



BelowGround

The Newsletter of Anvil Foundations Ltd.

Issue 2 | Summer 2001

Added Value - Above and Below Ground!

Welcome to the second issue of our newsletter *Below Ground*. To judge from the large response which we had to our last newsletter and the many new readers now on the circulation list, our reputation seems to be growing both under ground and on the surface!

In this issue we examine in a little more depth just why Anvil should be *your* choice for best value in underpinning, foundations and other structural work. As experts in handling difficult projects - be they new build sites, structural work or operations to upgrade existing buildings - we at Anvil Foundations know that we work in an area where 'value' has implications far beyond the simple pricing of a contract. Good training, site experience, Health & Safety compliance, excellent site management and outstanding customer care - all these aspects of 'added value' make the difference between a job which is barely adequate and one which memorably exceeds customer expectations.

For Anvil, as for its growing number of blue chip and individual customers, excellence is a minimum requirement: choosing the cheapest tender does not always, or even frequently, ensure peace of mind.

In this issue you will read about the consolidation of Anvil's reputation in areas such as staff training, the winning of Trade awards and the growth of turnover and profit. For us, success is synonymous with staff development, it is in this way that we feel we can add real value for both clients and employees.

To find out more about how we can match our success to your needs and turn our best practice into your best value, please contact us direct or by using the Response Slip on Page 4.



Some people get all the tough jobs - Anvil's Nigel MacLean collects a National Training Award from Dianne Oxberry of BBC North West Tonight with John Hackett of South & East Cheshire TEC looking on...



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New Equipment.
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Accent on Training gives Anvil the Edge!

"Is there life after Investor in People?" may be a question in the mind of many companies who have struggled to win this national accreditation. For Anvil Foundations, who secured IIP status back in 1999, that accolade has simply been the first of many awards to mark the Company's growing reputation within its specialist field.

The winning of a coveted National Training Award towards the end of 2000, only one of ten such awards in the North West selected from over 700 entries, and the securing of a North West Excellence Award, courtesy of Learning Northwest and the NW Development Agency, have simply reinforced the Company's view that training and staff development is an ongoing process that leads way beyond the simple testing of competence.



As Anvil's Managing Director, Nigel MacLean, puts it: "We operate in a difficult area of the building trade, somewhere between the major projects undertaken by construction multinationals and the ground preparation works which traditional builders often fight shy of! Much of our work is of a remedial nature covered by insurance claims or arises as an unwelcome addition to overstretched budgets. As such, we have to prove ourselves to be reliable, efficient and fast-moving problem-solvers in situations where things may already have gone wrong once. We need our work to speak for itself but we

don't ask to be taken on trust".

In this environment, a reputation for quality is hard won and jealously guarded. A culture of training and safety is therefore essential for a firm like Anvil to keep 'ahead of the pack'. But the proof lies in the

achievements. As Nigel MacLean sums up: "As a result of IIP and our other training initiatives, turnover is up by 15% and gross profit by 4%. All crews work competently and are confident of their skills and abilities, whilst remaining committed to their own further personal development. As a firm, we have not had to return to rectify faults in any of the 100+ projects completed in the past 18 months".

How many organisations involved in building and remedial works can make these claims?



New Equipment

Find that Mole!

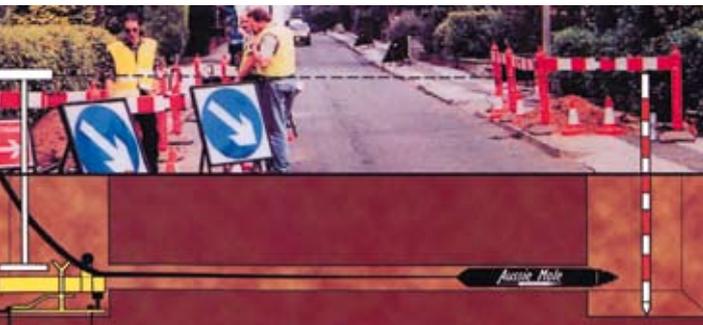
Not the same old boring stuff from Australia?!

New to Anvil's equipment armoury is the famous Aussie Mole pneumatic underground punch (pictured bottom left), which provides an efficient and economical alternative to the open trench method of laying pipes and services. Minimised surface disruption, notably to roads and other thoroughfares, is the most obvious and welcome benefit.



The Mole's unique floating head (another antipodean feature?!) generates a rapid frequency hammer punch action which adds to its efficiency. As it goes, it also reinforces the tunnel it makes and can drag piping with it, once fitted with the appropriate attachment. Ease of assembly and simplicity of construction make the equipment very straightforward to use, while its self-lubricating design minimises maintenance.

Have the Poms finally been taught a lesson or are the Aussies so keen to get out that they're trying to drill right through to us? Time will tell...



DIG deep - it's worth it!

All householders can now be covered by the Defects Insurance Guarantee (DIG for short) to give them complete peace of mind after work is completed and when they sell in the future.

For the first time house owners can be insured when their house is underpinned, provided a member firm of the Association of Specialist Underpinning Contractors carries out the work. The benefits of the DIG policy are included in the following features:

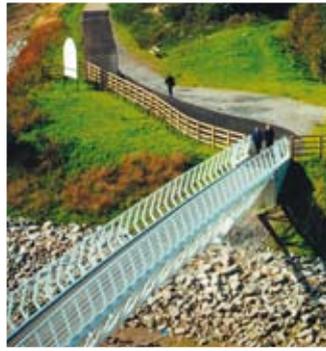
- each contract is individually insured and each house owner receives a policy document and schedule of interest;
- the policy is one of indemnity and in the unlikely event of a problem arising in the future the house owner could claim direct from the insurer. There is no need to prove liability, only that there is damage as defined in the policy;
- the extent of the works insured is described in the schedule enclosed with the policy document;
- cover lasts for 12 years from completion of the works and can be assigned to future owners of the property;
- if a valid claim is made under the policy, any consequential damage to the property, eg redecoration costs etc, is covered for up to 25% of the sum assured;
- if the property is rendered uninhabitable while repairs are carried out, the cost of alternative accommodation will be paid for up to 26 weeks.

The DIG policy not only provides reassurance to the house owner, but also complements Government proposals for the introduction of a Seller's Pack when the house is sold in the future. In it, one of the questions asks whether work carried out to the house is covered by insurance and requires a respective insurance policy to be enclosed with the Pack.

As a member of the Association, Anvil is covered by this insurance and subscribes to its objectives and code of practice.

Bridge that Gap!

A variety of bridges built on piled foundations installed by Anvil



Site Casebook

Case Study: The Gillibrand Arms, Chorley

This contract, won by competitive tender and carried out for Daniel Thwaites Brewery, called upon a number of Anvil Foundation's specialist techniques. Piled underpinning with needle beams, pin piling to upgrade the existing floor slab and piled ground beams for new construction were all employed to stabilise an existing public house suffering severe differential subsidence. The brewery employed Shepherd Gilmore Consulting Engineers and Quantity Surveyor Brian Chaddock to supervise and control the works. Along with the stabilisation work, Thwaites took the opportunity to carry out extensive refurbishment works during the shut down.

Geology

The public house was constructed in the 1970's on a thin, shallow raft. Fill deposits were encountered to depths varying from 2.8-7.3m. The material consisted of a random mix of stone, sand, clay ash, brick, topsoil, and peat with occasional pieces of timber and plastic. The natural drift consisting of firm to stiff clay deposits contained a high proportion of shale. Immediately below the clay, the solid deposits of highly weathered shale were encountered, albeit at greatly varying depths.

Problems arising

Settlement was attributed to: *compression of fill due to self-weight and imposed loading; collapse compression of fill due to water inundation; compression of weak deposits below fill; decomposition of organic matter within fill; collapse and migration of materials into possible mine shaft; collapse of possible shallow mine workings.*

Solution

Probing failed to find evidence of the historic shafts and so a solution involving piles at closely spaced centres was chosen for the main floor slab area. Concentrated reinforcement was installed at the roof support columns using piles and r.c. concrete needle beams. Due to the variation of sub-soil conditions pile lengths varied from 4.2-14.4m depths. A total of 508 piles were installed on the contract.

Anvil's Top 10

Training & Accreditation Highlights...

In order to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to training and accreditation in the workplace, the following targets have been achieved:

- Full Investor in People accreditation 1999
- IIP re-accredited 2001
- Receipt of National Training Award 2000
- Receipt of North West Excellence Award 2000
- Full in-house induction for all new staff
- Tuition in safety and best practice by approved external specialists
- Anvil is an approved CITB/City & Guilds Assessment Centre for NVQs
- Full training given in CSCS Cards, First Aid, welding and Abrasive Wheel usage
- Anvil's MD and Contracts Manager are NVQ Assessors to TDLB D32/33 levels; MD Nigel MacLean is also an NVQ Internal Verifier
- Achievement of 100% compliance on jobs with no penalties
- No Health & Safety incidents in past 4 years



Clean hat, sharp suit – you can tell who's in charge! MD Nigel MacLean on site with Gary Townsend and Mark Finnerty.

Say it how it is...

Testimonials from our clients

It's always nice when customers compliment us on a job well done. It's even better when they say they're always pleased with what we do:

"Good Health & Safety means efficient and economic working. Whenever Anvil Foundations are appointed as a sub-contractor of ours, we know they are able to comply with CDM regulations in every respect. On site, their methods of working show that Health & Safety forms an integral part of their culture. Continued development and training means that they are able to keep up with current legislation and maintain Principal Contractor status. This leads to efficient and economic working, which in turn benefits employer, worker and client".

Bob Wood, Wood Associates

Wood Associates is a leading firm of Quantity Surveyors, Contract Consultants and CDM Advisors. They act as Planning Supervisors and CDM Advisors to many clients and contractors.

Staff Profile No. 2

Mark Finnerty - the Flying Finn!

Although he has only been with us for 18 months, Mark is one of the most enthusiastic members of the Company. Always keen to increase his knowledge and question traditional methods and standard techniques, he is set to become an innovator as he progresses with the company. Having recently renewed his First Aid Certificate, Mark is now working towards completion of the NVQ Level II in Underpinning, before the end of this year.



Anvil Fun Day

Monday 11th June 2001 was Fun Day at Anvil Foundations. All the staff attended the Watersports Centre, Crown Reservoir, Whitworth for a day of water-skiing, jet-skiing, banana, ringo and chariot rides. Watching was almost as good fun as participating,



but there are no wimps at Anvil Foundations - everyone got stuck-in, soaked, and had a great day despite the typical English weather.

A hearty BBQ lunch soon warmed everyone up, ready for the afternoon session and a great day was had by all. Special thanks go to Flo and Andy for their help and supervision on the day.

Wordsearch

Our Industry

I	T	W	E	L	D	I	G	H	N
S	U	Z	R	O	S	N	L	O	S
A	O	W	G	A	I	D	I	U	E
N	R	L	F	L	C	T	V	S	B
D	G	E	I	N	A	V	N	E	U
Y	T	P	A	D	X	Y	A	L	C
Y	W	D	N	U	O	R	G	E	R
B	S	U	N	D	E	R	P	I	N
N	O	I	S	E	H	O	C	H	B
F	B	G	N	I	N	I	A	R	T

We received lots and lots of entries to our first Wordsearch competition, but nobody sent in one entry that was entirely correct, so we had to consume the contents of the Christmas Hamper ourselves! We thus have a rollover for Wordsearch II, for which the prize becomes an even more exciting hamper. Who could pass up such an opportunity?!

In the new competition, all words contain 4 or more letters and all have to do with our industry. Identify them by circling the answers and putting the total in the appropriate box on the Faxback Response Slip together with your name, address and contact details. All winning entries must show the correct total of words and a copy of the Wordsearch box with all the words ringed correctly. The competition closes on 14th November 2001, in time for that special Christmas treat.

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Name _____ Title _____
 Organisation _____ Address _____

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 e-mail _____ Website _____

I am particularly interested in the following operations:

- Cabling/testing Piling Foundations Cladding
 Repairs/maintenance/repairs Other (please state below): _____

Please add me to database for following projects: _____

Please add me to your mailing list to receive future issues of *Active Circuit*.

The main message is related to: this concerned to _____

I have completed the questionnaire which remains part of my survey.



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