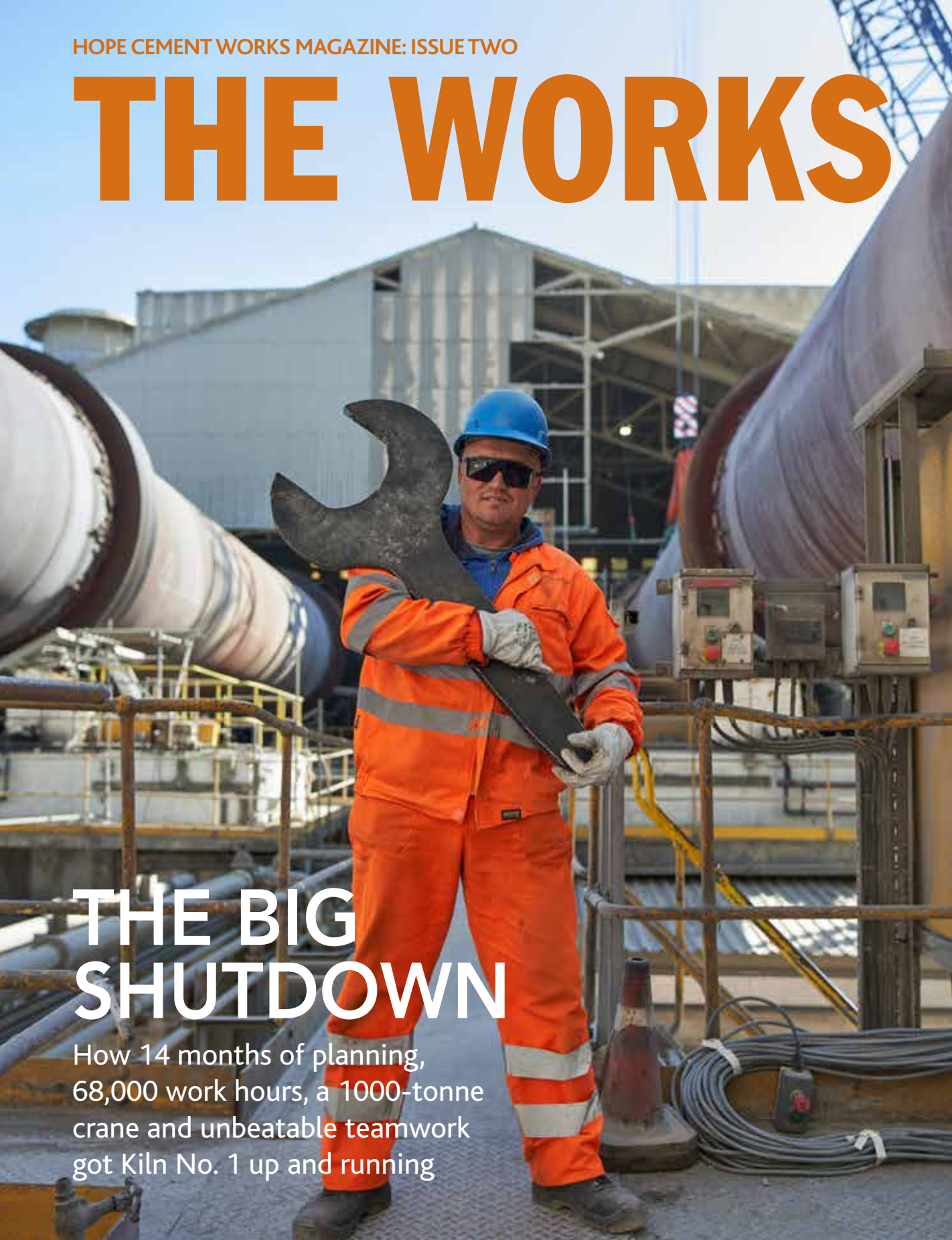


HOPE CEMENT WORKS MAGAZINE: ISSUE TWO

# THE WORKS

## THE BIG SHUTDOWN

How 14 months of planning, 68,000 work hours, a 1000-tonne crane and unbeatable teamwork got Kiln No. 1 up and running



# WELCOME TO THE WORKS

While the dramatic preheater tower and limestone quarries are the face of Hope Cement Works, the beating heart is undoubtedly the workforce. Whether an apprentice, an engineer, a chemist, a lorry driver, a customer services agent or an accountant, everybody at the plant has a tale to tell of team support and the feeling of being part of a family.

This second issue of *The Works* magazine is a testament to the unrivalled teamwork at Hope. Read about how the huge challenge of repairing and replacing Kiln No. 1 was overcome safely and smoothly thanks to teamwork. Find out how employee mental and physical health at Hope is becoming a key aspect of support on site. Say hello to new members of the team, and join with everyone to say a fond farewell to those leaving us after many years of service.

We hope you enjoy this issue as much as we've enjoyed putting it together!

**Photograph:**  
Kiln section being lifted high  
above the Hope Valley







# News



## Shutdown 2020

*A new year, a new major repair. January saw a 32-day shutdown at Hope Works for routine maintenance and refractory work. Photographer Sam DeVito was there to see it happen.*

Alongside contractor colleagues from Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, the North East, Bradwell and Tideswell, the team at Hope Works worked hard to pull off another successful and safe shutdown in January – just months after 2019's epic kiln section and tyre replacement (see page 10).

Thanks to the great quality engineering at Hope, the project was completed safely, on time and on budget, leaving the plant ready to deliver another monumental year of performance and reliability.

"The plant is just like the Forth Bridge, in that it is constantly evolving and in constant need of repair," explained Maintenance Manager John Mulryan. "Thanks to our great team and contractors, Hope is more than up for the challenge."







# What a party!

*Hope Cement Works' 90th anniversary celebrations were a party to remember attracting thousands of visitors – many of whom had never been inside the works before*



On 1 June 2019, Hope Cement Works opened its gates and gave an excited public the rare opportunity to see what life at the plant is all about. The occasion? The Works' 90th anniversary.

After a rainy start to the day, the sun soon came out and hundreds of people arrived to enjoy the party (some on the vintage bus link from Hope railway station, run for the day by South Yorkshire Transport Museum). There were tours of the Works and the chance to inspect Hope's impressive collection of diggers and dumpers for those keen to learn about what we get up to, and plenty of amusements for those who just wanted to have a good time! Younger visitors could ride a donkey, enjoy the birds of prey show and have a bop to Dave Wain's disco, while the delights of the Earle's Club proved popular with the older partygoers.

Guests, including the Mayor of High Peak and the Mayor of Stockport, also enjoyed the world premiere of Sam Devito's 90th anniversary film.

Huge thanks must go to everyone at the plant who gave up their time to make the day such a success.







## A NEW ISSUE

**A MESSAGE FROM  
ED CAVANAGH, WORKS MANAGER**

"Much has happened since our hugely successful 90th anniversary celebrations last summer, not least the long-planned repairs of each kiln line. Thanks to the enviable teamwork of our plant employees and the local contractors we rely on, the complicated procedure was, of course, a success.

2019 was the best ever year for clinker production at the Hope plant, and we go forward into 2020 with every intention to continue our successes, while facing new challenges with resolve. We will be working hard to mitigate our impact on the environment, at both a local and global level. As stewards of this beautiful landscape, we have the opportunity to work with local nature groups to increase biodiversity on our land and continue to reclaim former quarried areas as places for flora and fauna to flourish.

As always, the welfare of our team here at Hope remains our first concern in this new year, and we will be building on the success of our excellent mental and physical wellbeing initiatives in 2020.

While we welcome new employees and bid a fond farewell to others, we will continue to nurture the culture of support and teamwork that makes Hope Works a wonderful place to work."



# Healthy body, healthy mind

*The inaugural Hope Cement Works Health and Wellbeing Open Day was a huge success. Organisers Jackie Worthington and Sallie Chalupa tell us why it's so important to look after yourself, and why it's ok not to be ok*





The Works' first ever Health and Wellbeing Open Day was a great success, with people from all over the site popping down to the Social Club for a massage, mindfulness and reiki sessions and plenty of information on all aspects of physical and mental wellbeing. We spoke to Open Day organisers and Mental Health First Aiders Sallie Chalupa and Jackie Worthington about the event, the importance of looking after yourself, and why it's ok not to be ok.

**Jackie Worthington,  
Quality Technician**

"It's been great to work with Sallie on the Health and Wellbeing Open Day and on health awareness at the works in general – it's so important to raise awareness of health issues at work as people spend so much of their time here. We've put out information on mental health, health issues specific to men, stopping smoking, all sorts of things, and the reaction we've had has all been positive. I think people appreciate being able to learn about these issues without feeling like we're preaching at them or being pushy. Really, we're just promoting the idea of looking after yourself.

Like Sallie I trained this year to be a Mental Health First Aider and it's been great being able to help when people need someone to talk to. Often that's all people do need – just ten minutes to chat about something that's weighing on their mind, rather than keeping things bottled up. It's really important, especially in a workplace like the cement works. If you don't have a healthy mind, it's harder to do your job safely. We want everyone to know that support is there if they need it."

**Sallie Chalupa,  
Receptionist / Administrator**

"We've had Health and Safety days on site before, but this is the first event dedicated solely to health and wellbeing and it's gone really well. It's so easy to push your own wellbeing to the bottom of the pile of things to think about, but it's so important to look after yourself. We have people here who can help with the physical health side of things, and we've worked hard with our notice boards and information leaflets in the reception area to give staff members information on how to deal with physical health problems that may affect them. But people still find it hard to talk about their mental health – especially in a male-dominated work environment – which is why we've made sure we have Mental Health First Aid provision on site.

Like many people, I've suffered with my mental health and the most valuable lesson I've learned is to deal with my problems, rather than bury them. Talking to someone should never be something to be embarrassed about, and it's the best way to prevent things becoming worse further down the line. We're lucky to be working in such a supportive environment here at Hope Cement Works. The company really does care. We want people to know that it's ok not to be ok."

*You can contact any of the Works' four Mental Health First Aiders for support, advice or just a chat in complete confidentiality. Look out for the Mental Health First Aid posters and leaflets on site*



## THE BE KINDER PROJECT

In Summer 2019 we were proud to support the National Trust's Peoples' Landscape project, specifically the Be Kinder cultural walk in Edale. As curator of the walk, singer Jarvis Cocker approached Hope Works to engineer waymarkers for the route. Maintenance Manager John Mulryan co-ordinated the project and a series of cement markers was created to resemble the trig points at summits in the Hope Valley.



## Say hello to...

*A new year, a new crop of faces at Hope Cement Works.  
We meet the new starters of 2019/20*



Dai James  
Engineering Improvement  
Manager

Dai's new role began in September 2019, but he knows Hope Works well – he previously worked here from 1987 to 2010. "It's nice to be back. There's still lots of the old faces!", he laughs. Dai will be helping co-ordinate key projects, and working on the long-term strategy for the site. Outside of work he plays a lot of golf and is a member of his local railway preservation society.



Nicole Griffin  
Human Resources

Arriving at the beginning of 2019, Nicole is loving her (not so new) job at the Works. "I'd never seen anything like it before," she says about seeing the site for the first time. "My first tour took four hours!" Nicole's role includes co-ordinating the specialised training each job at the Works requires, as well as working across four other depots. She is a keen swimmer and is very busy training her new puppy.





**Neil Ferguson**  
Management Accountant

Neil joined the company in July 2019 from Go Outdoors in Sheffield. He's enjoying the commute (in his new car!) and is getting to grips with the scale of his new workplace. Neil loves being outdoors and is passionate about football.



**Richard Cave**  
Lorry Driver

Richard became a permanent member of the Hope Works team last June after working for years as a contractor. He always enjoys driving back to the Hope plant. When he finds spare time he'll be riding his mountain bike.



**Matt Whitlow**  
Lorry Driver

Matt Joined the team last June, after 13 years based at the Hope plant as a contractor. He has been driving tippers since he was 21. Matt lives in Bradwell and coaches the Bradwell under-10 football team.



**Adrian Arksey**  
Chemist

Adrian arrived at Hope Cement Works last September, having worked at Drax Power Station and for Nippon Gohsei. He has enjoyed settling into his new role in the Quality Department and his new home in Sheffield. Adrian plays guitar and enjoys going to gigs.



**Dave Stead**  
Health and Safety Manager

Dave has worked in Health and Safety for over 20 years, but was particularly happy to start at Hope Cement Works last August as he thinks the team here are fantastic. A former championship bodybuilder, Dave spends most of his spare time in the gym.



**Jess McDowell**  
Customer Service Agent

Jess moved to Sheffield from Melbourne seven years ago and began her role at the Works in September. She has a construction and design background and is studying for her IMC qualification. Jess is passionate about interior design and burlesque dancing.









# The Great Shutdown

*After a year and a half of planning, Hope Cement Works was shut down last September for major repairs to Kiln No. 1. The operation required unequalled teamwork from all on site, alongside the teams of contractors who arrived at the plant to assist. Photographer Sam Devito was on hand to document the huge amount of work put into the repair. Sam shares some of his wonderful images here, while John Mulryan, Maintenance Manager, describes the challenges faced by the Hope Cement team*

"After a long 14-month campaign, September saw our Kiln No. 1 shut down for its annual Major Repair. After many months of extensive planning and consultation the Hope team welcomed our contract partners through the gates to commence a monumental repair.

The major repairs are the equivalent to a Formula 1 pit stop but rather than a few seconds this repair was scheduled for 35 days and we recorded approximately 68,000 hours of work. It's great to see all the teams joining forces to execute the integrated and varied plan of works ranging from cleaning and scaffolding to refractory work and mechanical and electrical engineering.

Significant work was safely executed on our kilns, coolers, preheaters, raw mills and quarry plant during this period and we managed to complete the repair ahead of time which is a credit to all involved. We also have to ensure the rest of the plant delivers so we had a

team in the background tirelessly keeping the wheels of industry turning as well.

I personally get satisfaction from seeing the team rising to the challenge of completing complex heavy engineering such as the replacement of kiln sections; seeing the 1000-tonne crane lift the section into place with pin-point accuracy was fantastic. We also work really hard to reduce risk in the working environment and improve our future, one example being the removal of 29 tonnes of original refractory insulation containing asbestos, using highly skilled operators working to strict control measures.

The team at Hope are extremely proud of what we achieved during this period and are always looking to improve year-on-year so that we can enhance our operational performance. It's what we do very well and we'd like to thank everyone involved for their valued contribution and efforts during this intense period."

**Opposite page, clockwise  
from top left**

*Scrapping the old kiln section next to the new section; The big lift – the 1000-tonne crane lifts a tyre section; Rigging up the kiln section for the big lift; Loughborough graduates Tegan Norster and Nick Royston, on their placement year at Hope Works, observing the kiln repair.*





## Right

*Installation team, including members of the FL Smidth crew, by the new tyre and shell section assembly.*

## Following pages, clockwise from top left

*John Thurston, kiln installation expert engineer; Welding twigs ready for refractory; Steve Foster's crane operatives at work; Jeppe Lykke Hansen, FLS engineer; Nathan Swift; View from inside the hood looking into the kiln; View from the preheater tower overlooking both kilns; View inside the cooler while major overhaul is in progress; Quality manager Joanne Cantwell and mechanical engineer Dai James in conversation with contractor Rob Ogilby.*



















**Above, left to right**

*Lifting out the old tyre and shell section; Lowering the shell section to the ground next to the new section; View inside the old section; Steve Foster's crew watching the crane in progress.*

# A fond farewell

*Phil Swarbrick retired from his beloved Hope Cement Works at the end of last year after 46 years of service. His boots will be hard to fill. We chatted to Phil before he left and met the man he has been preparing to take his place*

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There can be few people more passionate about Hope Cement Works than Phil Swarbrick. "I can't remember a single day when I didn't want to come to work. I love it here," he tells me. And the feeling seems to be mutual – everyone I speak to at the works has nothing but praise for the Production Execution Engineer, who retired at the end of last year after 46 years of service. Not least Adam Banks, the man who will take over where Phil left off in the new year. But more on Adam and the big boots he has to fill a little later.

Phil grew up in Tideswell and, like so many who have come to work at Hope Cement, he had family and friends who travelled over the hill each day to their jobs at the works. It wasn't a given that Phil would

follow suit however. He started work as an apprentice draughtsman elsewhere, before he realised how much he missed getting his hands dirty, and asked his Uncle Doug to arrange an interview at the Works. "It had a good reputation for training aspiring engineers like me," says Phil. "And I already knew a lot of people who worked there. I was lucky enough to be taken on as an apprentice and I've never looked back."

As a mechanical engineering apprentice in the 1970s, Phil says the opportunities at Hope Cement Works were great. "It was all a bit more rough and ready in those days," he says, "but there were some cracking engineers who were willing to try anything. I learned so much just in the first few years of being here."









Of course, a lot has changed since then. Like many long-term employees, Phil remembers when health and safety regulations were, perhaps, a little less rigorous ("It was more about just using your common sense," he says), and when management locked themselves away from the rest of the workforce. He's also seen the changes technology has made to the way cement is produced and the effects that has had in Hope. "It used to be a lot more hands on," he says. "Working the kiln used to mean a lot of banging and crashing, but now you just have to push a button. It's all good though – everyone has to move with the times to stay productive."

One thing Phil says has never changed is the atmosphere of camaraderie at Hope Cement. "I know everyone says it," he says, "but there really is a feeling of belonging to a family when you work here. There's always someone to give you a hand or to keep an eye out for you, whatever your job or wherever you work on site. As someone who's been here a while, I feel strongly about my duty of care to the lads, and I know that's something I've learned from the people I've worked with over the years."

So now that he's finished his final weeks at the works, how is Phil feeling about the place? "Nothing but gratitude," he says. "I owe everything to Hope Cement Works: a job, a living, a lifestyle and the opportunity to go places and do things I wouldn't otherwise have done. I'm over the moon at what this place has given me." And the future? "I'm not going to pretend I'm not a little apprehensive," he smiles, "not least about my pay check stopping! But everyone I've spoken to says I'll not regret it once I've left."

And Phil has plenty more to feel passionate about in his retirement. He is in the throes of building a 7ft-long traction engine and is keen to show it off at traction engine rallies around the country. His partner Cath (pictured opposite with Phil) is also about to retire and the two have great plans for adventures in their motorhome together.

Of course, Phil's departure leaves a large hole to fill at the Cement Works. And this is where Adam Banks comes in. Phil's last months at the works were spent showing Adam the ropes and preparing him to take over after retirement day. Think Obi Wan Kenobi showing Luke Skywalker how to use the force... but in a cement works.

Adam has worked at Hope Cement Works for 12 years, so is no stranger to the process. But that's not to say he's not a little daunted by the prospect of taking over from Phil. "I've been shadowing him for a while now," Adam says, "and there's a lot to take in. After all, Phil's got forty years on me!"

The two get on well and Phil is very supportive of Adam's move to his soon-to-be old job. In fact, it was his idea for Adam to apply. "I knew Adam, knew his background, and knew he'd be a good fit," explains Phil. "I know he'll be able to pick everything up and I have every faith that he'll do a great job."

The most daunting challenge for Adam is also potentially the most dangerous – cleaning the preheater and dealing with blockages. When we chat he hasn't experienced it yet and he grimaces a little when it's mentioned. Phil is reassuring and points out that the preheater team are experienced and very good at what they do. "But," he says to Adam, "you have to be confident, and always show the preheater respect. Otherwise it'll come back and bite you!" No pressure there then, Adam.

Despite the years of knowledge that needs passing on, there is no doubt that Phil knows he's leaving his beloved job in safe hands. "Knowing that it's Adam who's taking over makes leaving that little bit easier," he says, then adds quickly "... and he can always ring me if he needs me."

It won't be easy for Phil to step away from the Works, but he will no doubt put his passion and energy into many new adventures. Hope Cement Works won't be the same without him.

# If you go down to the woods today...

*Just yards from the bustling Earle's Club is a patch of unspoilt woodland perfect for a spot of den building. We meet the local youngsters who come to the Hope plant for outdoor learning, and the retired headteacher who leads them*

Hope Cement Works has always valued its place in the local community and has long reached out to villages in the Hope Valley and the wider Peak District to offer its support. So when an unused patch of woodland on site was pinpointed as an ideal spot for outdoor learning, it wasn't long before the Works and Derbyshire Wildlife Trust joined forces to offer the facility to local schools for forest school provision.













Forest school sessions have become increasingly popular in recent years, particularly in the Hope Valley where many children grow up being encouraged to spend as much time outside in their beautiful local landscape as possible. The benefits are numerous. Spending time in nature not only helps a child learn about the world around them, but also boosts their health and wellbeing, encourages them to learn skills and take risks they may not encounter in the classroom, and builds their confidence in an environment where everyone is truly an equal.

The forest site at Hope Cement Works sits close to the Earle's Club, but hidden enough that when the leaves are on the trees the rest of the Works are all but obscured. It's a sprawling bit of woodland, with plenty of room to explore, build dens and climb trees. At the entrance end, a fire pit surrounded by benches can be covered with a parachute silk 'roof' if it rains and there's a mud kitchen and a train made of logs for more structured outdoor play.

The outdoor learning sessions at the works are coordinated by Louise Saxon and Bernie Hunter, the former head of Hope Valley College. He may have retired as a headmaster, but Bernie's enthusiasm for offering opportunities to the younger residents of the Hope Valley is in no way diminished. "This is a wonderful facility," he tells me as we walk around the forest site. "It gives kids a real sense of freedom that a classroom can't provide. It's great

watching them enjoy the space and the nature they can experience here."

A good number of local pre-schools and primary schools have taken up the invitation to use the forest site, including Bradwell pre-school, Castleton, Bamford, Tideswell and Litton primaries, plus the Hope Valley College post-16 facility, and – thanks to funding from Hope Cement Works – a dedicated minibus is on hand to collect the children for the session and drop them back at school afterwards.

"We want to make the facility as accessible as possible so that we can offer it to as many local children as we can," explains Bernie. "At the moment our school groups enjoy two hour sessions here led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the experience is overwhelmingly positive. I'm always particularly amazed at how the children seem unfazed by the weather – they come here even in the pouring rain and we rarely get any whingeing!"

The forest school is made possible by a lot of people working hard to make it happen, from Louise and Bernie and the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, to the headteachers and teachers who work the facility into their curriculum and the Cement Works contractors who give up their time to make wooden equipment for the site. Spending time outdoors is a huge part of growing up in the Hope Valley, and this little forest oasis hidden in the shadow of the Works will hopefully be enjoyed by many.





# The Limestone Quarry

*Drive up the steep track from the Hope plant to the limestone quarry and you may as well be on another planet. This lunar landscape cut into the hills of the Hope Valley is the lifeblood of Hope Cement Works. We take a trip up to the quarry and meet the team that work the face*









Ask most people in the Peak District what they picture when they think of Hope Works and the pale, concrete chimney and preheater tower standing proud of the Hope Valley landscape would undoubtedly be the answer. But behind the tower, hidden from most except those enjoying the valley's hills and edges, is the Works' lifeblood. The reason why Hope Cement Works came to the valley 90 years ago. The limestone quarry.

This vast, silver-grey, terraced expanse has fed the Works for decades – shifting position, changing shape and letting parts fall back to nature as time has worn on. Some will inevitably see it as a scar on the landscape, but from the viewing platform on a sunny day there is something intriguing, beautiful even, about being given the opportunity to see what's under the surface, what makes the rolling hills of the White Peak so special.

Driving the steep climb to the quarry, you feel like you're leaving the Works behind. There is noise of course as the trucks dump their loads into the crusher and the excavators scrape away at piles of blasted rock, not to mention the twice-weekly blasts themselves. But the size of the quarry site absorbs much of the industry going on along its limestone terraces and makes this part of the cement-making process more natural, more elemental than the heat and industry in the valley below.

Working the quarry involves a specific skill set, and employees are trained to rotate between the 60-tonne dump trucks, 90-tonne excavators and the primary crusher. The staff of 23 work their shifts in teams of six, making for a different kind of camaraderie up here. The quarry team certainly seem happier to be working in the quarry than anywhere else. This is a high-risk environment – the team are working close to precipitous edges and under rock faces that could be volatile – but all are trained in geotechnical awareness and this knowledge of what to look out for on the quarry face helps mitigate risk, along with the health and safety precautions that take priority throughout the Works.

Those that work here, or have worked here in the past, hold a special place in their hearts for the limestone quarry. We spoke to Nigel Robinson, Andrew Lukins, Andrew Allen and Steve Salt, four quarrymen who are about to retire after years spent at the rock face.



# Leaving the quarry

## **Nigel Robinson** **Quarry Coordinator**

Nigel, pictured below, has worked at the quarry for nearly 40 years, after starting at Hope Cement Works in 1980. He grew up in Castleton where the works was very much part of family life – his father worked on site and Nigel remembers going to family events and childrens' parties at the Works when he was small. Nigel was never intending to follow in his father's footsteps, however, planning on going to agricultural college and then becoming a farmer. But he took a part-time job at the Works to tide him over before college began... and never left.

Today Nigel knows the limestone quarry like the back of his hand, but still holds great respect for the unpredictable nature of the environment. He says the process of working here has changed relatively little, but that machinery, technology and awareness of the importance of health and safety have evolved constantly since he began working at Hope.

He's looking forward to retirement, but won't be far away. He's a passionate smallholder, and has land around the quarry, so as he's tending his flock he'll be able to keep an eye on what's going on down at the rock face. "And there'll be holidays," he tells me. "Lots of holidays."



## **Andrew Allen** **Quarry Process Operator**

Andrew has worked at the quarry for 32 years, but says no two days are ever the same. He says the best thing about his job is the team he works with. Andrew is a keen Manchester United supporter and enjoys playing golf.



## **Andrew Lukins** **Shot-Firer**

Andy moved up from Plymstock in Devon to begin work at Hope Cement Works in 1999. After 21 years at the quarry he'll be a much-missed member of the quarry team.

## **Steve Salt** **Project Engineer**

Steve, pictured opposite, started work at Hope Cement Works in 1976 as an apprentice fitter, but engineering had been 'his thing' since he was very young. Between 1980 and 1998 Steve moved between the limestone quarry and the main site, until he joined the projects team in '98, which oversaw a major quarry upgrade. In the early 2000s Steve became Quarry Engineer and Quarry Manager, before moving to projects in 2009.

Steve's looking forward to retirement, although he does admit it will be strange not seeing the Works every day. He'll be using his new-found spare time to indulge in his hobbies, including clay pigeon shooting and golf.











# New starters at the quarry

*While a number of the team at Hope's limestone quarry have been working there for many years as contractors, we are pleased that as of 2019 they have become Breedon employees*



**Roger Ibbotson**  
**Quarry Process Operator**

Roger has worked as a contractor at the quarry for five years. He says that on a nice day with views across the hills it's a beautiful place to work. In his spare time Roger enjoys riding and fixing up motorbikes.



**Alan Williams**  
**Quarry Process Operator**

Alan has worked at the quarry as a contractor for three years (although he says it feels more like 30!) and says the quarry team are great. In his spare time he enjoys field sports, fishing, gardening and looking after his grandkids.



**Nathan Townsend**  
**Quarry Apprentice**

Nathan began his apprenticeship in August, after working on the family farm on Tideswell Moor. He's enjoying a different way of life, especially the more sociable hours, and is looking forward to learning more about the quarry.



**Gemma Barber**  
**Quarry Process Operator**

Gemma, from Dove Holes, has been working at the quarry for eight years as a machine driver. She enjoys being the only girl on the team. In her spare time she likes going to the gym and taking care of and riding her horses.



**Keith Light**  
**Quarry Process Operator**

Keith is from Buxton and has been working at the quarry as a contractor for eleven years. He says the best things about working at Hope Cement Works are the scenery and his colleagues. In his spare time Keith enjoys gardening.



**Alan Baxter**  
**Quarry Process Operator**

Alan joined the team in August 2019, after eight years as a contractor driving dumpers. He's always liked working at Hope Cement Works and in his spare time enjoys a pint or two at his local pub.





# THE BIG BANG

*The Hope Cement Works firework display has become a must-see event for the residents of the Hope Valley. Last year's spectacular was bigger and better than ever. We spoke to Louise Saxon about how it all began*

When you think about it now, a loud, explosive public event at a cement works would seem a no-brainer –after all, this is a place that specialises in loud, explosive events. So it was a surprise to learn that the Hope Valley institution that is the Hope Cement Works firework display is only fifteen years old.

"We were looking for something to celebrate our 75th anniversary with the community," explains Louise Saxon, "and fireworks seemed the thing. We never thought it would become an annual event, let alone one that's proved so popular."

That first display attracted a crowd of fewer than 200 people, but today over 2,000 come to watch the spectacular show. One year, the number of visitors was close to 3,000.

"We've grown so much!" Louise says. "Now we have entertainers, live music and food and drink, not

to mention the treats and flashing torches we lay on for the kids."

And it's not just the fireworks that have become legendary – the Hope plant bonfire is epic. Built at the last minute (to protect the hedgehogs!) by members of the Works team, the fire is – as Louise describes it – "the biggest known to man".

"Thankfully it's also the safest," Louise laughs. "As you know, we're all about Health and Safety here at the Works, so John Millen and his gang of bonfire builders make sure everything is as it should be."

Anyone who's ever been to a Hope Cement Works firework display – and there are many, both in the Hope Valley and beyond – will tell you it's one of the noisiest and one of the best. No wonder this highlight in the plant calendar continues to go from explosive strength to explosive strength.







# Full steam ahead

*At the end of 2019, four Hope plant apprentices travelled north. Their mission? First, to lend their skills to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway and second, not to get into trouble along the way!*

It's no secret that most Hope Valley Cement Works apprentices like a good tinker. Many have been working on cars / engines / motorbikes in sheds and garages for years before they arrive at the plant. So when apprentices Jake Saxon, Alex Dunsby, Harrison Winters and Daniel Hobson were asked to spend two days helping to restore an 1888 steam locomotive on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway, they jumped at the chance. The four were tasked with getting to the KWVR sheds under their own steam (excuse the pun) and meeting up with ex-Hope employee Steve Peach, who volunteers with the KWVR. Dave Simpson and Robert Mulvey, who work as craftsmen on the Hope Works kiln section and also volunteer for the preserved railway at weekends, joined them.

The apprentices worked on the London & North Western Railway Webb Coal Tank, a 19th-century engine used on the railway to pull vintage trains, undergoing its ten-year overhaul. It was a great opportunity for them to gain heritage engineering skills, overseen by experienced heritage engineers. While they were at the Ingrow workshop, the apprentices also got to check in on *Nunlow*, the former G&T Earle locomotive that used to work the Hope Cement Works railway.

The short placement at KWVR was a huge success. Jake, Alex, Harrison and Daniel all really enjoyed the experience – even their unusual overnight accommodation on one of the steam train carriages! – and did a great job representing the company.

Thanks must go to the guys at the KWVR and the Bahamas Locomotive Society for hosting our apprentices and for supporting the apprenticeship programme at Hope Works.







