

be informed

Welcome to our first edition

This is our first Be newsletter, in a new style and in a new format so that you can email it to anyone else in your firm or your supply chains. Please let us know what you think of it. We are planning more frequent newsletters, every two months to start with, so all comments and suggestions for future contributions would be very welcome – please contact Suby Snellen.

To complement this we will also soon start a regular e-bulletin news service. Finding time to read key titles within the trade press is often difficult, and a number of Be members have commended the idea of a service that picks out and summarises key stories from the leading journals and email this to you with links to key websites for further information.

Merger

We finally drew a line under our merger on January 16 when Malcolm and Inge vacated the former RCF office on the Whiteknights campus and moved in with the rest of the Be team at the London Road office in Reading. I am sure you will soon see the benefit of having everyone under one roof.

Feedback to the launch of Be before Christmas was very positive, both from members, press and other organisations. We now have to live up to the exciting vision we have set out, whilst staying focussed on the practical strengths that both RCF and DBF had to offer.



Be's officers at St Paul's for the launch of Be – Oct 2002. From left Kevin Thomas, Don Ward, Richard Saxon, Hugh Rogers and Malcolm Dodds.

Be is the largest independent construction supply chain body in the UK. Our 100 member firms are clients, contractors, consultants, specialists and manufacturers, all committed to collaborating for sustainable improvement in the built environment through the research and delivery of change within firms.

<http://www.beonline.co.uk>

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Collaborating for the built environment

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Conference

Those of you who attended told us it was a superb event. Robin Priest of Mapeley arguably stole the show with his robust critique of the industry, which had allowed his integrated business model to flourish. But he was run close by Paul Finch of Emap and CABE, who chaired the afternoon plenary session and gave a tour de force helping our facilitators give excellent accounts of their breakout groups.

Many thanks once again to all who participated, a full record of the proceedings is available from the website www.beonline.co.uk.



Robin Priest of Mapeley at the Be Conference

Advancing the Integration of the Supply Chain in Construction

This EPSRC and DTI funded project (£341,000 over three years) involves Be members in a group of action research projects entitled “the challenges for commercial practice in integrated supply chains”. This project will develop –

- A framework for analysing and describing costs in a way that supports collaboration;
- An evaluation methodology and measurement system that will allow supply chain integrators to measure and improve supply chain performance over time;
- A portfolio of commercial frameworks and agreements that supply chain integrators can use with key supply partners.

The seven companies involved in the project are BDP, Pearce Holdings Ltd, Bovis Lend Lease, Irvin Whitlock, Emcor Drake & Scull and Wates. The Open University Business School is discussing with three other members the possibility of their involvement in the project.

In January the University of Manchester expressed an interest in engaging the research team to evaluate their proposed use of the new Be Collaborative Construction Contract on a newbuild laboratory project. The ISC research team has also agreed with BDP and Bovis Lend Lease that they will evaluate the effectiveness of the design and cost management processes during detailed design at the Chapelfield development in Norwich. It is significant that both of these initiatives involve clients. The research team is still hoping to find a contractor-led example of integrated working where the team would be interested in engaging with the project in action research mode. We would be very interested to hear from any members of Be who are undertaking an initiative of this nature. Please contact Malcolm Dodds.



Business plan 2003

At its first full meeting in December the Council approved the Board's business plan for 2003. The strategic priorities are Learning, Delivery, and Influence, and our first priority is to conclude a number of the projects and working groups originally started by our predecessors the DBF and RCF.

The Board has approved a list of outputs, which it expects to be delivered in 2003 from its full list of activities. You can expect to see the following by the end of March –

Be outputs Jan-Mar 2003

G4C – “Generation for Collaboration” pack
G4C workshop – “Be the future”
Commercial arrangements and risk management – “Be collaborative” contract
Collaborative working – PFI position paper
Collaborative working – Strategic Forum measurement questionnaire & survey
“Integrated supply chains in construction” learning club
Newsletter
Member Forum
Regional event
Website upgrade

In January the Board approved a new communication strategy which, rather than aiming primarily at PR and the press, is aimed at communicating directly with you, our members, and helping you communicate knowledge and learning within your business.

All of the papers highlighted in bold can be downloaded from our website.

Influencing Government

In December we were approached by the Office of Government Commerce to review their new draft procurement guidelines. Many thanks to those who assisted with this. A copy of the documents and our response is available from the office for those who cannot wait for the published versions which are due to be distributed at the OGC conference on February 26, to which all member firms received invitations.

PFI

The Council debated the government's approach to PFI/PPP procurement, and as a result a task group chaired by Jonathan Hosie of Hammonds has been asked to produce a report within three months. We feel we have much to offer based on the knowledge and experience that members can share. Other key inputs will be our work in developing best practice in collaborative working, and our vision of integrated solution providers. If you have relevant experience to share please do get in touch quickly – this subgroup will only meet initially on a couple of occasions.

Membership subscriptions

In early February members' lead contacts will have received a notice for membership renewal for 2003. Don Ward set down in that letter some of our achievements last year and some of our targets for 2003. He also explained our work programme and our budget on which the subscription level has been set. We hope our plans lead you to renew your membership without further ado, but please do get in touch with Don if you have any questions at all.



Collaborative working

Strategic Forum toolkit

The Strategic Forum's 2002 report Accelerating Change set a target for 20% of construction projects by value to be undertaken by integrated teams and supply chains by end 2004, this figure to reach 50% by end 2007. It committed the Forum to produce an "integration toolkit" by April 2003 to help the industry to achieve this target, and Be's working group on collaborative working, chaired by Kevin Thomas, has led the development of this toolkit. In December we achieved a key milestone when a consultation version was published for review by potential users and other industry stakeholders (see [http://www.cbpp.org.uk/accelerating change](http://www.cbpp.org.uk/accelerating%20change)).

Once the toolkit is published, Be's working group will turn its attention to helping Be members get maximum value from this toolkit through supporting the development of education and training packages and confirmation projects in partnership with Be's training arm CWC Ltd.



CWC Ltd

Be's training arm currently has commissions from the following clients and construction firms to provide consultancy or mentoring services in support of implementing collaborative working policies within those firms –

CWC paying clients

Local authorities: Conwy, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Warwickshire, Sutton, West Sussex, Lancashire, Coventry, Hillingdon, Nottinghamshire, Worcester, Cambridgeshire.

Other clients

Welsh Water, Fusion 21 (a consortium of registered social landlords)

Contractors

Bensons, Dew Construction, Costain, Henry Boot, Owen Williams.

These services are available to Be members at a rate discounted by 25% contact –

Vassos Chrysostomou

vassos@collaborativeworking.co.uk

Neil Jarrett

n.jarrett@warwick.ac.uk

Diary Dates

Feb	25	ISC Project Steering Committee
	27	Benchmarking meeting
Mar	4	AGM
	4	Be Council
	18	Collaborative Working Group
	19	Forum – Thistle Hotel Marble Arch
	27	Benchmarking Working Group
Apr	1	FM Working Group (tbc)
	8	Executive Board
	9	Education and Training Working Group
May	6	Executive Board
	13	ISC Project Steering Committee
	13	FM Working Group (tbc)
Jun	4	Executive Board
	19	Forum – Royal Berkshire Conference Centre, Reading
Sep	19	Forum – Linklaters, London



G4C Generation for Collaboration

“Be the future – Be G4C”

Our grateful thanks to Nerida Williams who is relinquishing her Chairmanship of G4C after two years.

Nerida was the founding chairman of this group and its success owes much to her enthusiasm, strong leadership and engaging personality. We welcome Duncan McIndoe from Turner & Townsend as the new Chairman and wish him every success in establishing the group as an important mouthpiece for young people in the industry

The Group have confirmed their updated name and strapline – as above. To appeal to a wider group of young people, G4C now stands for the Generation for Collaboration rather than Graduates for Collaboration.

The group will issue their new Business Plan in March/April.



Nerida Williams

This will outline their objectives with regard to industry education and training for young people, together with their ideas for promoting careers within the various disciplines.

Their latest G4C Workshop, hosted by Gensler, was held on 11 February. The findings from this workshop will be made available to members. For further details, please contact Malcolm Dodds.



Duncan McIndoe

Life/Work Balance

Be is sponsoring a major project looking at issues relating to life/work balance for young professionals working in the construction industry.

The project, led by Dr Jane Sturges of the Open University Business School, is nearing the end of its first phase, with results to be announced at a Be seminar later in the year. Dr Sturges is now looking for companies across the construction industry supply chain to join the project’s second phase, which will involve their employees, aged 35 and under, completing a questionnaire. No cost is involved – the project is fully funded by the Open University. Participating organisations will receive individual feedback on the findings and advice on how to deal with issues which arise. For further details, please contact Malcolm Dodds at Be or Dr Jane Sturges at j.l.sturges@open.ac.uk.



Funding bid “ICT-Enabled Collaborative Working”

The R&D Directors Group (Industry Network for Construction Research – INCR) reviewed its member organisations’ priorities and decided to put together a bid to DTI in this year’s PII round addressing what, for members, was a major frustration. In collaboration with the International Association of Interoperability (IAI) and Teamwork, we submitted a joint bid for £750,000 over three years under the DTI’s PII programme, called ICT-Enabled Collaborative Working – Sharing what we know and making it work.

Successful application of ICT-Enabled Collaborative Working at project level is seen widely within member organisations and the industry as both resource intensive and uncertain as to timescales and outcomes – in other words, potentially a high cost, high risk activity. The principal consequence of this is that the construction industry is generally reluctant to embark on such work, with the result that key barriers to implementation at project level often remain un-addressed.

The vision for the programme is to secure a fundamental shift in the industry’s supply side performance by using ICT-Enabled Collaborative Working within a target project community of innovative clients and suppliers to improve dramatically the quality and productivity of a group of live construction projects. The main characteristic of this programme is that it

will be conducted to support live construction projects and managed by commercially driven stakeholders concerned with the ownership, provision and management of the built environment. An important secondary characteristic is that it joins the intellectual and financial resources of the academic research community with the business community, facilitating a pooling of ideas, knowledge and experience for collaborative working to a suitable common agenda.

A small group of the project team attended a viva at the DTI on 21 February. DTI will hold its own internal decision-making workshop, and the shortlist of selected proposals will be submitted for ministerial approval in late February. Decisions and feedback will be received in early March, and the successful programmes will begin in April 2003.



“The Red Brick” – Be inspired

At the conference in November we launched “The Red Brick”, a business magazine programme on CD or cassette, to listen to in the car whilst on the way to work, a meeting or site visit.

Conceived by Be, the product is a joint venture with the Construction Best Practice Programme. With the overarching themes of supply chain integration and collaborative working, it is about the management of people, supply chains and projects as they apply to construction.

Features on the first edition of “The Red Brick” included:

- Site Visit – Manchester City Council, Commonwealth Stadium
- Foundations – Peter Rogers, The Strategic Forum
- Executive Summary – ‘Good to Great’, Jim Collins

- Brickbats – Vaughan Burnand, Shepherd Construction
- Management Masterclass – ‘Collaborative Working’, Neil Jarrett
- Company Profile – Supply Chain Management, Exel
- Toolbox – ‘Best Practice Explorer’, Clive Turner
- Project Diary – Tony Giddings, Argent
- Sector Focus – The Needs of the Health Sector: can the construction industry cope?

All Be members received free copies of “The Red Brick”. Feedback to date has been very positive indeed and the Board has agreed in principle to regular editions. All ideas for content would be welcomed – please contact Don Ward or Suby Snellen.



Member's Profile

In our previous Newsletter we welcomed George and Harding and provided a brief outline of the Company. This introduction described them as Building Contractors. They would like to be known as Construction Managers – apologies. To complement this they have provided an interesting article, which better describes their activities.

“We are a modern construction company with a strong heritage of craftsmanship and quality stretching back 135 years to the early days of Bournemouth as a new Victorian town. We have provided a full Design Build service to retained clients for much of that time. In recent years we have supported and in some cases helped to lead the modernisation of construction’s structure and systems. For example, we have been Founder Members of the following organisations:

- Construction Confederation (one of its predecessors) in 1898.
- The NHBRC, just after the Second World War.
- The original NFBTE Guarantee Scheme in the 1980’s.
- The Chartered Building Company Scheme.
- The Considerate Constructors Scheme.
- The Movement for Innovation.

The company offers a complete one-stop integrated Design and Construct service from feasibility to facilities management.

Although a gradually reducing proportion of our work is still tendered under traditional contracts, the majority of our projects are procured and managed under true “Rethinking Construction” lines, partnering with clients and the complete supply chain. Much of this work is long-term repeat business, which for one client has enabled us to be constructing their regular building type for the same price as we did 20 years ago, in half the time, to an improved design and specification and with an equitable margin for us and our suppliers.

We are now offering a full independent professional consultancy service as an integral part of our construction and construction management activities. We have been providing for the last 18 months an innovative bespoke modular/sectional off site construction service that can be

tailored to the needs of particular clients and projects on a one off basis. George & Harding are one of the partners in the “Urban Settings” consortium which is developing modular relocatable housing, based around shipping containers.”



This site is Bishop Wordsworth School, where George & Harding are working with them over a number of years. They are just completing a set of classrooms which, as this image show, were built using the modular construction technique. This allowed them to save a large amount of time on site – minimising disruption to the school as they installed the classrooms over a holiday period which allowed the children to return to usable classrooms after the summer.

The significance of this photo is that the site is very close to Salisbury Cathedral, and therefore historically and environmentally sensitive. They have worked closely with Southampton University to monitor the surrounding area, to make sure that our construction work has no negative impact.

We plan to introduce a profile of one of our Member Companies in each Newsletter. We therefore invite members to submit interesting articles about their organisations for use in future issues.



Membership – Be part of it

The Board has set a target of growing membership of Be to 150 by the end of 2004 based on the following:

- For every £1 of extra membership income, about 90p passes to the 'bottom line' to fund core research or delivery. Thus 50 new members would provide an extra £300,000 to fund more research and practical outputs for members, three times more than the current direct budget.
- We estimate that our supply side membership currently accounts for around 9% of the industry's net value added. Our influence would be significantly greater if we could move this closer to 12-15%.
- Our overhead is adequate to support this higher level of membership.

Thus a priority in early 2003 is the recruitment of new member firms. Already we can say welcome to Build-Online.

Council members have agreed to nominate 3-4 firms each from their own contacts who would meet the criteria of membership of Be:

- Commitment to our values
- Involvement in our work
- Seniority of representation.

Nominations can come from anywhere in the demand chain or supply chain, but to retain the 'balance' of membership within our four communities our priorities are the demand side (clients, end users, FM companies, agents) and manufacturers, suppliers and specialist installers.

All members are now invited to nominate 1-2 firms with whom you would be prepared to arrange an introduction to the benefits of joining Be. Please contact Suby with your suggestions.



Members Forum – 19 March

The first full forum of 2003 will be at the Thistle Hotel, Marble Arch, London on March 19 from 10.00 to 15.30.

The programme will be to provide a full update on progress with our key projects and working groups, feed back the results of our annual membership survey, and to discuss "supply chain management from the receiving end". Several Be members report that, if only their production processes and on-costs of old-style procurement were properly understood by those earlier in the supply chain, real cost and other savings of 30-50% could be realised. This session will discuss the issues and seek to identify practical actions to help members deliver these benefits.

We hope you will be able to attend, and we would like to encourage you to bring a colleague and (a new feature) a guest from your supply chain. I am sure this would really add to the benefit of the day for all involved. We are however limited to 100 attendees so an early response will guarantee a space! If you have not received the invitation letter and fastfax form to indicate your attendance please contact Suby Snellen on 0870 922 0034.

