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Welcome... from Hanson Cement technical director Gareth Price

I am delighted that Flintshire Council has given us the go-ahead to install the new mill and associated facilities (see below). This is really positive news for our business, our employees and our contractors.

But, while the future is looking much more secure, we must not forget our commitment to the local community. We must continue

to improve and strengthen our relationship with our neighbours through the site liaison committee, our support of local organisations and, most importantly, through the performance of the plant. We will always strive to be a good neighbour.

With the mill project about to begin, it's the perfect time for our new plant manager Murat Burakcin to be taking over (see

page 2). Murat has spent all his working life in the cement industry both in his native France and in Turkey and brings a wealth of experience. I wish him every success.

I also want to send best wishes and thanks to Alan Bennett, our shop steward and electrician, who will retire in January after 32 years.

Sadly, we have recently lost two great friends; retired

works manager Don Hughes, who worked so tirelessly to keep the plant going through difficult economic times, and former employee and trade unionist Ron Hampson, who was a county and district councillor and served on our community liaison committee. They will both be missed.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone the very best for the coming festive period.

£20m investment under way after council approval

A £20 million project to install a cement grinding mill and upgrade the rail loading facilities at the Padeswood works is under way.

Preliminary construction work began in November after Flintshire Council's planning committee unanimously approved the development application.

Hanson Cement's technical director Gareth Price said: "Securing planning consent got us over a critical hurdle and I would like to thank everyone involved for their efforts. We can now focus fully on getting the project completed, hopefully by the end of 2018."

The Loesche vertical roller mill, which is being shipped from Bilbao in northern Spain, can grind up to 650,000 tonnes of clinker a year and will reduce energy consumption by around 30 per cent due to the efficiency of the electric motors.

The plant's existing mills are old and inefficient and do not have the capacity to grind the volume of clinker made by the kiln, creating a production imbalance and resulting in some of the clinker being transported to sister plants Ketton and Ribblesdale for grinding.

The development project also includes installing new cement silos alongside the existing railway line to allow up to three trains a week to be loaded for deliveries to Hanson depots in London, Bristol or Glasgow depending on demand. At present, the rail link is only used to bring in coal to fire the kilns.

"This is a critical project which will safeguard the future of the plant, improve efficiency and reduce both environmental impacts and lorry movements," added Gareth.

■ Phase one of the £20 million redevelopment project has already been completed with the demolition of six obsolete cement silos.

The silos were old and could not be modified so were dismantled by contractor AR Demolition, cut up on the ground and removed.

Project manager Chris Sheady said: "Environmental consideration was paramount to control potential dust releases. The task was completed safely and on time."



Sylvia Vaughan of Gwernymynydd, whose great uncle's name is on the war memorial, lays a wreath watched by piper Niall Borthwick

Memorial garden gets a refresh

Gwernymynydd residents gathered at their village centre's war memorial for a Remembrance Sunday service – and had much more space thanks to the efforts of two local firms.

Hanson Cement and ASH Waste Management came together for a community project aimed at improving the memorial garden.

Overgrown trees were lopped, the hard-standing area in front of the war memorial was

enlarged and a new rockery and garden works completed.

Cllr Kevin Hughes, chair of the village centre management committee, said: "Previously, the congregation did not have sufficient room to stand before the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday but that has now changed.

"We are proud of our links with both Hanson's Cefn Mawr quarry and ASH and look forward to working together on future community projects."

Remembering...

Don Hughes

Former Padeswood plant manager Don Hughes, described as a great ambassador for both his local cement works and the industry, has died at the age of 86.

Don joined Castle Cement in 1966 and retired 29 years later in 1995; in that time he was involved in the production of almost 17 million tonnes of cement used in many high-profile projects, including the repair of the Falklands airport after the war.

He is survived by his two daughters Janice and Gail. There remains a strong family link as Gail's husband John Gaughan and their eldest son Gary are both process operatives at the works.

Don joined Castle Cement as a senior technical assistant. Promotion followed quickly to mechanical engineer, chief engineer and, in 1979, works manager.

He travelled extensively studying the latest cement making and environmental technology. Visits to plants in Kansas and Texas convinced him of the environmental benefits of burning alternative fuels, rather than coal and oil.

Hanson Cement's technical director Gareth Price said: "Don dedicated his working life to Padeswood. Because of his commitment and tireless efforts, the plant survived through the difficult times of the 1980s and the collapse of the cement market in the early 1990s.

"As a result of Don's stewardship, the plant now enjoys high levels of investment and a brighter future. I thank him for his contribution."

Ron Hampson

Gareth Price has paid tribute to councillor Ron Hampson, who died earlier this year, for the support he had given to local business and in particular to the cement works.

A former builder, councillor Hampson represented the Bistre West ward on Flintshire County Council and Buckley Town Council for 27 years. He had a strong association with the Padeswood plant as an ex-employee, who for many years served on our community liaison committee. Gareth knew councillor Hampson well, as both were lifelong residents of Buckley.

He said: "Ron was a great supporter of the plant, offering guidance during difficult times. He was never afraid to deliver a strong message when he felt it was required but, at the same time, provide constructive advice."

He is survived by his wife Rita and children Stephen and Michelle.

IMAGES: GINGER PIXIE PHOTOGRAPHY



Murat Burakcin has spent his entire career in the cement industry

Experienced Murat takes the reins

Frenchman Murat Burakcin, 48, is the new manager of the Padeswood plant, replacing Steven Hall.

He has spent his entire career in the cement industry and joins Hanson from NUH Cement in Turkey, where he held a senior management role looking after quality control and environmental management.

Murat said: "I am excited to be here and I can feel there is a real willingness

to improve the performance of this plant. Together, as a team, I am sure we can look forward to achieving the challenges of reaching our common goals."

He and his wife Perihan have two boys – Kaan, 17, and Volkan, 13. Murat is fluent in three languages – Turkish, French and English – and likes reading, particularly history and culture, and enjoys football, rugby and badminton.

Residents' concerns drive change of route decision

Concerns about Hanson lorries using a short cut from the A55 Expressway through Penryffordd to Padeswood have been resolved.

Residents from Warren Hall Court estate and Penryffordd community group expressed concern that lorries using the newer junction off the A55 along the A5104 had to pass the estate and Penryffordd school.

Hanson recognised the problem and has instructed drivers to use the Dobshill interchange.

Andrew Archer of the Warren Hall residents committee said complaints had been received about problems trying to

leave the estate and turn right towards Broughton. Residents were also concerned about crossing the road to visit family or use the bus stop, and ad hoc speed cameras had been set up to monitor the situation.

Operations support manager David Quick said: "I was pleased we were able to respond positively to the concerns of residents. Our drivers are trained to high standards and are expected to drive safely and courteously at all times."

He said the £20 million development project due for completion next year (see page 1) would further reduce road traffic movements.

Anthony returns after global role

Former mechanical apprentice Anthony Peace has returned to the works as a mechanical engineer.

Anthony, 35, from Oakenholt, started in 1999 and after completing his apprenticeship, became a fitter and team leader.

He left Hanson in 2010 to join a German engineering company which makes roller mills for the cement, coal and steel industries and worked globally managing installation projects before returning to Padeswood in July.

Anthony is married to Anna and they have a two-month-old daughter Zoe. In his spare time he enjoys fitness training and running.



Anthony Peace

Electrician Alan pulls the plug

Electrician Alan Bennett, who retires in January, has seen huge changes in health and safety during his 32 years at the Padeswood works.

He was appointed on a temporary contract in 1986 after an accident to an electrician's mate and has been at the site ever since.

"Over the years, I have seen safety tightened up. It is now paramount, which is really good for our workforce," Alan said.

He has served as a union shop steward since 1988, first with the Electronics and Electrical Trades Union and now with Unite.

Alan, 65, is chairman of the Flintshire Badminton League and plays for Northop. He lives in Hawarden, is married to Rita and has two stepchildren.



Alan Bennett has been at Padeswood for 32 years

Newcomers join the team

Ahmet Sacid Karacuha, from Kusadasi in Turkey, and Levent Bayraktar from Chester have joined the workforce.

Sacid, 37, heads the maintenance control centre. He joined HeidelbergCement in August 2011 as an engineer and moved to Tanzania in 2013. He is married to Serpil with two sons – Yusuf Ali, nine, and Omer Furkan, 20 months.

Levent, a trainee manager, graduated from the University of Manchester with a degree in electrical engineering in 2016 and has just completed a masters in engineering and management.

He did work experience at Padeswood as a pupil at Christleton High School.



Ahmet Sacid Karacuha, left, and Levent Bayraktar

Builders' merchants contracts are in the bag

Bagged cement produced at Padeswood is supplying major builders' merchants across Wales.

Huws Gray, based in Llangefni, has sold our products for almost 45 years, as has Richard Williams Ltd, whose headquarters are in Llandudno Junction.

Cement is also going to long-term customer CL Jones, Bethesda, which has branches throughout north Wales.



Rob and Claire Jones celebrate finishing the Cardiff Half Marathon

Charity feet...

Rob Jones' spur of the moment decision to compete in the Cardiff Half Marathon has raised almost £1,000 and helped a three-year-old boy with cancer realise his dream of having a John Deere tractor-themed bedroom.

Rob, who lives in Ruthin, is a keen runner and rugby referee and has worked as a tanker driver with Hanson Cement for 16 years.

He said: "My wife Claire and I were out running one night and she asked if I fancied doing a marathon. I said jokingly: Why don't we do a half? We entered on the spur of the moment and then realised we had just 10 weeks to train."

So far, Rob has raised £410 thanks to donations from fellow-drivers and other work colleagues and the final total will be doubled by the Hanson charity match fund.

The money will go to the Make-A-Wish foundation, which has been supporting the family of three-year-old Charlie Gladwin who was diagnosed with hepatoblastoma, a solid tumour of the liver.

His wish was to have his bedroom decorated in the green and yellow colours of John Deere.

"It was worth the 13 miles of pain to put a smile on Charlie's face," Rob said.

Efficiency drive

Hanson is putting a greater focus on preventative maintenance to ensure increased reliability at its three UK plants.

The maintenance improvement programme introduces standard ways of planning, budgeting and analysing risk.

It also looks at how contractors are managed, particularly during the annual shutdowns, and ensures stocks of vital spare parts are available.

Maintenance manager Paul Cowell said: "The emphasis will be on making our maintenance efficient and effective and up-skilling the workforce to improve plant reliability."

Moth is survey highlight

Cefn Mawr quarry's annual butterfly survey produced an amazing find when ecologist Pauline Michell spotted a hummingbird hawk-moth on protected limestone grassland.

The moth is a day-flyer that, from a distance, behaves like a miniature hummingbird hovering over wildflowers in search of nectar.

"Its presence on the grassland illustrates the benefits of management work to maintain the diversity of wildflowers," said Pauline.



The hummingbird hawk-moth has a wingspan that ranges from 50-58mm

The moth has greyish-brown forewings, bright orange hind wings and a black and white tail. Its flight is a distinguishing feature, fluttering its wings so fast that a hum can be heard.

It is considered to be a lucky omen after a swarm

was seen crossing the English Channel on the day of the Normandy landings.

Flintshire County Council's senior ecologist Amanda Davies complimented Hanson for its positive management of the site for biodiversity.



Charlotte Ashby, left, and Ailish Leiper with Andy Rees

Pupils cash in on exam success

Two Alun School pupils who secured Hanson Cement science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) scholarships have been celebrating their AS level exam results with a cash bonus from the company.

Charlotte Ashby from Nannerch achieved As in maths, biology and chemistry and will carry the same subjects through to A2 level. She wants to go to university to study veterinary surgery.

Ailish Leiper from Mold plans to study physics and engineering at university. She gained As in physics, chemistry and English literature and a B in maths. She is studying

maths, chemistry and physics at A2.

Hanson Cement is working in partnership with the Mold school to support the UK-wide STEM programme, which aims to produce a strong supply of scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians.

Alun School's assistant headteacher Andy Rees said: "The students have gained enormously from this experience as they have been able to apply the skills they learnt in the classroom in a real-life scenario. Partnerships such as these are essential for schools and employers to enable us to produce the next generation of scientists and engineers."

Talk to us...

Hanson Cement operates an open door policy – if you want to talk to us about this newsletter, our operations or visit the plant, please contact **Murat Burakcin** on 01244 550330 or email murat.burakcin@hanson.com