gas related environment and infrastructure projects. While originally from Northern Ireland, Zoë has enjoyed Scotland too much to consider leaving. She is a keen environmentalist and volunteers with an Edinburgh based environmental charity, Earth Calling, which teaches primary school children about wildlife.

Jenny Sneddon has joined the expanding ecology team as a Graduate Ecologist from the RSPB where she managed and undertook a range of ecological surveys. She also brings to Scott Wilson considerable experience in data management and GIS. As a keen naturalist Jenny has gained a wide knowledge of British wildlife and is looking forward to applying and developing her skills as part of the ecology team. Jenny enjoys many outdoor pursuits and is a keen rower.

In addition to new staff, the range of our work continues to develop. The planning team has continued to expand its Strategic Environmental Impact expertise and is currently preparing an SEA for the Pentlands Regional Park. Whilst we have always undertaken urban renewal work we are now able to provide expertise in urban regeneration and the work we are currently undertaking for Fife Council at Abbeyview is being well received. Environmental Assessment continues to be a strong theme and we provide this service for a range of regulatory and non-regulatory requirements including Environmental Statements, assessments for the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process, environmental

management plans and scoping studies.

The leisure and tourism team has continued to undertake urban park development projects, with Blairtummock Park in Glasgow being the most recently completed study. The sporting tradition of the section has been cemented with the successful completion of the masterplanning of the Berwick Rangers FC ground to incorporate new council offices. In addition, the team now includes economic and socio-economic expertise.

Our landscape work continues to grow and we have recently completed a number of landscape and visual impact assessments for infrastructure projects including the A96 at Threapland and Delnies, the A2 Shore Road in Belfast and the A848 Gualan Dubh - Salen Road Realignment on Mull. For these projects we can now provide photomontages, which help clients more clearly understand the effects of new infrastructure.

The ecology team is now three years into the five-year monitoring project for agri-environment schemes in Scotland, being undertaken for the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department. In addition, the Scottish Biodiversity List was recently completed for the Scottish Executive, a list of flora, fauna and habitats considered by the Scottish Ministers to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation. Considerable wind farm work has been undertaken throughout Scotland, including assisting clients with the submission of ornithology and terrestrial ecology Environmental Statement chapters. Work has also involved post-construction monitoring including Crystal Rig in East Lothian, which is currently the largest land based windfarm in the UK, and winner of the Best Renewable Project prize in the prestigious Green

Energy Awards 2004. The team has just been awarded a contract from Scottish Natural Heritage as part of its contribution to 2007 Highland Year of Culture. The brief is to prepare treasure trails on 12 National Nature Reserves. Children will follow clues on the trail, that link people with the natural environment, to find a bag of "goodies".



Baxter Park Pavilion - a Heritage Lottery Fund project monitored by MOU6



Stirling Old Town Cemetery - a Heritage Lottery Fund project monitored by MOU6



A bat found on an ecology team training day with the photograph taken by our licensed bat worker

MOU 7

Newcastle

We were recently tempted by an architect with the proposition "Would you like to bid for a loss-making job?" Always willing to try something new, we took up the offer and were introduced to the National Trust. It turned out that they wanted somebody to assess the condition of the elegant wrought iron footbridge over the gorge at Cragside: this is the home of Lord Armstrong, the engineer whose factories for making guns and warships had such a profound effect on the history of Tyneside. Cragside contains many interesting features



such as hydraulic machinery and the first domestic electric lighting system. The bridge which Lord Armstrong built has been closed for some time due to concern over its strength and stability. A couple of earlier reports on its condition took a pessimistic view, implying that significant strengthening would be necessary before it could be opened again for public use. Tony Buckley went to view the bridge and, used to encountering bridges which in many cases were barely standing under their own weight, could find

little wrong with it. He subsequently made a presentation to the National Trust proposing that their money would be better spent doing a detailed analysis to prove that the bridge didn't need strengthening than to launch into work which was quite possibly unnecessary and which could affect the appearance of the structure. His undoubted expertise convinced them; consequently he won the commission at a price which might yet prove the architect wrong.

While Tony was peering at the Cragside bridge from a safe distance, Kate Fytopoulou decided to have a go at the Tyne Bridge. The difference was that she thought that "roped access" would be a good idea. Tyne Bridge is somewhat bigger and spans over significantly larger quantities of fresh air. Just looking over the parapet is a challenge: Kate actually climbed over and descended through the aforementioned fresh air to raise money for a cancer charity. She did well - always willing to try something new

George Tedbury

MOU 9

Geotechnics- Glasgow

A number of the members of the Geotechnics team have recently moved into the very nicely refurbished first floor office accommodation in No 20, which has been welcomed by all lucky enough to be there. The team continues to be extremely busy with a number of new projects keeping us all on our toes. We continue to support other mou's in the Glasgow, Edinburgh and Newcastle offices in a diverse range of projects.

In addition to projects within the Division, we are continuing with our long history of support to Scott Wilson Railways with Stewart Proud leading the team assisting Donaldsons who are the geotechnical consultant for the Edinburgh Airport Rail Link and Ali Bastekin assisting with a railway investigation in Jamaica!

Detailed design of the recently won Dalkeith Northern Bypass for Morgan Est is keeping a number of people very busy with Ali Bastekin and Kamrul Ahsan providing support to the structures section. Andrew Marsh and Catriona Miller are undertaking mining and earthworks assessments with Iain MacPherson being kept very busy drawing up the designs. We are also continuing with our review of the geotechnical aspects of the detailed design for the M1 Westlink in Northern Ireland currently under construction.

We are still very busy providing support in the many projects that are currently underway in Northern Ireland including the A2 Shore Road, the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass, the A6 and the M1 Westlink project. Salwa Yassin is busy providing a site presence in A6 ground investigation which is currently underway. Lynn Masterson and Stephen Breslin are busy working through a number of our Scottish roads projects and a cycleway design to obtain geotechnical certification before construction of these begins.

We are continuing with our role as Geological Clerk of Works at Braes of Doune wind farm where Andrew Marsh is checking construction activities to ensure that bog bursts and peat slides do not occur. Continuing with our increasing number of windfarm activities, Edd Edmondson is busy on site at Weather Hill and Crystal Rig locating borrow pits and assessing foundations for the turbines. We have also been providing our Edinburgh colleagues with geotechnical advice for a number of building projects and Ryan Cho has been recently supervising ground investigations and undertaking design for the construction of new schools.

We are pleased that a new graduate Tomas McLaughlin will be joining the geotechnical team in early October. The geotechnical search for staff is continuing so if you know any likely candidates contact Susie Edwards.

Lynn Masterson

MOU 10

Traffic and Transportation Glasgow

It's been a long time since our last news sheet, but I'm pleased to confirm that MOU10 has continued to undertake some high profile projects throughout Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Earlier this year, we were awarded the 160km Aberdeen to Inverness Transport Corridor Study, which is being undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Executive, Transport Scotland, HITRANS and NESTRANS. The assessment is being carried out in accordance with the STAG procedures and involves detailed consultations, identifying problems along the corridor, establishing transport planning objectives and developing a range of improvement options for more

detailed assessment. In October and December 2006, two stakeholder workshops were held where more than 30 representatives from key organisations in northern Scotland were given the opportunity to express their views on key issues within the corridor – for most of the time, a consensus eluded us, but a common goal for improving the corridor prevailed in the end.

The completion of the A82 Tarbet to Fort William Route Action Plan earlier this year was well received by Transport Scotland and set out proposals for a range of improvements over the 100km route. These improvements included the removal of the Pulpit Rock traffic signals, which have been a feature on the western side of Loch Lomond for a long time as many tourists to the west of Scotland would testify, and a bypass of Crianlarich, both of which are being taken forward by Transport Scotland. This has led to Scott Wilson being awarded the design of the Pulpit Rock scheme, which is currently underway. Given the particularly sensitive environmental conditions, input from the MOU6 environmental team was essential in identifying and developing the improvement options.



In Northern Ireland, we are nearing completion of the assessment of the 60km A6 Castledawson to Londonderry dualling scheme, which is one of the longest road projects in Northern Ireland. There has already been significant interest in the

project, especially in Derry, which has involved an extensive programme of traffic surveys and presentations of initial findings to Derry City Council. The success of the project can be attributed to the close teamwork with Ferguson McIlveen, which is now even stronger since the 1 November.



Work is also progressing on the traffic and economic assessments for the A6 Castledawson to Randalstown dualling and the A24 Ballynahinch Bypass projects in Northern Ireland, and on the development of micro-simulation and economic assessment models for the A9 and A96 improvements with MOU2. Our capabilities in the development and application of demand forecasting and STAG assessments and in various freight studies, continues to grow with some great client feedback. Further details to follow in the next Communiqué.

On the staffing front, MOU10 welcomes four new members of staff to the Transport Planning team in response to our continued growth in key projects.

Russell Bissland

benchmark is produced by and for the staff of Scott Wilson's Scotland & Ireland Division. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition. If you would like to submit any news or an article for the next edition please email moyra.taylor@scottwilson.com or stephen.leckie@scottwilson.com