

## Investing for the future

**CPSA cautiously optimistic about proposals, says marketing director Keith Daniel**

It is pleasing to see that after a period of limited investment in the sewerage infrastructure the water companies are now proposing significant increases during the period up to 2010.

In the current five-year period (AMP3), which will end in March 2005, levels of investment in sewerage pipelines have been significantly below what was proposed initially by the water companies and what was actually required.

Government statistics show that the average annual value of orders obtained by contractors in the sewerage sector was almost 25% lower in the first four years of AMP3 than for the average of AMP2 (the previous five years).

It is therefore very encouraging to see the draft business plans for 2005 to 2010, which have recently been published by the water industry regulator, OFWAT. On average the water companies are proposing to increase the average annual household bills for sewerage from £124 in 2004/5 to £164 in 2009/10, an increase of almost one third to help fund additional infrastructure investment.

Although this will be seen by the consumer as being a very large increase it is heartening to see that the water companies realise that there is a very real need to make significant investment in the sewerage infrastructure. This will ensure that it is improved in the coming years and meets the long-term needs of consumers.

There are still many questions to be raised, especially regarding the aspects of the sewerage system which will benefit from the investment. There is also a long period of review by OFWAT and the Government before a final conclusion is reached in November 2004 - but as an industry we are cautiously optimistic about the current proposals.

One final point – it should be realised that at the current rate of renewal, critical sewers (the most strategically important ones) are expected to last on average more than 350 years, and in

some cases at more than 1000 years!!

Now is the time to ensure that this level of investment in the sewerage infrastructure is increased.



## Concrete pipes graduate at university

Leadbitter Construction installed a total of 31m of Stanton Bonna 2350mm x 1350mm elliptical concrete pipes at the Castle Mill graduate accommodation site for University of Oxford. The storm water attenuation pipes were laid in a battered trench in two parallel runs, because of the restrictive space and required shallow depth. They were procured with blank ends and formed holes for the connecting discharge pipework, where square manholes were incorporated for maintenance access.

Consulting engineers Halcrow opted for the elliptical pipes because they provided an off-

the-shelf solution with design flexibility and ease of installation in ground conditions with a high water table. The tanks were designed for HA & HB45 vehicle loadings and were laid on a standard compacted granular bedding material. They provide 75m<sup>3</sup> capacity for the attenuation of surface water run-off in storm events exceeding 1 in a 100 years, discharging into the Fiddler's Island stream adjacent to the river Thames. Control devices are utilised to regulate flows approved by the Environment Agency in an area prone to flooding.

# Question Time

**R**oy Swarbrooke, commercial director of Johnston Pipes, recently asked the building and civil engineering industry for its views on the company's performance by sending out 3000 questionnaires as part of its forward strategy.

The survey is carried out every four years and Roy believes that by doing so the company stays customer focused. He commented, "This is the third questionnaire we have circulated and the results are very encouraging. Johnston Pipes is a very people-

orientated company - service is at the forefront of everything we do, and the questionnaire confirms this."

As a thank you for completing the questionnaire, customers were offered a chance to win £200 of Marks and Spencer vouchers by way of a prize draw. Picture shows Roy Swarbrooke (left), with Paul Cartwright, sales director picking the winning questionnaire completed by Mr D W Lester of Particon (CE) Ltd.



# Company updates image

**Milton Precast providing concrete solutions**

**MILTON PRECAST**

**M**ilton Pipes has been re-branded as Milton Precast, with a striking bold logo and strapline of 'Providing Concrete Solutions', which better defines the company and the service it provides. There are also specialised company divisions; created to cater for the specific needs of certain niche markets, initially agriculture, sea defence and street furniture.

Says John West, sales director of Milton Precast: "We felt that the time had come to update our image, as the name 'Milton Pipes' didn't really best reflect the comprehensive range of products and service we offer our customers. We're now much more about producing bespoke solutions for our customers' requirements.

What hasn't changed, however, is one of our greatest assets: our customer service. We've built up a great reputation for this and we intend to keep it."

# Learning about new jointing system

**H**ughes Concrete Ltd has launched HUGHFLEX, an integral ring jointing system for its range of DN300 to DN600 concrete pipes. The first use of the new HUGHFLEX pipes was on the £2 million AWG Construction services contract for the reinstatement of fire-damaged teaching accommodation, new sports hall and changing facilities at Crawshaw School, Pudsey for Leeds City Council.

The 2.5m long pipes, with factory-cast flexible joints, were easier and quicker to install on site according to specialist drainage contractor Adana Construction Ltd. of Stockport. The order was supplied through stockists The Warrington Slate Company Ltd.



# Launch of stormwater system

**H**anson Drainage Systems in an innovative joint venture with Hydro International plc has introduced the Hydro-Brake® chamber, which together with the Downstream Defender® forms the sustainable stormwater control and treatment system package.

The patent pending Hydro-Brake® chamber incorporates a pre-cast reinforced concrete chamber with pre-formed benching and headwall delivered directly to site.

A bespoke Hydro-Brake® flow control device, manufactured by Hydro International is pre-fitted in position ensuring that it is correctly installed. This product will greatly reduce the installation time for the Hydro-Brake® flow control; the reinforced precast one-piece chamber also reduces the need for concrete surround. The design of the semi-circular benching allows for up to three inlet pipes to be incorporated into the same chamber within 180° to suit customer specifications it also provides easy access to the sump area for sediment removal. The Hydro-Brake® chamber is available in 1200mm and 1500mm diameters.

The Downstream Defender® is an innovative stormwater treatment device based on hydrodynamic separation principles. Developed originally by Hydro International it was subsequently further developed into a packaged solution by Hanson and Hydro in a joint venture. The system is designed to remove settleable solids, grits, silts, oil and other floatables from stormwater runoff. Since its launch, the system range has been extended to include seven diameters from 1000mm to 3000mm capable of dealing with a wide range of flow characteristics.



The most common form of water pollution from construction sites is suspended sediments, which carry contaminants such as oil and chemicals. The 1000mm and 1200mm Downstream Defender® are one-

piece reinforced units that are ideally suited to be reused. Installed at the start of construction the unit is pumped out when construction has been completed and taken to the next site.

## Flushed with success

**T**he first of the Grange Rexim surge manhole units have been installed at the Screwfix Ltd factory in Stanley Matthews Way, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire.

Owners St Modwen Developments designed the factory, the main civil contractor is Bluestone of Manchester and the complete drainage scheme was designed by David Payne, consultant engineer of Nolan Associates.

David Payne's concept was that by

incorporating two surge manholes, instead of two pumping stations, considerable savings on the installation costs and future maintenance of the system would be achieved. The surge manhole requires no energy input and is maintenance free.

Initial tests proved successful and on 1st December, a delegation from Yorkshire Water plc projects department, led by David Oldknow visited the site to view the system in operation. To prove the power of surge, some "stones" were dropped into a manhole

in the main outfall line approximately 50 metres from the surge manhole, these "stones" were washed away down line after the first flushing was activated. The system also allows for "grey" water to be used (such as water from baths, sinks, dish-washers etc) which will enable the flushing to continue during the dry summer periods.

The level of enquiries received has been exceptional and future developments, such as the production of smaller diameter units, is well under way.

# Linking 'lions' and dragons

The new sealion enclosure at Colchester Zoo lies on the opposite side of the zoo's main access road to a new exhibit for Komodo dragons, due to be opened next year. To link the two, The Johnson Dennehy Planning Partnership designed a new system of tunnels. Visitors will be able to view the sealions up close by walking under the water, through a 24m-long acrylic tunnel, which then leads into a precast concrete walkway beneath the access road.

A specialist Japanese company has been commissioned to produce and install the

acrylic tunnel and windows, capable of withstanding the high water pressures in the 500,000-gallon enclosure.

J Breheny Contractors Ltd constructed the underpass by installing twenty precast concrete culverts, in standard sizes manufactured by Milton Precast, creating a 2.5m high by 3m wide walkway.

The sealion enclosure will be clad in artificial rockwork and coral to resemble the natural coastal habitat. The enclosure base and walls are constructed from 550mm thick reinforced concrete and will require 150 tonnes of steel and 1000 m<sup>3</sup> of concrete.



## Pipes rise to Red Bull challenge

Pipes from Hepworth Concrete met a demanding challenge issued by energy drink brand Red Bull when used as an integral part of a unique bike trials course - The Red Bull Bike Battle - specially erected for an event in Nottingham involving Europe's top 15 riders.

In this case the bikes were not motorcycles but pedal-powered mountain bikes. The course, laid out in Nottingham's market square, presented the riders with a series of obstacles to be negotiated around, jumped over or travelled along. Concrete pipes,

ranging in diameters from 300mm to 1500mm and laid both vertically and horizontally, were used to test the skills of the riders who included the top 10 mountain bikers from England and the top 5 from elsewhere around Europe. The riders competed for a top prize of £750 and an all-expenses paid trip to Boston, USA to take part in a similar event there.

The Bike Battle is one of a series of unusual challenges being organised by Red Bull as part of its on-going promotional programme.



### CPSA Members

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CPSA member companies represent almost 100% of the concrete drainage industry.

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