## Asphalt Now Reporting on the Asphalt Industry Issue 31 Spring 2013

ASPHALT INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

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In this issue: Filling the skills gap Sustainability The cost of poor condition local roads Sharing Best Practice Website makeover

07.07

## **Reduced budgets drive further innovation**

The continued tough economic conditions and resulting reduced budgets have driven asphalt suppliers, contractors, customers and industry bodies to collectively and individually find new, more efficient and cost-effective products and ways of working. At the same time, the AIA continues to work closely with our partners to push for improved funding for local road maintenance.



In this, the first electronic-only issue of *Asphalt Now*, there is a fascinating mix of articles that fit within three important and topical themes: apprenticeships and the skills shortage, business / the economy, and

sustainability. Interestingly, there is a clear and common thread throughout, which is how important greater collaboration is to achieving enhanced results.

The drought warnings and localised water restrictions in the first half of 2012 now seem a very long time ago, as rainfall levels then went on to hit record-breaking proportions on a number of occasions. However, the abnormally high volumes of water caused problems to the road network, not just by contributing to a further deterioration in their surface condition, but also by potentially compromising their structural integrity.

Shortly before Christmas, the AIA commissioned market research firm YouGov to look into what impact the poor condition of local roads had on businesses. The shocking revelation was that the cost to SMEs in England and Wales was an eyewatering £5 billion in the previous 12 months. Elsewhere within this issue there is an update on the HMEP programme and a report on the most recent meeting of the Highway Maintenance All Party Parliamentary Group, where MPs and Peers discussed the thorny issue of funding.

We have also recently completed a restyle of the AIA website to improve its accessibility and usage from mobile devices.

Meanwhile, we very recently launched the 18th ALARM Survey report into road maintenance by local authorities, which captured widespread media interest.

I hope you enjoy the read and do please feed back any comments about *Asphalt Now* to: <u>info@asphaltuk.org</u>

Alan Mackenzie Chairman, Asphalt Industry Alliance

## Mind the gap - apprenticeships key to minimising skills shortage

There is a growing feeling that the gap between the UK's engineering skills and its needs could threaten the country's economic recovery, and its overall standing as one of the world's key economies. To avoid this scenario will require a collaborative effort, with Government, industry bodies, employers and academic institutions all working together to ensure there are sufficient numbers of skilled individuals coming through the "talent pipeline".

One recent example of positive action to try and ensure there are sufficient skills and experience to meet this growing demand took place in December 2012, when industry body EngineeringUK went to Downing Street and called on the Government to help double the number of engineering graduates and apprentices by 2020.

Without similar enlightened thinking, road construction and maintenance could also be facing the prospect of an impending skills shortage after some apprenticeship training schemes were cut to reduce the immediate impact of the economic downturn.

However, the good news is that within the asphalt and associated industries there are numerous examples which demonstrate how seriously the potential skills shortage is being taken - by employers, industry associations, trade bodies and learning institutions.

Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation Director of Education and Membership Sue Stevens commented: "CIHT recognises the importance of inspiring a new generation of highway and transport professionals. With fewer graduates entering the industry and an aging professional population, UK Governments need to continue to support apprenticeship schemes as a way of attracting new entrants, providing training relevant to industry's needs, and assisting the UK to compete successfully in global markets."

#### Earn while you learn

A pioneering modern apprentice scheme which enables individuals to continue to earn while they develop their knowledge and skills has been created for the next generation of supervisors and managers in mineral product technology.

The University of Derby and Hanson UK have joined forces to develop a twoyear apprenticeship which is delivered predominantly via e-learning, which enables the apprentices to continue working for and being paid by their employer.



Hanson Corporate Director David Sharman said: "The programme is designed to bring enthusiastic young people into the business and give them the training and skills they need to become the next generation of supervisors, managers and business leaders."

Another benefit of this particular scheme is that it can also lead to the award of a qualification that is both academic and vocational.

Highlighting the important role academic institutions can play, Sue Stevens from the CIHT added: "UK Governments also need to recognise and support the contribution made by further and higher education, and consider incentives to



encourage young people to pursue careers in engineering and related occupations."

#### Asphalt Materials and Flexible Pavements Course - a landmark in training



Budding highways engineers, technicians and those in associated disciplines can build their knowledge and understanding of asphalts and flexible pavements by attending a CPD-qualifying residential course at the University of Newcastle.

Jointly developed by the University in conjunction with the Mineral Products Association, the popular *Asphalt Materials and Flexible Pavements* course provides students with an important understanding of the properties and performance of asphalt, as well as the design, construction and maintenance of asphalt pavements – all of which are fundamental requirements for client highway engineers and those in the supply chain alike.

In celebrating its landmark 40th consecutive year, the MPA / Newcastle University Asphalt Course clearly demonstrates that it remains at the forefront of training and education in the sector. In that time, literally thousands of delegates have attended, participated and possibly even enjoyed the unique opportunity to learn about a broad range of topics and issues relating to highways construction and maintenance. Based on delegates' feedback, the content and speakers are reviewed every year in order to meet the changing needs of the sector and by doing so keep it fresh and relevant. The friendly atmosphere and opportunity to meet with other delegates from a wide range of highways-related activity and expertise also provide a special networking opportunity for delegates and contribute to the ongoing success of the Course.

Past delegates include representatives from across industry and the client sector, many of whom now hold significant and high profile positions in their organisations and remain their own best advert. Clearly budgetary pressures are also higher than ever in all businesses, but the Course remains excellent value which the acquired knowledge can pay back many times over.

### Professional body at the heart of asphalt education



The Institute of Asphalt Technology (IAT) is the professional body for those working in asphalt technology and related disciplines - individuals from the road contracting

and supply industries, local authorities, universities, research organisations and consultants – and is playing a key role in providing opportunities to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals working in the asphalt industry. As well as organising regional training days for its members, the IAT also runs CPD-accredited, evening technical sessions, where experts deliver presentations on asphalt-related "hot topics".

#### **Diploma in Asphalt Technology**



The IAT has developed the only university-

level academic diploma for the asphalt industry, the *Diploma in Asphalt Technology*. Run by the University of Derby, this part-time course helps career progression and is aimed at individuals already working in the asphalt industry.

Comprising online study and tutorials at the University, this three year course can be completed more quickly by individuals with relevant qualifications – who can receive exemptions from specific modules, or even years.

At the end of the course, successful students receive a qualification that is not only recognised by the Engineering Council as meeting some of the academic requirements required to become a Professional Engineer, but also enables them to convert to full membership of the Institute of Asphalt Technology.

Further information from: <u>www.ncl.ac.uk/cegs.cpd/cpd/asphalt.php</u> <u>www.instituteofasphalt.org</u> <u>www.derby.ac.uk/corporate</u>

# Asset management critical to sustainability in asphalt industry

Asphalt Now (AN) speaks to Miles Watkins (MW), Director of Sustainable Construction at Aggregate Industries, about sustainability in the asphalt industry.

AN: Thanks for making the time to speak to us about what has become an increasingly important issue. Can we start off by getting to the heart of this and ask why sustainability is an important issue for the asphalt industry?

MW: Sustainability is a key part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda, which is a particularly important public accountability consideration for most businesses, particularly those that are publicly listed.

Historically, it could be argued that the asphalt industry had a tendency to be a little "behind the curve" when it came to the adoption of new products and working practices. However, while technology is undoubtedly important in relation to sustainability, the structural integrity of roads plays a much greater role in determining how sustainable the road is, irrespective of what materials were used in its construction.

What is needed if you want to really improve sustainability in the asphalt industry, is for clients to adopt an asset management approach as to how they care for and maintain their roads.

### AN: Ok, so what is the asphalt industry doing to address sustainability?

MW: At a company level, I would say that most suppliers will have introduced programmes aimed at carbon reduction and more responsible sourcing, as well as increasing their use of "green" energy from more environmentally favourable sources such as wind turbines and anaerobic digesters. That is certainly the case here at Aggregate Industries, where we are also working hard on innovation at a product level. This includes developing materials that can be worked at lower temperatures, enhancing certain aspects of operational performance and also increasing their recycled content.

One of the best ways to improve sustainability is through a close and early collaborative partnership between responsible suppliers, enlightened contractors and receptive clients. The earlier in the process that asphalt suppliers are involved in a project, the more able they are to make a positive sustainability contribution to the overall planning and decision-making process. The industry has a good track record of collaborative research which has delivered and continues to investigate many sustainability-related initiatives.

As I said earlier though, the most significant contribution to improving sustainability will come by enhancing how the asset (road) is managed - which will deliver much greater length of service.

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## AN: How important is sustainability to your customers?

MW: Well that's a very interesting question, as historically the asphalt sector has been slower to adopt sustainability policies and practices. That in itself is quite ironic, given how big an all-round impact roads have on the broad sustainability scenario.

The good news is that many local authorities are now taking an asset management approach to how they plan and manage the local road network under their control, which from a sustainability perspective should see a greater focus given to preventative maintenance and increasing the lifespan of these roads.

There is also a willingness to engage with contractors and suppliers at an earlier stage, so that together they can determine the best value outcome, although it has to be said that modern procurement practices can inadvertently work against supplier relationship building and so stifle the resultant opportunities for innovation.

## AN: What should customers look for from their asphalt supplier in terms of sustainability?

MW: The two most important things that customers should be looking for from their asphalt supplier are a sustainability policy and a demonstrable mindset of working with customers to achieve the best sustainable outcomes with their projects. Sustainability is a key part of the CSR agenda and a particularly important public accountability consideration that we, like many businesses, are committed to. However, to be sustainable we also need sustained funding for the road network in order for the industry to continue, and improve, its sustainable delivery efforts.







 Lafarge Tarmac will produce in excess of 450,000 tonnes of blast furnace slag aggregate for the project, creating approximately 1,892 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e when the transportation contribution is included.

BOMAG

- If primary limestone aggregate had been used instead, 3,855 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e would have been produced.
- Using blast furnace slag has delivered a 51 per cent reduction in carbon emissions.
- Blast furnace slag is durable and has a lower density than many primary aggregates, providing a conversion cost benefit by reducing the tonnage required to lay the same volume of material and helping to cut down on transport emissions.
- Total greenhouse gas contributions are expressed as carbon dioxide equivalents, CO<sub>2</sub>e.

## Road scheme's sustainability credentials validated

BOMPG

Sustainable thinking by Costain and Lafarge Tarmac led to more than 450,000 tonnes of blast furnace slag aggregate, a by-product of the local steel and iron industry in Port Talbot, being used to conserve primary aggregates and reduce carbon emissions on one of the UK's most sustainable roads.

Locally-sourced industrial by-products were given a new lease of life on one of the largest recent highways projects in Wales, the £107 million Harbour Way road scheme - a 4.8km link from Junction 38 of the M4 into Port Talbot and the docks.

As an alternative to conventional road base asphalt materials, Lafarge Tarmac's National Contracting division installed FoamMaster into the carriageway. This sustainable and cost-effective road base material also uses blast furnace slag aggregate and contributed to delivering a significant reduction in the embodied carbon in the new road.



Using the asphalt Pavement Embodied Carbon Tool (asPECT), Lafarge Tarmac demonstrated they had cut the total carbon footprint of the aggregates by 1,963 tonnes of  $CO_2e$  - 792 tonnes of which came from the reduced transportation contribution.

Due to be completed in autumn 2013, the new road scheme will open up unused dockland in Port Talbot to create a new "harbour quarter". It will also provide greater portside access for freight and other docks businesses, as well as serving as a vital link to West Wales, the UK motorway network as a whole and also to the regional trunk road network.

Commenting on the sustainable approach, Rhys Griffith, Project Manager at Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, said: "It is fantastic that locally sourced material will help ensure our area has first class infrastructure, providing an attractive gateway to the town and supporting the regeneration in Port Talbot."

For further information: <u>www.lafargetarmac.com</u> <u>www.sustainabilityofhighways.org.uk/</u>

## Surface dressing can help deliver a cost-effective increase in road life

The tough economic environment is challenging the entire highways maintenance supply chain to deliver best value, innovation and sustainability – all with reduced budgets.

The use of premium surface dressings is one of the options available to restore performance in areas of road where the surface deterioration is relatively minor and a new thin surfacing overlay is not justified. There has also been a push to seal and protect road surfaces to prevent a recurrence of previous winters' pothole problems, and there is a view that thin surfacings could be enhanced, or at least maintained, with a planned surface dressing programme throughout the material's life cycle.

Surface dressing correctly applied as a planned preventative maintenance treatment, not as a quick remedy to cover serious structural issues, will seal the road pavement surface, restore skid resistance, inhibit the formation of potholes and help extend the original service life of a road. Failure to maintain the road's surface will result in damage to the layers below and inevitably lead to more expensive, deeper, obtrusive and, in some instances, even emergency repair work being required.

Binders are a critical constituent within surface dressings and are produced in a variety of forms to meet varying levels of site stresses, historical wear and previous failure modes. This allows customers, contractors and suppliers to select the option that best balances initial cost against the expected life cycle.

One such binder is Total Bitumen's Emulsis, which has been used by surface dressing contractor Kiely Bros to good effect. A spokesman for the contractor said: "We have used large volumes of Emulsis Ultra and Satis and are very pleased with the performance, reliability and quality."

Saving maintenance costs by surface dressing at the right time as part of a highway authority's planned preventative maintenance programme could not only protect the asset, but theoretically help protect funding for more critical structural maintenance.

For further information: www.bitumen.total.co.uk





## New surface on M90 praised

Transport Scotland's determination to obtain roads that are durable and safe is apparent on the M90 at Rosyth, north of the Forth Road Bridge, where in 2012 surfacing was carried out to TS2010 - its own specification for thin surfacings.

Part of the Fife Intelligent Transport System (ITS) contract, in which 3.8km of the existing M90 was converted into "managed motorway", the new surface is bearing up well to both traffic and expert scrutiny.

The overall quality achieved impressed the Scottish Inspection Panel, which includes surfacing experts from Transport Scotland, Mineral Products Association, Performance Audit Group and TRL, who visit sites all over Scotland each year to visually inspect surfacing work. Dougie Millar, materials and QA advisor at Transport Scotland, said: "TS2010 ensured this section of M90 carriageway is resilient, should serve a long time and provides beneficial surface characteristics."

Motorists using the M90 were also impressed by the scale and speed of operation when the carriageway surfacing works were carried out, which saw three asphalt pavers laying in echelon. The reason that multi paver surfacing was used was simple: Transport Scotland does not favour longitudinal joints in its new surfacings.

No joints means no path through which water can pass, eliminating a possible weak spot from the very start.

Preventing water ingress is only a small part of the story. TS2010 is intended to maximise the return on the Scottish Government's investment by preventing premature failure and subsequent interventions.

"The M9O's surfacing has been laid to last and be safe from the off," says Breedon Aggregates Scotland Contracts Director, Kevin Carmichael. Principal contractor on the Fife ITS contract was GRAHAM Construction; which oversaw some very complex surfacing by Breedon as part of its contract.

For the M90 TS2010 mix, the aggregate used was 10mm nominal size but with varying Polished Stone Value (PSV) to suit different areas of application. For example, approaches to junctions had stone of 68PSV, while 60PSV was used for the less stressed areas. The binder was Nynas' Nypol 103, a highly polymer-modified elastomeric binder with exceptional resistance to permanent deformation and cracking. This made it well suited to the kind of durable asphalt that TS2010 is intended to produce.

For further information: <u>www.nynas.com/en</u> <u>www.breedonaggregates.com</u>

## Badly maintained local roads cost businesses billions

The poor condition of the local road network is costing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) £5 billion a year in production delays, lengthier journey times, increased fuel consumption, wasted staff time and vehicle damage repairs, according to research conducted by YouGov for the Asphalt Industry Alliance.

For the economy as a whole this is a high price to pay, not just for the 1.8 million SMEs in England and Wales. Widely regarded as the "engine of the economy", SMEs have a combined annual turnover of £1,321 billion and employ 9.6 million people.

#### Worse to come

The local road network in England and Wales has an estimated value of £300 billion, but has been consistently underfunded for over 15 years. In 2012 alone the highways maintenance budget shortfall was nearly £800 million.

The cost to businesses of poorly maintained local roads is set to get even higher, with the Department for Transport's year-on-year cuts to the local authority highways maintenance budget, and further cuts announced in the *Local Government Finance Settlement 2013-14*.

Alan Mackenzie, Chairman of the Asphalt Industry Alliance, said: "Properly maintained local roads play a vital role in helping drive the economic recovery; not only by reducing businesses' costs, but also by enabling them to operate more efficiently and make them more competitive.

"The maintenance work to get local roads back into good shape can be started

quickly and could also secure additional employment in the road maintenance sector across the country. I urge Government to act now and give local authorities the additional funding they need to improve the condition of their roads, thereby helping SMEs boost the country's economy."

#### Support from small business organisations

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the Forum for Private Business (FPB) both strongly support the research findings.

Neil Hoose, chairman of the FSB infrastructure policy unit, commented: "In the FSB's view, the Government should give priority and funding to maintaining and improving the current local road network. Tackling the maintenance backlog on these roads will help small businesses now and lead to significant job creation in the short term. Whilst significant road improvements are needed in the medium to long term, the maintenance backlog is of more immediate and pressing concern."

FPB Chief Executive Phil Orford added "Most firms rely on the roads network one way or another to ply their trade, so when highways are allowed to crumble into the type of third world disrepair commonly seen today, businesses suffer.

"With business rates so high, the Government has a responsibility to make sure the funding is there to repair damage immediately - particularly after cold snaps, which accelerate the rot. Other countries manage it, and compared to the pristine highways common in France and Germany, what we have here is nothing short of a national embarrassment."

- 60 per cent of survey respondents said the condition of local roads had deteriorated over the last five years, and over half said the condition had worsened over the past year.
- Poor local road conditions over the last 12 months affected 50 per cent of surveyed SMEs, costing each an average of £8,333, making the total cost to SMEs of poor local road conditions £4.966 billion.
- 32 per cent of survey respondents incurred additional costs due to lengthier journey times and used more fuel due to congestion attributable to poor road condition.
- 27 per cent have experienced additional damage to their vehicles due to poorly maintained local roads.
- 37 per cent said their local roads were not very well maintained, while only four per cent thought the local roads used by their business were very well maintained.

#### 'Road Tax' the Favoured Option for Funding

The condition of local roads is more important to SMEs than the condition of motorways and dual carriageways, or proximity to an airport, railway hub or shipping port, when choosing the location for a new business site.

Two-thirds (66 per cent) of respondents said well-maintained local roads were important for their business, while just under 59 per cent said the same about well-maintained motorways and dual carriageways.

However, funding for road maintenance is recognised as being an issue. More than two-thirds (68 per cent) of respondents said they thought the money given to local councils by national government for the maintenance of roads should be ring-fenced.

When asked how road maintenance should be funded, the most popular option - chosen by two in three (66 per cent) respondents - was through road tax receipts. Fuel duty was a clear second with 54 per cent, while general national taxes (30 per cent) and local taxes (24 per cent) were the next most popular options.

The broad consensus was that the best-maintained roads in Europe are in Germany, with France a clear but distant second and British roads barely receiving a mention.

Further information about the AIA/ YouGov research into the impact of local road condition on SMEs can be found at: <u>http://www.asphaltuk.org/news-press.</u> <u>asp?info=YouGov&start=0</u>

## **APPG explores funding investment in local roads**

In November 2012, MPs and Lords from the Local Government All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) joined their contemporaries on the Highway Maintenance APPG for a lively debate exploring funding options for much-needed additional investment in the local government-controlled road network.

In the absence of Highway Maintenance APPG Chairman Christopher Chope MP, the meeting was chaired by Highway Maintenance member and Local Government APPG chair Heather Wheeler MP. She introduced guest speaker Mike Llywelyn-Jones, who heads the Association for Consulting and Engineering's Roads Sector Interest Group.

Mike's presentation explored how the private finance landscape has changed considerably following the financial crisis: liquidity in the market has reduced and lending restrictions are tighter. Amongst other things, this has led to the value for money of models such as PFI being called into question. Government could raise expenditure to offset these effects, but public deficit levels mean this is unlikely. So there is a view that some form of private finance involvement in infrastructure investment will be required.

#### A few facts and figures

- Infrastructure is highlighted as a primary driver for economic growth and a means to deliver the UK's goal of a hi-tech, low carbon, globally competitive economy. However, the UK is acknowledged to face an infrastructure investment shortfall, estimated by the Policy Exchange in their *Delivering a* 21st Century Infrastructure for Britain report to be £434 billion.
- The World Economic Forum ranks the quality of the UK's roads at 24th in the world.
- Short term road maintenance fixes, such as reactively repairing potholes, are at best 20 times more expensive than a planned asset management approach - in which efficient maintenance actions are undertaken at the most cost-effective times.
- A recent report by the CBI estimates that congestion alone costs the UK economy up to £8bn per year, and 84% of firms consider quality of transport infrastructure in their investment decisions.
- The Eddington Transport Study (2006) reported that case studies demonstrate actual economic returns on road investment of between 2.2 and 4.3 times the initial investments. Such returns could place road investment at the centre of an economic growth programme.

The three main conclusions of the presentation were: road investment can generate multiple returns, supporting economic growth; an asset management approach to maintenance is far cheaper in the medium to long term; and private finance and funding could support the investment needed to achieve this, but the conditions and returns have to be right for this to be attractive.

A wide-ranging debate then followed and touched on a number of areas including transferring risk to the private sector and the merits of longer-term transport infrastructure planning.

However, many of the politicians commented that spending on road maintenance doesn't, at the moment, win votes. So, what is needed is a shift in the public's attitude towards the importance they attach to the quality of roads.

Future APPG meetings will continue to explore potential solutions to the road maintenance funding issue and involve roundtable discussions including local councilors.

For further information: www.highwaysmaintenance.org



### "Innovation in recession" - MPA Asphalt 2012 conference

The Heritage Motor Museum at Gaydon, in Warwickshire, was the venue for the Mineral Products Association (MPA)'s successful *Asphalt 2012: Innovation in recession* conference, run in collaboration with the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) and sponsored by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL).



*Stephen Child, for ADEPT, addressing the conference* 

A programme filled with an interesting mix of technical presentations, thoughtprovoking addresses, case studies and panel sessions attracted an audience of industry and local authority delegates to the conference, which took place on an unseasonably sunny 23 November, 2012.

The morning session focused on the challenges presented by restricted budgets and how industry innovation could help find more cost-effective solutions. Speakers included the Keynote Address by CIHT's Steve Rowsell, followed by AIA Chairman Alan Mackenzie highlighting the ALARMing messages on underfunding, Hertfordshire County Council's Chris Allen-Smith giving the background to delivering asset management principles and HMEP Advocate Jason Russell from Surrey County Council updating on HMEP work packages.

The MPA's John Bradshaw-Bullock gave an acronym-based background to issues being addressed by the Association, which was followed by the "*Great SMA Debate*". Stone Mastic Asphalt (SMA) has been the subject of much informal discussion across the industry and this was captured perfectly in a pre-lunch panel debate involving experts from TRL (Ian Carswell), Transport Scotland (Dougie Millar), ADEPT (Bob Noakes), the Highways Agency (Donna James) and the MPA (Robert Gossling). The panelists discussed the application and performance characteristics of SMA, and concluded that it was a perfectly valid solution for UK highway construction and maintenance providing it was specified, handled and applied correctly.

In the afternoon, the focus shifted to innovation under the headings of "Sustainable Solutions" and "Essential Materials". Stephen Child, for ADEPT, set out some of the client challenges for innovation, and the subsequent presenters sought to demonstrate how these may be risen to. The session included presentations on the proactive management of Recycled Asphalt Pavement and tar (by Robert Gossling for MPA), and also included an insight into UK experiences with warm mixes (by John Bell of MQP) and recycled rubber (by Alan Ferguson of Breedon and Siegfried Sadzulewsky of Genan).

The final session of the day included a compelling case study by Harvey Cullen of Lafarge Tarmac, which described how cultural changes had driven significant quality and productivity improvements for Walsall Council's pothole repair programme. Dr Emma Benbow then described the industry collaborative research project at TRL, which looked at what impact different road surfaces had on fuel economy, before brothers Nick and Simon Laity showed how their environmentally-friendly release agents business had risen from the 2010 Conference's "Phoenix Furnace".

Delegate feedback on the Conference remains positive and is invaluable in directing future events.

For further information: www.asphaltuk.org/news-conferences.asp





Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme

## For the sector, by the sector: HMEP launches new products

By Matthew Lugg OBE - HMEP Advocate



The Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) has made significant progress since it was set up in April 2011, and its mission to maximise returns from highways investment and deliver efficient and effective services continues to progress with the launch of four new products.

#### **Standard Specification**

Historically, many local highway authorities had developed their own specifications for highways works, which led to significant variations in how highway work was carried out, when, and using what materials. On the materials issue, it has been said that this contributed to the development of hundreds of different mixes of asphalt. A simplification of this situation clearly presented significant scope for manufacturing and operational efficiencies.

HMEP's *Standard Specification* document builds upon the existing specifications from within the sector and covers areas such as road pavements, bituminous bound materials and winter maintenance. It is the first in a suite of documents under the Procurement, Contracting and Standardisation theme, and aims to provide specifiers, contractors and materials manufacturers with a much simpler set of guidelines to deliver mutual benefits.

A presentation about the Standard Specification can be viewed at: <u>http://www.</u> youtube.com/watch?v=v2ptEtek6RI&list=PL <u>6E187A2EF59ED301&index=8</u>

#### **Highway Infrastructure Asset management**

HMEP recently launched specific guidance and toolkits to help authorities manage and maintain their highway assets. The *User Guidance* helps authorities maintain highway assets at a defined service and condition level in the most efficient way. It incorporates a deterioration model that allows different scenarios to be assessed for prioritising maintenance of bituminous surfacing.

The guidance supports three planning toolkits that cover carriageways, footways and ancillary assets. Each assesses the impact of different levels of funding on asset management and performance that leads to the optimum whole life cost solution. Workshops are being staged across the country to raise awareness and give an appreciation of the new asset management guidance being developed by HMEP.

#### Form of Contract

The Form of Contract is the first national standard suite of contract documents for local highway services, and aims to help deliver significant savings by simplifying and standardising how local highway authorities procure their maintenance services.

It was launched at a webinar organised by the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) at the beginning of March, and can be viewed at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQcQIUDvs Dw&list=PL6E187A2EF59ED301&index=6.

#### **Procurement Route Choices Toolkit**

The Procurement Route Choices Toolkit has also just been unveiled and is a web tool developed to be particularly helpful for local highway authorities that are about to procure highways maintenance services. It enables them to assess the key factors in their service and provides advice around the procurement options that best suit their needs. The toolkit draws on advice from across the sector, building on work originally proposed by CIHT.

The presentation can be viewed at: <u>http://www.youtube.</u> <u>com/watch?v=AUWvzodKRdA</u> <u>&list=PL6E187A2EF59ED301&i</u> <u>ndex=7</u>

#### **Shared Services Toolkit**

This toolkit will provide advice and guidance on how to set up and operate shared service arrangements, often a precursor to more formal collaboration, and draws on evidenced case studies to highlight good practice. It will also reference what has been achieved as well as the financial savings that have been realised.

This toolkit was launched at *The Future* of Highways Delivery conference on 14 March, and complements the Local Highway Authority Collaborative Alliance Toolkit released last summer.

These and all the other HMEP products are freely available on the Department for Transport website: <u>http://www.dft.gov.uk/hmep</u>

**WHMEP** 



## AIA website gets a makeover

#### Some of you may have already noticed that the AIA website has very recently been restyled.

With more and more people now accessing the internet using mobile devices, a restyling was necessary in order to improve its accessibility.

We hope you enjoy accessing the site whilst on the move.

For further information: www.asphaltuk.org

## **Sharing Best Practice**

On a wet and windy day at the end of September 2012, delegates from local authorities across the North of England attended the latest Sharing Best Practice event at the National Railway Museum in York. This was the second year the AIA had organised such an event, and once again it was supported by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT).

The aim of this day-long event, independently chaired by former BBC North of England Transport Correspondent Alan Whitehouse, was to not only give delegates the chance to learn directly from successful best practice case studies, but also to provide them with a valuable opportunity to discuss the outcomes with other delegates in workshop sessions.

Barrie Mason from North Yorkshire County Council, Lancashire County Council's Ray Worthington and Paul Elliott from Norfolk County Council presented their respective case studies on *Forming a Highways Alliance for Yorkshire, Lancashire County Council's Response to the Pothole Review* and *Building Member Confidence.* Dana Skelley, Director of Roads at



From left to right: Ray Worthington, Lancashire County Council; Paul Elliott, Norfolk County Council; Stephen Child, ADEPT; Dana Skelley, TfL; Barrie Mason, North Yorkshire County Council; Phil Brennan, APSE; Alan Whitehouse, ex-BBC; David Weeks, Hanson

Transport for London, and a key advocate of the Department for Transport-backed Highway Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP), provided an update on HMEP. Additionally Phil Brennan, APSE's Principal Advisor, spoke about Performance Management, and the workshop sessions were grouped under the headings of "Working together to move ahead" and "Planning and improvement".

During the break for lunch, many delegates took the opportunity to take a closer look at some of the magnificent historic and modern trains on display, including the famous Mallard and The Flying Scotsman locomotives.

To view and download the presentations see: www.asphaltuk.org/news-conferences.asp

#### Asphalt Now

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