

Geotechnical Courses

Soil Description Work-shop

26th January 2017

1st March 2017

Rock Description Work-shop

2nd March 2017

10th May 2017



Health & Safety Courses

IOSH Safe Supervision (3 Day)

11th - 13th January 2017

IOSH Avoiding Danger (1 Day)

20th January 2017



IOSH Working Safely (1 Day)

11th November 2016

Geotechnical Courses

Geo Foundation Design

21st December 2016

Geotech' Lab Testing Awareness

7th December 2016



Other Events

Geotechnica 2017

12th & 13th July 2017

@ Warwickshire Exhibition

Centre, nr. Leamington Spa



theGeotechnica

November 2016 | Issue 54

The Quest for Quality Geotechnical Data

The UK's newest geotechnical specialists strive for the very best quality results



Geotechnica 2017 Gold Sponsors Revealed

Information on Geotechnica's return to the WEC in 2017

Long Term Health and Wellbeing

The BDA's latest seminar looks to tackle the issue of work-related illness

Managing Underground Risk

Geotechnical Engineering discuss the importance of utility surveyance

GEOTECHNICAL COURSES

SOIL DESCRIPTION WORKSHOP - £275 + VAT

@Equipe Offices, Banbury

26th January 2017

1st March 2017

6th April 2017

9th May 2017

ROCK DESCRIPTION WORKSHOP - £275 + VAT

@Equipe Offices, Banbury

2nd March 2017

10th May 2017

27th July 2017

28th September 2017

GEOTECHNICAL FOUNDATION DESIGN - £225 + VAT

@Equipe Offices, Banbury

21st December 2016

GEOTECHNICAL LABORATORY
TESTING AWARENESS - £225 + VAT

@Brunel University, London

7th December 2016

IN SITU TESTING - £225 + VAT

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IOSH Safe Supervision of Geotechnical Sites

This three day geotechnically focussed health and safety course has been developed by industry specialists and is a unique course for managers and supervisors involved in projects in the drilling and geotechnical industry. The course is certified by IOSH and has been approved by The Environment Agency, Thames Water, AGS and BDA and also meets all of the requirements of the UKCG (formerly the Main Contractor's Group).

NEXT COURSE DATES: 11th - 13th January 2017
15th - 17th February 2017

IOSH Avoiding Danger from Underground Services

This one day geotechnically focussed health and safety course follows the requirements and guidance set out within HSG47 and includes the four chapters; identifying and managing the dangers; planning the work; detecting, identifying and marking and safe excavation. Important aspects include the use of real examples from the geotechnical industry and delivery by chartered advisors who are from within the industry.

NEXT COURSE DATES: 20th January 2017
24th February 2017

IOSH Working Safely (on Geotechnical Sites)

This one day geotechnically focussed health and safety course has been developed by industry specialists as a foundation to site safety for all personnel involved in projects in the drilling and geotechnical industry. Its aim is to impart the core safety skills required of those working on geotechnical sites by building on their existing specialist technical skills and making it relevant to their place of work.

NEXT COURSE DATES: 11th November 2016
23rd February 2017



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Welcome

Welcome to the 54th Edition of **theGeotechnica** - the UK's fastest growing online geotechnically focussed e-magazine.

The opening article of this month's magazine comes from Liz Withington, Senior Manager at Geotechnical Engineering Ltd. Providing an insight into utility surveyance, Liz examines the risks that buried services pose to construction activities and the role that utility surveys can play in avoiding them.

Following Liz's excellent look at utility surveys is exciting news regarding the UK's largest geotechnical conference and exhibition. As Geotechnica returns to the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre in 2017 for it's eighth successive outing, **theGeotechnica** can exclusively reveal the Gold Sponsors for the event. Find more details on page 15.

Our third entry for the month comes from the British Drilling Association (BDA). The BDA are looking to promote long term health and wellbeing as a priority to the geotechnical industry. The first step along this way is a



seminar promoting awareness for the issue on November 16th 2016.

The final entry into this month's issue of **theGeotechnica** is an interview initially conducted for the October issue of BUILD Magazine. Director Julian Lovell introduces the UK's newest geotechnical specialist - S M Associates. In this interview Julian discusses the aims for the new company and how they aim to deliver the highest quality investigations for the UK GI industry.

As with every new edition of the magazine, the Editorial Team here at **theGeotechnica** will be on the lookout for even more new, original and interesting content from all corners of the sector, and would actively encourage all readers to come forward with any appropriate and relevant content - whether it be a small news item or a detailed case study of works recently completed or being undertaken. If this content is media rich and interactive, then all the better. We are looking to increase the already large readership of the magazine through better social media integration and promotion, as well as improving content month on month.

Finally, for any content that is submitted we will ensure that an advertising space, proportionate to the quality of content provided, is reserved should you wish to place an advert in that single edition of the magazine. We hope you enjoy this month's edition of the magazine and are inspired to contribute your own content for the coming editions of **theGeotechnica**.

**Editorial Team,
theGeotechnica**

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Soil Description Workshop - £275 + VAT per person

This one day geotechnical training course is delivered by the UK's leading Soil and Rock Description expert, Professor David Norbury, and will bring delegates up to speed on the changes within the Standards and provide a detailed approach to soil description practices and techniques. The British Standards (Codes) under which investigations in the UK have been carried out continue to incorporate and mirror the European Standards. UK practice has changed to meet these new requirements and practitioners will learn about them and how to follow compliant soil logging techniques within this course.



Rock Description Workshop - £275 + VAT per person

From 2007 new European Standards have started replacing the British Standards (Codes) under which investigations in the UK have been carried out. UK working practice will have to change to meet these new requirements but few practitioners are aware of the changes or the timetable. The workshop will comprise a series of lectures on the changes, and lectures on rock description followed by practical sessions describing rock and compiling mechanical logs of rock core.



In Situ Testing - £225 + VAT per person

The course will cover both the theory and the practice of various In Situ Testing techniques used on typical geotechnical projects. In addition the courses will consider the effect that Eurocodes will have on the UK's current practice. This course provides an overview of in situ tests used in common practice and some of the more specialist tests together with their advantages and limitations.



A collaboration between



Geotechnical Foundation Design - £225 + VAT per person

This one day course will provide a general overview of foundation design. It will include an assessment of the use and choice of shallow foundations and piles. It will cover the derivation of bearing capacity formula and their use. Exercises will be carried out to calculate the working loads and settlement of simple foundations. The methods used to calculate these will be in accordance with those described in Eurocode.



IOSH Working Safely (on Geotechnical Sites) - £175 + VAT per person

This one day course is developed by industry specialists within RPA Safety Services and Equipe Training as a foundation to site safety. Its aim is to impart the core safety skills required of those working on geotechnical sites by building on their existing specialist technical skills. After attending the course, candidates should be able to identify hazards on site, understand basic safety legislation, participate fully and confidently in site safety consultation and manage priority risks to a sufficient standard.

IOSH Avoiding Danger from Underground Services - £150 + VAT per person

Partnering with RPA Safety Services once again, Equipe provide another IOSH certified health and safety course. This one day course is aimed at anybody involved in specifying, instructing, managing, supervising or actually breaking ground and really addresses the problems and risks related to underground services, which may be encountered during both planning and execution of geotechnical projects.



IOSH Safe Supervision of Geotechnical Sites - £450 + VAT per person

Equipe has partnered with RPA Safety Services, an independent occupational health and safety specialist, to provide a unique IOSH certified course for the Drilling and Geotechnics industry. This three day course is certified by IOSH, is specifically focussed on the geotechnical industry and provides a totally unique and relevant Health and Safety course for managers and supervisors.



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RISK MANAGEMENT: THE UTILITY SURVEY

Providing an insight into utility surveyance for theGeotechnica is Liz Withington, Senior Manager at [Geotechnical Engineering Ltd.](#) In this month's article Liz examines the risks that buried services pose to construction activities and the role that utility surveys can play in avoiding them.

When planning any construction related activity it is essential to have an understanding of where all buried services are to prevent harm to staff, the public and the environment.

The first activity in the risk management process for your project should be to compile a copy of the statutory records of the utilities for the site. Two types of service search can be

carried out, a standard and a full service. A Full Service to PAS 128 Level D is where all known asset owners within the area of interest are contacted, a complete Utility Record Pack can then be compiled which includes all affected and non-affected apparatus.

The second activity in the risk management process is then to accurately identify and map underground apparatus and

“The second activity in the risk management process is then to accurately identify and map underground apparatus and services...”

services in accordance with BSI PAS 128 and HSG47.

- BSI PAS 128 is the British Standard Specification for underground utility detection,

verification and location. This is the specification to which the utility survey industry works to deliver its services to a recognised level of accuracy.

- HSG47: Avoiding Dangers from Underground is guidance aimed at all those involved in commissioning, planning, managing and carrying out work on or near underground services. It outlines the potential dangers of working near underground services and gives advice on how to reduce any direct risks to people's health and safety, as well as the indirect risks arising through damage to



services. It explains the three basic elements of a safe system of work during excavation:

- Planning the work
- Locating and identifying buried services
- Safe excavation

In accordance with HGS47 once the work has been planned the next process is to locate and identify buried services. This is done by a combination of sub-surface scanning technologies including Electro Magnetic Locators (EML) and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) techniques to detect, trace and verify buried services in the proposed locations of boreholes and excavations. By using both EML and GPR

“By using both EML and GPR techniques the location and depth of services can be determined...”

techniques the location and depth of services can be determined including non-metallic services such as cable ducts, plastic and clay pipes. All the detected services should then be identified and marked up on the site using spray paint or chalk.

A GPR survey To PAS 128 is considered by many to be the best practice approach as this survey provides the most accurate picture of a site. ►



The service should involve the following techniques:

- Gathering and analysis of statutory/public records and drawings
- Deployment of EML and GPR techniques to locate and map metallic and non-metallic services including underground tanks and voids.
- Photographic records of manhole chambers and inspection covers.
- A CAD topographical drawing should then be produced of the site, accurately identifying the position of all known services, including their depths.
- Detailed report, outlining any site limitations

It is also essential to consider

“It is also essential to consider the training of the surveyors carrying out the works.”

the training of the surveyors carrying out the works. Depending on the type of sites they are working on the surveyors should be trained and competent with the following qualifications:

- CSCS
- SPA Petrol Retail
- LPS trained (ESSO)
- Defensive Driver Training
- TSA Approved 5 day Utility Surveyor Course

- National Grid Person (Substations)
- BESC (Substations)
- PTS and IWA
- QCF Level 3 and 5

“Vacuum excavation is an intrinsically safe method of avoiding dangerous and expensive utility strikes.”

When required to undertake a PAS 128 Level A survey, safe excavation of the utilities to confirm their location should be carried out either by hand digging or vacuum excavation.

“Depending on the ground conditions, the excavation methods are either by hydro or pneumatic techniques.”

Vacuum excavation is an intrinsically safe method of avoiding dangerous and expensive utility strikes. In line with HSG47 industry best practice, the method eliminates the risk from buried services, whether it be checking for known services or for excavation at borehole positions prior to drilling.

Depending on the ground conditions, the excavation methods are either by hydro or pneumatic techniques. The hydro vacuum technique uses a high-pressure water jet delivered by a cyclonic “nozzle”. It can be used in all soil types including cohesive soils. The slurry waste is removed into the on-board storage tank by suction methods and then is safely disposed of. The pneumatic method injects air into the ground, loosening the materials, which are then removed by suction methods. The technique produces dry spoil which can easily be put back into the ground. This method suits non-cohesive soils.

And finally, by following the guidance and best practice you will demonstrate compliance with CDM (The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015) showing that:

- the work has been planned and so the risks involved are managed from start to finish
- the surveyors are trained and competent
- information about the risks and how they are being managed is available
- the information is effectively communicated to those who need to know ■



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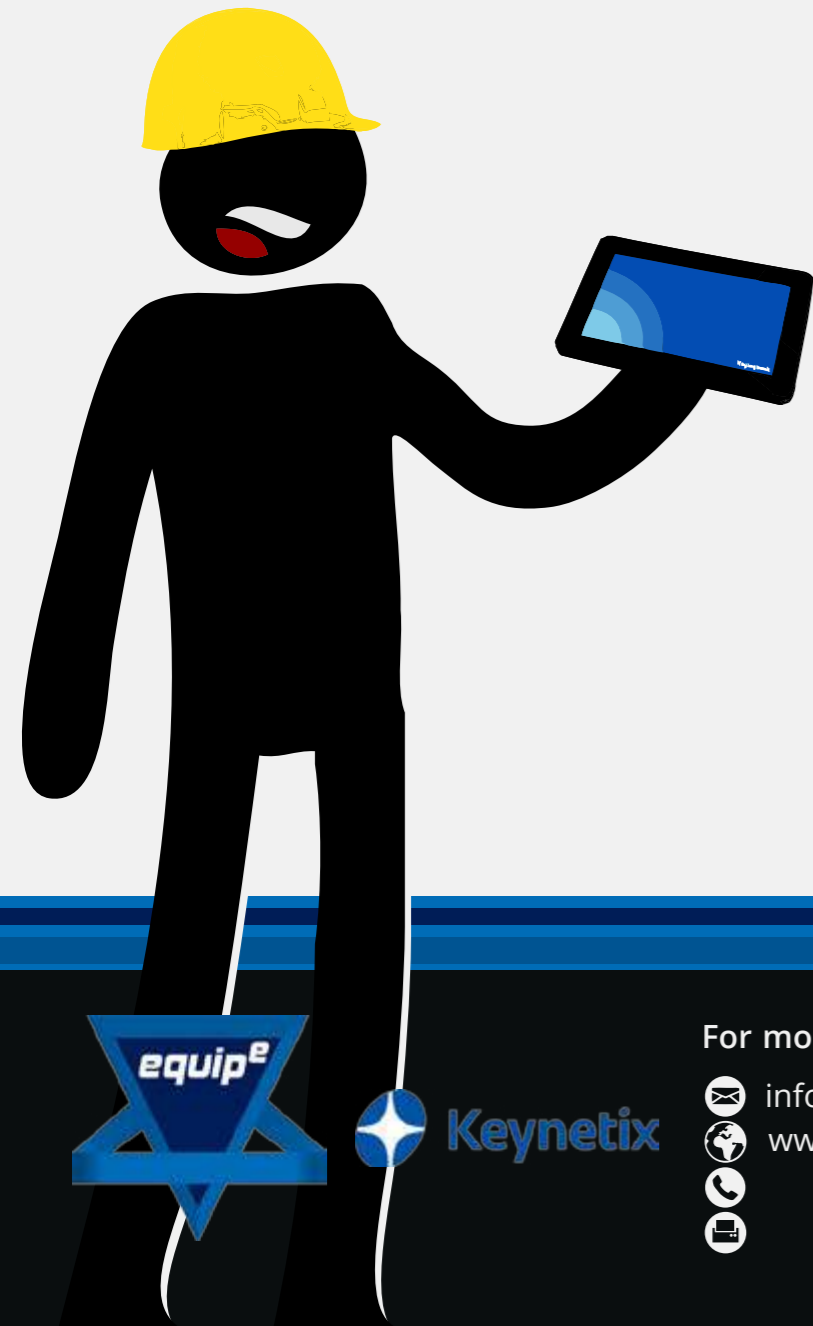
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Geotechnica 2017

As Geotechnica returns to the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre in 2017 for its eighth successive outing, theGeotechnica can exclusively reveal the Gold Sponsors for the event.

In last month's issue we revealed details of a number of new features planned for Geotechnica 2017, as the UK's largest geotechnical conference and exhibition returns to Warwickshire.

Next year will see a bigger focus placed on the exhibition

portion of the event after the success of a more conference-focused event was held at Brunel University earlier in 2016.

Considering this greater focus on product and service exhibition, it is with great pleasure that theGeotechnica

are able to reveal that Casagrande UK have signed on the dotted line to become the Gold Sponsor of the 2017 event.

Casagrande UK have been a staunch supporter of Geotechnica over the years and 2017 will see them return to the mantle of Gold Sponsor - a position that they held in 2015, 2014 and 2013.

Their Gold Sponsorship package will see their logo take headline level inclusion on all event marketing collateral, adorn every event lanyard, as well as sole sponsorship of another new feature for 2017 - the Electronics Lounge.

The Casagrande UK Electronics

Lounge will be an area in which visitors and exhibitors alike can complete work and/or recharge their electronic devices in comfort. The area will have free wifi available as well as comfortable seating and a variety of phone and laptop chargers available for free use.

"Casagrande UK ... are not the only company to have secured their place for Geotechnica 2017 early."

Of course exhibition space comes included in Casagrande UK's sponsorship package, but they are not the only company to have secured their place for Geotechnica 2017 early. Other confirmed exhibitors include the AGS, Dando Drilling International, The Geotechnical Academy, Jet Materials, Rockbit UK, Skelair and TerraDat. ■

Registration Now Open

Registration is now open for Exhibitors, Sponsors and Visitors to be a part of Geotechnica 2017. This year we are also offering discounted Exhibition Combo-Packages for Exhibitors who wish to make the very most out of the excellent opportunity that Geotechnica presents to meet new customers.

Full registration details can be found on the Geotechnica 2017 website - www.geotechnica.co.uk.

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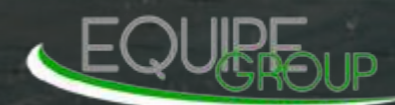
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BDA HOST LONG TERM HEALTH & WELLBEING SEMINAR

The [British Drilling Association](http://www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk) (BDA) are looking to promote long term health and wellbeing as a priority to the geotechnical industry. The first step along this way is a seminar promoting awareness for the issue on November 16th 2016.

The British Drilling Association's new series of seminars starts on November 16th 2016 at the RAF Museum, London (Edgware). The seminar will commence at 1pm until 5pm, and will be followed by a canapé and drinks networking reception.

As always the series of seminars will play host to a fascinating array of topics from some of the geotechnical industry's most respected figures. The chosen topic for this series will focus on 'Long Term Health & Wellbeing'.

Work related ill health impacts about two million workers every single year. In addition, it can cost businesses up to 18 million lost days each year alone. This, along with all the other associated costs, places work related ill health among one of the most serious risks to the geotechnical industry.

Work related illness can take many forms and the symptoms may go unnoticed, slowly getting worse over time until the problem becomes permanent, disabling or even deadly. Companies that understand

the pain and suffering and the financial losses can take steps to manage and prevent work related ill health.

Work-related ill health is a problem for every section of society but much more so for the geotechnical industry, with conditions ranging from cancer and other long-latency diseases, to stress and musculoskeletal disorders. Greater awareness of the harm, costs and preventability of work-related ill health should drive collective action to improve health outcomes.

This will require long-term and coordinated action across all sectors, bringing in additional partners to support the substantial behaviour change and awareness programmes that will be required.

Speakers from HS2, BDA, B & CE (Constructing Better Health), UK Specialist Risk, Pristine Condition will give attendees their interpretation of the problems facing the sector and the remedies that can be implemented.

For more information about attending either this seminar or exhibiting, please visit the BDA website at

<http://www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk/Events/Driving-Long-Term-Health-and-Wellbeing-Seminar-47>

Prices are £75 for BDA member companies and only £95 for non-members. ■

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LONG TERM HEALTH & WELLBEING

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An estimated two million people suffer from ill health caused by their work.
18 million working days are lost each year because working has made them ill.

Work related illness can take many forms and the symptoms may go unnoticed, slowly getting worse over time until the problem becomes permanent, disabling or even deadly. Do you know what work related illness is costing you in lost production, sickness absence, retraining, increased insurance premiums?

Companies that understand the pain and suffering and the financial losses can take steps to manage and prevent work related ill health.

Speakers from: HS2, BDA, B & CE (Constructing Better Health), UK Specialist Risk, Pristine Condition & Skanska,

will explain the risks, the symptoms, the costs to your business and most importantly the remedies

Registration 12.30pm. Speakers 1pm – 5.30pm with 30 min coffee & networking break, followed by canapés, drinks & further networking opportunity.

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THE VALUE OF QUALITY INVESTIGATIONS

In an interview initially conducted for the [October issue of BUILD Magazine](#), Director Julian Lovell introduces the UK's newest geotechnical specialist - [S M Associates](#). In this interview Julian discusses the aims for the new company and how they aim to deliver the highest quality investigations for the UK GI industry.

S M Associates provides high-quality ground investigation and geotechnical consultancy services both within the UK and overseas. The company has a

fleet of rotary drilling rigs and a team of expert site staff and geotechnical specialists. The services offered by the firm are very much as a collaborative

partner, providing the client with specialist geotechnical advice from project inception to foundation design.

Ground risk is often the single biggest contributor to construction delays, over engineering and additional costs and this is often due to the risks not being managed. The S M Associates team

“The S M Associates team has a wealth of knowledge and expertise within ground engineering...”

has a wealth of knowledge and expertise within ground engineering and can help the client to manage this risk, through the provision of high-quality specialist ground investigation services to the built environment sector.

A relatively new company in

the industry, S M Associates was established by leading experts in the fields of ground investigation and geotechnical engineering, and has used its collective knowledge of the industry to establish a unique but cost effective service.

“We often work very closely with Consulting Engineers who have been employed by the client to provide design for their projects,” says Julian Lovell, Director at S M Associates. “Often, the client and many of the consulting companies do not have the ground specialists in-house to do the job themselves, and so S M Associates approach is to become part of the client’s team as their specialist. We always encourage the client to engage or preferably appoint the ground specialists early on in the project. This allows us to build up a better appreciation of the site and the project and design the ground investigation and subsequent geotechnical work to hopefully eliminate or

“Clients have expressed concerns over the quality and reliability of the Ground Investigation data that they are being provided with.”

at least reduce the ground risk of the project.”

It is true that S M Associates have access to a depth and breadth of experience that is, according to Julian, becoming increasingly rare in the industry. “Clients have expressed concerns over the quality and reliability of the Ground Investigation data that they are being provided with. To overcome this, we look to get the basics right, which may seem like a simple enough aim, but many within our industry have been struggling with a lack of investment. As



“...there is a tendency to blame poor performance on low margins, and we are determined to avoid falling into that trap.”

a result, there is a tendency to blame poor performance on low margins, and we are determined to avoid falling into that trap.

“We at S M Associates are

passionate about what we do and the industry we work in,” Julian announces. “We are strong believers that the statement ‘we have always done it this way’ is a dangerous one, as it leads to apathy from within. We always believe that there is a better way of doing our work, and whilst good practice is a perfectly acceptable goal to aim at, there should be no reason not to aim for best practice.

“We are also actively involved with the British Drilling Association which represents the drilling contractors and the



Association of Geotechnical and Geo-Environmental Specialists which represents the consulting engineers. This allows us to keep abreast of the industry but also to be involved in and support any initiatives for improving safety and quality.

According to Julian, the industry is very buoyant at the moment, with major infrastructure projects including rail, smart motorways, and power stations in the pipeline, as well as a multitude of small to medium construction and development projects. Unlike other busy periods, where the work was often concentrated in the South East, there is a spread of work from Scotland to the south coast. Julian brings especial attention to the positive impact

that new rail projects like HS2 will provide for companies such as S M Associates.

“HS2 is currently keeping about 40 per cent of the UK drilling capacity busy, and is likely to require this level of resource for the next two to three years. HS3 and HS4, which take the connections north of Birmingham to Manchester and Leeds, are also likely to require preliminary geotechnical work from 2017 onwards. Crossrail 2 is also scheduled for 2017.

“On top of this, works are currently underway or planned for the next phase of nuclear power and possibly even shale gas – if the politics and environmental concerns can be resolved. So currently, the projected workload is more than enough to keep everybody

in the industry busy.”

“The industry has been slow to innovate... and those who have are not always rewarded...”

As Julian reveals, the numerous new opportunities on the horizon are giving the industry cause to reflect upon its practices, and how they might be applied in these future projects. Currently taking stock of their current situation, and asking if the current plant and techniques are appropriate, S M Associates and its competitors are coming to the conclusion that some of the

drilling techniques that they employ are becoming aged and obsolete. Although effective in variable ground conditions, these methods are not always the safest. This is an important concern for Julian, especially with environmental protection taking such a key position in the debate as the new bank of projects looms ever closer.

“The industry has been slow to innovate,” comments Julian, “and those who have are not always rewarded especially as these older and often more simplistic techniques are cheaper. Therefore, innovation is important, but it has to go hand in hand with improved efficiency and safety. There are often better alternatives, but clients are reluctant to adopt them if they are



significantly more expensive. As technology is embraced more and more, cost typically reduces, and this will allow the sector to become more efficient, safer and cost effective.

On the back of this revelation that technological innovation is key to the industry moving forward and developing new, affordable methods of drilling, Julian discusses the role that his firm plays in cultivating this creative mindset within the industry, and expresses immense pride in playing a leading role in this area.

“S M Associates have formed a number of strategic partnerships with technology companies, as we believe that technology based solutions are another way to move the industry forward and keep us at the forefront. These partnerships have so far involved the adoption of an innovative tablet based digital logging system called KeyLogbook which captures driller’s data at source (on

“S M Associates has been established to become a leading provider of specialist geotechnical services both in the UK and overseas.”

site) and allows it to be sent directly from site in real time using the industry standard digital format (AGS). The S M Associates drilling rigs are also equipped with a sensor based guarding system which means that the rigs are safer and more efficient to use than rigs with the normal heavy safety cages.

“The team are also now looking at advanced technologies which could obtain information about ground conditions using in-situ testing and geophysical techniques. This has in the past been seen to be a ‘black art’ but it is used very successfully in other sectors particularly the

oil and gas sector and across Europe.

“We are aiming to establish ourselves as a specialist within a specialist industry. We plan to get the basics right but also to provide our clients with the benefit of some of the UKs leading experts in our industry. As their experts we can minimise their exposure to ground risk and this will inevitably lead to better and more lean designs. It will also result in no nasty surprises due to ‘unforeseen’ ground conditions which should reduce programme delays and project overruns.”

S M Associates has been established to become a leading provider of specialist geotechnical services both in the UK and overseas. This, as Julian concludes, will be achieved by a commitment to safety and quality, by employing and training the best people and by continual investment in plant and equipment. ■

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