

# focus

Aberthaw in your local community

## 2021 getting back to normal

I am pleased to bring you the latest issue of Focus On Aberthaw at a time when it looks positive for society to start moving on from the initial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. We clearly have some way to go but with over 69% of people in Wales having had both vaccinations (at the time of writing), there is reason to start feeling optimistic.

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**The raw mill motor team**

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# 2021 - getting back to normal

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On site we continue to put safety first, with Covid-19 measures still in place. We want to ensure our employees, contractors and visitors continue to feel as safe and protected as possible. (See the article on page 3 for more information.)

Since our last newsletter we have completed two major projects involving our raw mill - the mill which grinds our raw materials before they enter into the kiln. We have also recruited two new apprentices and we look forward to Ethan and Paul joining our team in September. Read more about these developments on the inside pages.

In other news, I am pleased to say that there is good demand for our cement product(s) with major

construction projects and home DIY customers keeping us very busy.

I hope you find this edition of our newsletter an interesting read. We would love to hear your feedback. See the back page for more information on how to contact us. Wishing all readers a safe and enjoyable autumn.

**Stuart Escott**  
Aberthaw Plant manager

## Our process starts here...

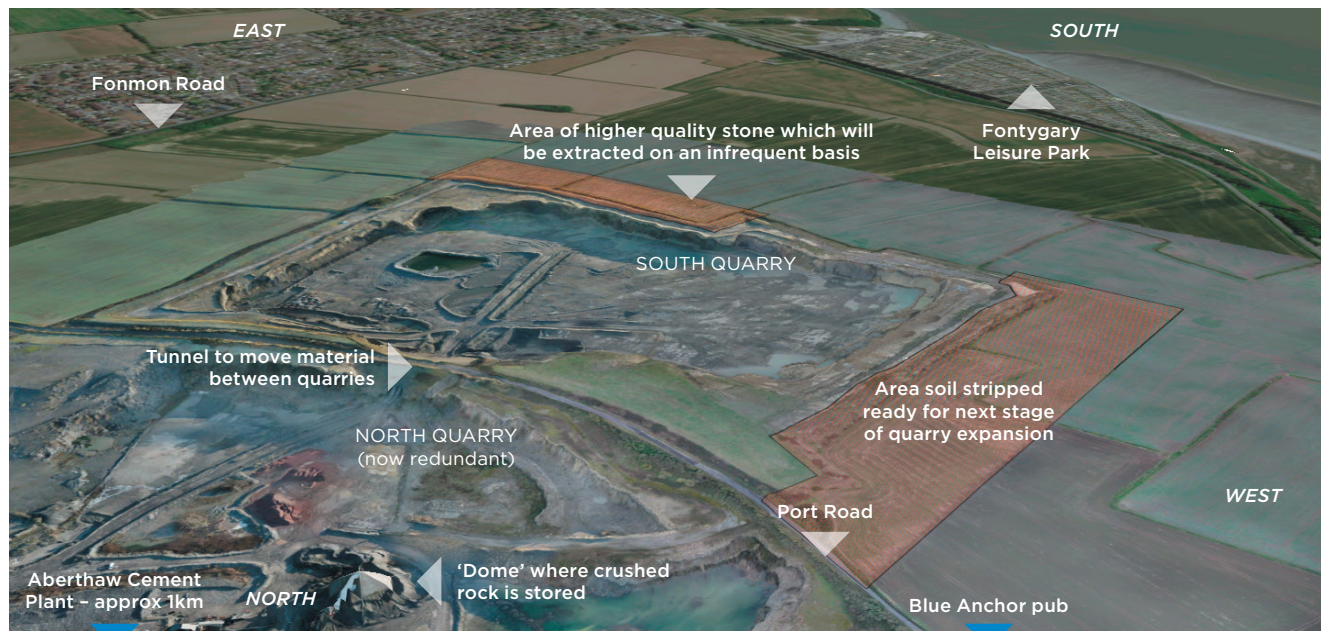


Image Credit: Esri UK, Esri, Maxar, Microsoft, Tarmac.

Recent aerial shot of the quarry

Our quarry provides us with the majority of the stone we need to make cement. This aerial photograph shows the layout of the quarry - we have recently completed a strip of 4.6 hectares of 'overburden' (topsoil), ready for the next phase of development. This area will provide us with stone for the next step in our quarry development plan.

We extract limestone following the designs approved in our planning permission, which is granted and monitored by the Vale of Glamorgan. We carry out our quarry operation, as with all aspects of the site, with due regard for the surrounding community.

Future extraction will advance first to the site boundary in the west, then southwards, and subsequently towards the east. The rate of working is not possible to predict as it depends very much on customer demand, but also on the quality of both the Aberthaw stone and, more critically, the other raw materials that we import from quarries in South Wales to site. All of these factors determine how we work Aberthaw quarry.

# Keeping Covid-19 safe

As the country starts to adapt to a less restricted way of living and working, we will continue to work hard to keep our employees, contractors and visitors Covid-19 safe. Since the first lockdown in March 2020, we made a significant financial commitment to adapt our procedures to ensure distancing and sanitising measures were in place. In addition, we have employed on-site nurses who have carried out over 900 tests. We will continue to follow Welsh government guidelines, including operating one-way systems in buildings and masks being worn inside when standing.



Robbie Webber (left) and Norman Creighton with their European awards.

## European safety awards for Aberthaw duo

Safety is always the number one focus here at Aberthaw Cement Plant. For electrical engineer Norman Creighton and shift supervisor Robbie Webber, this commitment has resulted in recognition in the form of a European Safety award from CRH, Tarmac's parent company.

The pair devised an enhanced approach to the existing Industry Standard electrical 'isolation' safety procedures used by people on site when working on mechanical equipment.

An 'isolation' is where interlinked mechanical equipment is isolated from a live electrical supply to ensure that there is no risk for anyone working on or near that equipment. To guarantee someone cannot accidentally work on live equipment, a series of personal padlocks and keys, held only by permitted workers, are used to 'lock off' the electricity supply to each piece of kit. So long as someone

is still working on the equipment, their personal padlock remains in place to ensure the electrical supply stays locked off.

However, this isolation procedure can be very complex, particularly when multiple people are working on several pieces of interrelated equipment at the same time. Norman and Robbie came up with a system that includes special colour locks to act as stops at various stages of the isolation process.

Steven Davies, health and safety advisor said: "Many congratulations to Robbie and Norman for this well-deserved award. We are always encouraging colleagues to look for ways to take site safety up another level. It is really good to see people stepping away from their day-to-day roles to find practical ways to do this."

# Welcome to the team!

We are pleased to introduce you to our successful apprenticeship applicants for 2021. Ethan Black, 18 from Tonypanydy will start as a mechanical apprentice, with his first year based at Coleg y Cwmoedd. And Paul Condick, 18, from Cardiff takes on an electrical apprenticeship with his first year at Cardiff and the Vale College. Welcome to the team!



Paul Condick



Ethan Black



Aberthaw Plant manager Stuart Escott (left) with Victor Lishman

## Graduate Victor enjoys fast-paced programme

Meet 24-year-old Victor Lishman who is coming to the end of his Tarmac graduate programme here at Aberthaw Cement Plant. Having graduated from Lancaster University in 2019 with a degree in chemical engineering, Victor then moved to Wales to start here as a graduate process engineer in September 2019.

On the technical side, he quickly became involved in several site projects, rotating between them and learning from other established process engineers. However, six months into his programme, the pandemic hit, and the wider skills training and networking came to a halt.

Victor explained: "Luckily the initial impact of the pandemic did not affect my graduate programme too much. I was able to continue with my process engineering

work on site. It was a shame that the other elements of my graduate programme - like wider networking, business and people skills - were put on pause as I wasn't able to travel to other Tarmac sites.

"However, despite Covid-19, it has been a fantastic opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge of a fast-paced industrial process and work with a great team who always manage to perform and come up with creative solutions."

Victor is pleased that the business development aspects of the graduate programme will now be re-started. Until the programme is complete, he will continue to live in Cardiff, which he has found to be much larger than the town of Lancaster where he had been studying, but equally welcoming!

# Major projects deliver big benefits

It is fair to say that we talk a lot of cement-making jargon at Aberthaw Cement Plant. One of the terms we use is 'raw mill'. This mill takes the crushed stone from the quarry (a raw material) and grinds it down so that it is fine enough to be heated up in our kiln to make cement.

In the past few months two major projects have been completed on site to improve our operational, environmental and energy efficiency - both involved the raw mill.

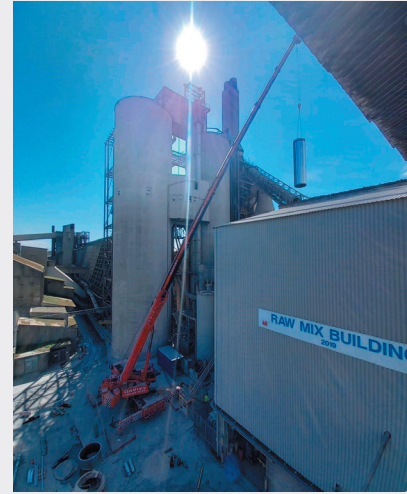
Project manager Dylan Le Clare explained: "The first project involved the raw mill motors. The previous motors had been installed in 1974. So, after 47 years long service, and numerous overhauls, we have retired these and replaced them with two energy efficient new motors.

"The new motors, which weigh 10 tonnes each, bring the latest milling power technology to site and are quieter and more energy efficient.

"The second project was the replacement of ducting which takes hot gases from our kiln to the raw mill. Here the gases 'pre-heat' the raw material before it enters the kiln to be heated up to temperatures around 1400°C and converted into cement 'clinker'. The original ducting also dated back to 1974; some of the ducting was replaced in 2015 and the rest this year using a giant 220-tonne crane.

"I am pleased to say both projects have been completed through the hard work of our site teams and local contractor support. These are now delivering significant

benefits to our overall performance - particularly around energy efficiency."



The 220 tonne-crane lifts the new duct work into place.



Welsh Poppy



Bee Orchid

## Adding a splash of colour

At Aberthaw Cement Plant, as an industrial operation, we have shown previously how our operations can co-exist with nature and we are pleased to encourage biodiversity and wildflowers where possible. The beehives located in the quarry are successfully managed by a local beekeeping family and we are delighted to enjoy the pots of honey that result.

In this issue of our newsletter, we want to focus on the wildflowers found on site. They include colourful species such as the oxeye daisy, the common daisy, buttercups, forget-me-nots, bird's-foot trefoil (also known as 'eggs and bacon' due to its yellow and pink appearance), speedwell, the beautiful yellow Welsh poppy, field madder with its tiny pale lilac flowers, the pink Herb-Robert, bee orchids, scarlet pimpernel, the bee orchid and the impressive red valerian

Insects such as the red-tailed bumble bee, cinnabar moth, miner bees and of course our resident honey bees all benefit from these

specially created wildflower areas throughout the summer months.

And we are boosting our wildflower areas through a wildflower seed donation from our neighbours at Fonmon Castle.

Delena Harris from Fonmon Castle's team said: "The wildflower seed gift to Tarmac Aberthaw is part of our 'Step into the Wild' wilding project focused on the Kenson river valley and surrounding grassland and woodland. It aims to restore valuable wildlife habitats and encourage the return of lost species of native plants, animals and birds. We are looking forward to seeing a new area of wildflowers become established at the Tarmac site".

Plant manager Stuart Escott added: "There are always opportunities to find areas to plant up and create wildflower patches. Our rewilding work has added a welcome splash of colour to the site, and we look forward to extending this further thanks to the kind donation of native wildflower seeds from Fonmon Castle".



Left to right - Volunteers Tim Bunce, Glyn Davis, Ian Buckley and site manager Neil Hardy.

## Cement donation helps Barry charity make improvements

We have donated more than 70 bags of Blue Circle cement to Barry-based charity Amelia Trust Farm to make site improvements, ready for its return to normal opening.

Tarmac Aberthaw has had a long-standing partnership with the charity which helps disadvantaged young people gain skills, confidence and experience to help them move forward at a critical time in their lives.

The cement has been used for various projects around site, including posts for a sign at the main entrance, pothole work, fencing and new gate posts. The donation was organised by ex-Tarmac employee Glyn Davis, one of the charity's volunteers.

The Farm, which opened 30 years ago, is also a countryside sanctuary for the local community to enjoy. It is home to a variety of animals from rabbits and ferrets to pigs, alpacas and donkeys.

Neil Hardy, site manager at the Farm said: "The ongoing support from Tarmac Aberthaw has been vital these last few years. The latest donation couldn't have come at a better time - there was a lot of work to be done using cement around site! I also have to say a massive thank you to Glyn Davis, one of my volunteers who makes this all possible."

Stuart Escott, Tarmac's Aberthaw Plant manager added: "Our partnership with this fantastic local charity goes back many years and it was a pleasure to be able to support them in such a practical way once again. I very much hope they can now get back to the farm being fully open for both the visitors who enjoy a day out there, and for the young people who benefit from attending the farm as an alternative school."

For more information about the Amelia Trust Farm please go to [www.ameliatrustfarm.org.uk](http://www.ameliatrustfarm.org.uk).

Do you have any comments on this newsletter or suggestions for what you would like to see in future issues? Do you have any questions about what we do at Tarmac Aberthaw?

We would be happy to hear from you - please email us at [aberthaw.feedback@tarmac.com](mailto:aberthaw.feedback@tarmac.com) or call 01446 752300 and we will respond to you as quickly as possible.

**we welcome  
your feedback**