

Watson & Hillhouse



Unequalled International Service in Piling Since 1972

2014

Welcome - from the Managing Director

Welcome to the latest edition of the Watson & Hillhouse newsletter. 2014 got off to a great start - surpassing our expectations and for this we would like to thank all of our customers. It's very easy to pat ourselves on the back (after all we must be doing something right) but we wouldn't exist without our customers. I think it is also important to acknowledge our equipment suppliers. We work very closely with them to ensure that the products we buy, not only meet our customers' needs, but totally comply with today's regulatory standards.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and look forward to your ongoing support.

Phil Bell



UK CONSTRUCTION ON THE UP?



Many industry experts have stated that UK construction is in recovery and we have certainly seen an increase in UK sales.

For the past few years the majority of our sales have been overseas but, for the first time in a while, UK sales of new and used equipment has surpassed our international trade.

Piling specialists, Berryrange and Fussey Piling, recently invested in the latest Kowan WP-150 Still Worker noise and vibration free sheet pile pressing machines. For both customers the purchases were additions to their existing fleets, demonstrating the high and increasing demand for this technology. It also meant they were able to take advantage of the rises in the 'Annual Investment Allowance' (AIA) which the Chancellor increased to an unprecedented £500,000 in 2014.



We've also had a great run of sales for our Ozkanlar (OMS) excavator mounted vibratory hammers, not only to UK customers but also overseas.

On the hire side we have been very busy on projects all over the UK, particularly marine works, where on a couple of occasions we had nothing left

in the yard! Still Worker hire has been particularly busy. As we go to print, we have six sites running across London and Northern Europe - all handled by our Neil Davey.

This all indicates to us that the UK construction industry is certainly seeing an upturn and long may it continue.

WORKING WITH YOU

We love working with you - if you have a challenging project, talk to us. We have years of in-house experience and we can help you find a solution to most problems as the following stories will testify.

LIMITED ACCESS



The Beens Groep from Holland are undertaking urgent repairs to a waterway where the original timber retaining walls have started to crumble. The project will take up to 5 years to complete.

The repair has to be done in 100 metre stages by installing temporary steel sheet piles in front of the existing wall which is then closed off. The water is then pumped out, the old timber wall removed and then a new permanent wall of steel sheet piles is installed with a new fascia. The temporary sheet piles are then extracted to complete that section.

The unique location presented a number of problems which would have been impossible to solve with conventional systems. These included:

the proximity of buildings which meant that noise and vibration had to be virtually eliminated; the mature trees along the canal wall were not allowed to be damaged by overhead equipment, and the only access for the piling and associated equipment was via the canal itself. The answer to these problems was the Kowan Still Worker noise and vibration free sheet pile pressing machine. A piling machine that presses sheet piles into the soil by using the reaction force of the previously pressed in piles and walks itself along the pile line without the need for a crane.

When the work commenced further difficulties became apparent. The first 'Z' pile had to be 'tied' into the existing 500 mm wide 'U' pile wall in order to start the pressing procedure. However,

ZU-100 clamps cannot be configured for 500 mm wide 'U' sections. Therefore our engineering department designed a reaction platform (inset) to be welded onto the existing piles on which the ZU-100 would be placed to install the first pile. Due to the extremely difficult access, a 600 ton mobile crane was needed to lift the ZU-100 into place. Once on the temporary platform, and using the existing 'U' piles as reaction, the Still Worker successfully installed the first 2 piles with ease.

One of our operators commenced the works and during the course of the initial 3 - 4 week period, trained two Beens Operatives who eventually took over the reins. The Watson & Hillhouse pile press operator training programme is the only one of its type recognised and accredited by the CITB.

// We initially hired from a competitor of yours, but they seem to be a 9-5 kind of company. We're looking for a more flexible approach.

// As always the service from Watson & Hillhouse is amazing.

REDUCING THE IMPACT

One of our customers was looking for a solution to a particular problem and contacted us to see if we could help.

They were working on a harbour wall project and required a hammer in order to drive the piles in effectively. However, being in a built up area, albeit with a river on one side, they needed to keep the noise and disturbance to residents and visitors to a minimum. They approached us to see if there was anything that could be done.

The type of piles being driven were the 'HZ' wall which precluded the use of a Still Worker. With tough ground conditions an impact hammer was the only solution to drive the piles to the required toe level. Our engineering department once again took up the challenge of finding a solution.

This entailed designing a sound deadening 'skirt' around the base and upper part of a BSP CX hydraulic hammer and blocking off other holes by bolting sheet metal fitted with acoustic material over them.

The system was a resounding success with a reduction in noise level of around 10dB (A). The contractor had two gangs operating, each with a powerful PVE 40VM high frequency variable moment vibratory hammer to reduce the vibration for pre-driving the piles and a BSP CX110 hydraulic drop hammer with the sound enclosures for final driving. Another section of the works is to be undertaken later this year and the contractor has said they will have no hesitation in using the same equipment for this next phase.



AS GOOD AS NEW

All some plant needs is some TLC to bring it back to its former glory - it's often the first impression a customer has of your company.

We know as well as anyone that the equipment gets knocked around. It's the nature of the job, but we like to keep our equipment well maintained and looking good. Therefore it is not uncommon for us to remove an item of equipment from our fleet, overhaul and repaint it. We believe maintaining our plant to the highest standards ensures peak performance and minimal breakdowns.

Spare Parts Support

For maintenance of your own equipment, we hold in stock spare parts for all manufacturers of plant we own. If we don't have it in stock we can source it. Not only that but we can deliver parts to you wherever you are in the world.

Our Parts Manager, Ricky Dade, is always happy to help and has a reputation for providing good service. We get some really nice feedback from customers - this was from a customer in Australia: "Thanks for your help and excellent service."



PVE 40VM Vibratory Hammer and Power Pack



NEW WEBSITE



We've decided it's time to have a new website designed in order to give a better user experience.

It's a little more visual than our current site and we have ensured it's easy to navigate. Not only that but we've tried to make sure our core values, 'to provide state-of-the-art, high quality piling equipment, backed by a first class service', are communicated to the visitor more effectively.

To the left is a sneak preview of the home page. We hope to be 'live' by the end of October, if not before.

We hope you enjoy surfing.

FORS ACCREDITED

Watson & Hillhouse are pleased to announce that we are now accredited to the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) at bronze level.

The voluntary scheme, operated by Transport for London, started in 2008 to help van and lorry operators comply with the numerous regulations and agencies that commercial vehicle activities are governed by. The aim was to create just one scheme that encompassed all aspects of safety, fuel efficiency, economical operations and vehicle emissions. In so doing this would improve fleet activity specifically in London but also throughout the UK and beyond making the UK's roads safer, cleaner and less congested.

At Watson & Hillhouse we have become increasingly aware of the needs of our customers to comply with legislative

and ethical obligations. Accreditation provides us with the tools to assist you in reaching those obligations whilst we get safer, greener and more efficient.

In order to obtain accreditation we had to demonstrate that we had the policies, procedures and systems in place to meet the criteria laid out by the FORS requirements. This was then assessed by an independent FORS assessor on a visit to our Head Office in Ipswich.

All vehicles and drivers from both our depots are now FORS compliant and will be subject to an annual audit.



WATSON & HILLHOUSE ACADEMY



L-R: Grant Barden, with Watson & Hillhouse staff - Andrew Smith, Robert Burch and Paul Lee

In the last edition we spoke about the Still Worker training we offer which is CITB recognised. We have since had a few students through our doors.

Grant Barden, Plant Manager at Berryrange, obtained his Still Worker certificate in the Principles of Operation and Maintenance, as did three operators from Beens Groep.

We also undertake a lot of our own in-house training in areas such as welding - an illuminating experience as you can see from the picture below!



HEAVY DUTY INVESTMENT...



...In more ways than one! To ensure our customers continue to be supplied with the most reliable, work proven and technically advanced equipment available, we have invested one million pounds sterling with Ipswich based BSP International Foundations to supply us with two CG300 hydraulic drop hammers and one CX110. All three hammers are additions to our fleet.

To ensure we can provide total flexibility to our customers, the CG hammers have been purchased with additional drop weights and cage extensions to enable us to offer all mode options: 12 ton (CG180), 14 ton (CG210) 16 ton (CG240),

18 ton (CG270) and 20 ton (CG300). Both hammers were put straight to work in CG300 configuration. The first hammer hire, secured by our Northern Area Manager, Ken Smith, and supported by our Warrington depot, installed 2 metre diameter tube piles in Liverpool (inset). The second is driving 2.56 metre diameter tubular piles in Felixstowe (above).

Whilst the CG hammers are generally hired to install tubular bearing piles, the CX110 can be fitted with legs and inserts to install both 'U' and 'Z' sheet piles, as well as 'H' and concrete piles. If fitted with a sleeve it can install up to 1.42 metre diameter tubular piles.

We have owned and operated BSP piling equipment since we started 42 years ago and have always found the hammers to give great performance. Our new purchases are no exception and are all performing well on their respective projects.

Our philosophy is not only to own and operate state-of-the-art piling equipment, but to ensure it is fully prepared, tested before every hire and delivered to site on time. If you need assistance at any time during the hire process, we offer advice on hammer selection, operation and safety. We have an on-site service that is second to none.

EXHIBITIONISTS!

We love showing off and we've been showing off our new agencies and our existing range this year. Below are just two of the exhibitions we have attended this year so far.

Seawork International, Southampton



We took advantage of our new status as UK and Ireland agents for Damen range of DOP submersible dredging pumps, the perfect tool for small scale dredging works in Marinas, Ports and Canals, to exhibit at this year's Seawork International exhibition in June.

It was a successful show for us. We spoke to a lot of people in the industry and generated a lot of interest. We are now following up on enquiries and working hard to bring the DOP pump to dredging contractors across the UK.



Samoter, Italy

We joined our agents in Italy, Hi-Tech SRL, who were promoting their range of piling and foundation equipment. Phil Bell joined Roberto Dall'Ara, MD of Hi-Tech, to promote our Kowan Still Worker product.

Between 1999 and 2003 we sold seven 'U' pile Still Workers into Italy in order to press in sheet piles as part of the Venice flood protection project.

More recently we have been successful with our ZU-100 model with one contractor in particular, Chimin SPA, purchasing a machine which they have fully utilised installing sheet piles - mostly for basement projects.



JAPANESE ADVENTURE

It's really important to us that we continue to keep all our employees up to date with equipment innovations and to ensure that they are fully competent on all machines that we sell and hire.

It was with this in mind that we sent Robert Burch to Japan in March. He had half a day for sight seeing, as you can see here, but then it was four days of intense product training to develop a greater understanding of the Still Worker.

So what did he learn? Well, not only did he learn more about the operational system of the Still Worker, but he is now our expert on the Kowan Press-in Monitoring System that records pile pressing tonnages against the prevailing soil conditions.



Marion Moves

After 26 years at the reception desk (she has been allowed home evenings and weekends) Marion has moved on to become our new Hire and Workshop Administrator. She is now on-hand, for both departments, to enable them to run more efficiently by ensuring that all paperwork is up-to-date and computer systems are in order.



New Faces?

Since the last edition we welcome two 'new' faces to the team.

With Marion's role as receptionist coming to an end we welcome Maria Adams to the hot seat. Maria is familiar with us already since her husband is employed in the workshop so she has been to many a Watson & Hillhouse shindig.

We also welcome Joe Manning who is not so much a new face but an old one (a young old one!). He left his role as a fitter to travel around New Zealand in the middle of 2013 and he has just returned and taken on a new role as Assistant Operations Manager. He will be helping Paul Lee with his day to day role.

MEET THE MOBILE TEAM

When you hire an excavator mounted vibratory hammer, it is accompanied by a fitter to ensure it is fitted and working properly and sort out any problems - should any arise. They also attend all equipment breakdowns and because we know where they are, thanks to vehicle tracking, they can be sent straight to you.



Alex Cox has been with Watson & Hillhouse for 6 years and is based at our Warrington depot and George Harvey is based at Ipswich and has been with us for 12 years. George went through our comprehensive 4 year apprenticeship programme and Alex has undergone significant product training since joining us from the general hire industry. Both therefore have the knowledge and experience to tackle any problem.

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