



THE JOURNAL OF THE CONCRETE REPAIR ASSOCIATION

ISSUE NO. 9

PARTNERING *is it working?*

A view from David Kenny,
Contracts Manager, Atkins plc

The concept of 'Partnering' is now so ingrained in my own sector of our industry, that of Highway Management, that it is difficult to recall a time when it wasn't around.

In reality partnering, as a formalised process, has only been with us for about 10 years or so and didn't really catch on generally until maybe the last 5 years. These days few contracts are let in the public sector that do not embrace the concept of partnering. So what started this rush to cosy up with one-another, what's involved for the uninitiated and are we getting the benefits of these new relationships?

Many would lay claim to the partnering idea, but it probably developed in the USA out of frustration over the levels of litigation in construction. Its introduction to the UK in the late 80s was similarly as a result of an industry culture that was highly competitive, highly contractual, adversarial in approach, and inefficient. Though our industry was technically skilful, professionally and managerially competent, in general, there

was little willingness to manage relationships to the mutual benefit of the project.

Latham and later on Egan, exposed these problems and promoted a response that would allow the negative aspects of our industry's culture to be reversed. The logic went that by first constructing a team that had mature relationships at their heart, it should be possible to create a project culture that was co-operative, innovative and responsive.

Economic benefits would spring from directing resources more effectively and efficiently and from project teams being focussed on solutions rather than 'claimsmanship' or blame. The concept of 'partnering' was seen as the means by which these benefits could be delivered. So what is partnering?



Many CRA members are currently involved in Partnering arrangements.

In truth, there are as many definitions of partnering as there are commentators. For me, though, partnering is basically a structured management approach that is intended to promote team working across

contractual boundaries. It should be based on mutual objectives and a commitment to continuous, measurable improvement. It requires people who are honest, who want to do things of value and are motivated by challenge.

To deliver on these aspirations, organisations entering into partnerships will need to be ready to trust the people involved and empower them to add value. The ability of organisations to listen and to be clear about expectations is also an imperative.

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CRA PRODUCE SECOND EDITION OF 'THE ROUTE'



Following an enormously successful launch (in 2001) the CRA has updated, improved and introduced a second edition of its CD-ROM programme entitled 'The route to a successful concrete repair'.

The CD-ROM programme, which clarifies the essential procedures necessary to conclude a successful concrete repair project, is based upon the Association's publication and CPD seminar presentation of the same name. All three items are specifically designed to enhance awareness and understanding of this specialist activity among construction professionals, to highlight the various aspects to be taken into account when faced with the repair of reinforced concrete and to provide guidelines as to the best approach to be adopted.

The second edition CD-ROM version now contains a full screen presentation (previously restricted to MPEG format), with a voice-over script, improved graphics and the facility to 'hold and study' specific aspects of the programme. It also contains a bibliography of publications and a list of useful contacts relating to the field of concrete repair. The list of current CRA members has been changed to give far more information than previously, whilst retaining the facility to cross-link to their various web sites and email addresses.

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PARTNERING is it working?

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Partnering comes in two basic arrangements; Project Alliances - for the duration of an individual contract and; Strategic Alliances - for a period of time rather than a single project. Through my company, WS Atkins, I have been involved in both types of alliance and have learned that for these arrangements to be a success, it is of fundamental importance for the parties involved to understand what they are getting themselves into, from the start. The old adage 'Marry in haste, repent at leisure' will strike a chord with most people and applies equally to contract partnerships. For this reason, clients are increasingly beginning the selection process at the pre-tender stage, to ensure that their potential partners are both compatible and committed. This is particularly the case when a Strategic Alliance is being considered.

Once the project has been awarded, most people will genuinely want that project to be a success. Success, however, usually has different meanings for different people. What constitutes a successful project will therefore need to be defined, recorded and signed up to by all of those who have a significant stake in it. The means by which that success will be measured should also be agreed. Considerations of safety, quality, delivery are typical measures of success, but for most Clients and Contractors it is the important matter of money that will figure large in whether the project has been a success or not. Reflecting on how successful the introduction of partnering had been, a client 'partner' of ours summed it up nicely - "Generally partnering works well, it's only the money that fouls it up!"

This process of project partnering usually begins by bringing together the main team players to a neutral venue, with a neutral facilitator. The objective, over one or two days is to work out how they will work together and to establish the key features which, if achieved, will provide everyone concerned with the result they want. For the more enlightened teams this will not only involve Client, Contractor and Engineer, but will also include key sub-contractors and key suppliers.

The result of these efforts is usually condensed into a Charter, incorporating the signatures of the participants. The Charter is usually framed and hung in a prominent position to act as a visible reminder of the commitments the parties made to one-another, the mutual objectives they were seeking and the core values that would underpin their working relationships. The art in successful partnerships, however, is to take the message off the wall and into the minds and attitudes of the team.

An example of just such a project is one that we are currently bringing to a close with the Highways Agency (HA), that of Construction Management. With partnering at the heart of the contract, the HA entered into a framework contract with a number of works contractors within 8 specialist disciplines, including concrete repairs. The contracts were for 2 years and each appointment was made on a combination of quality and price. The price was assessed on a tendered percentage for profit and

overhead and an indicative schedule of cost components.

For each project only one works contractor from each trade was asked to price up their part of the scheme. This price was submitted to the Construction Manager with calculations, assumptions etc who would go through it in detail. Any unexplained costs or low efficiencies were asked to be justified on an 'open book' basis. If changes occurred, the consequences were discussed and agreed directly between the consultant and works contractor without the defensive posturing. Indeed, the fact that prices had been agreed on an 'open book' basis made any subsequent changes transparent. Both sides knew precisely what had gone into the original price, therefore subsequent changes were obvious.

Contractors were involved early on in the design of the each project so that buildability was improved, cost driven down and programming requirements could be fleshed out. The works contractors also knew that to some extent, the amount of work put their way depended upon how well they were judged to have contributed in the preparation phase and performed in the implementation phase. There was therefore a motivation to contribute and perform.

An important feature of the process was the degree to which the schemes and their contractors were benchmarked against each other, both so that lessons could be learnt from individual contracts and to ensure value for money was being achieved.

The trial has been sufficiently successful for it to be made the preferred form of procurement in two of the HA's new Agency Areas, with contracts now being let for a minimum four year term. A testament to the fact that partnering really does work in practice.

ENQUIRY NO: 901



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Brookes would like to offer a FREE educational lunchtime seminar at your office that qualifies for one hour CPD. The agenda covers all aspects of concrete repair including:

- Diagnostics
- Documentation
- Practical Repairs
- Electrochemical Techniques
- Structural Strengthening

If you would like to arrange a seminar or receive further details of the agenda please contact Katy on 0161 789 0901



ENQUIRY NO: 902

BRISTOL CAR PARK REFURBISHED WITH MBT FEB PRODUCTS

MBT Feb has supplied a range of products to a project to structurally strengthen and refurbish Trenchard Street Car Park in Bristol City centre.

The client, Bristol City Council, appointed main contractor Connaught Parking Services to carry out the work on the 11-storey, 1960s concrete multi-storey car park, with Tony Gee and Partners carrying out the design work. MBT has supplied 2700 linear metres of MBT-MBRACE product MBAR Carbon Fibre rod to strengthen cantilevers. Other MBT products used on the project include Emaco S103, Structurite HB, Febset NF 45, Sonolastic Ultra, Aquseal Black Bitumen Paint, Anti-Rust Metal Coat.



ENQUIRY NO: 903

Two new CD-Rom programmes planned by CRA

Since the introduction of the CRA's CD-ROM programme entitled 'The route to a successful concrete repair' demand has been overwhelming, with almost 1,500 copies (and 200 video versions) having been requested and distributed. As reported on the front page, this has prompted the Association to update the presentation and launch a second edition.

Currently, the Association is planning the production of another two programmes in a similar format. Both are expected to be ready in the Autumn of 2002 and will focus on important aspects of the business.

The repair of deteriorating concrete is not as straightforward as may first appear. It is usually obvious that reinstatement is necessary, but since most of the problem is hidden, the exact extent of the work needed is often less obvious. The first programme will therefore concentrate on the measurement of concrete repair work and the use of the CRA's standard method of measurement. It will provide an insight into the reasons for concrete deterioration; the problems resulting from poor assessment and the cost implications; avoiding possible pitfalls and how the correct approach will eliminate possible conflict at later stages. The importance of survey, testing and diagnosis; assessment of the Client's requirements and product specification will also be included.

The second programme will deal with the increasing use of composites for strengthening and how structural problems are being overcome using innovative composite techniques.

Over the past ten years there has been an increasing requirement to strengthen existing structures and buildings to accommodate increased loading. In the civils bridge market the introduction of heavier vehicle loading has meant that the entire UK bridge stock is being structurally reassessed for the new 40 tonne loading and this on-going assessment has identified a need for strengthening or the introduction of load restrictions. The building market is also experiencing a growing demand for composite strengthening. A change of use for a building can often require an increase in floor loading capacity and traditional methods of strengthening using heavy steel frames or additional reinforced concrete are being abandoned in favour of composites, which can provide significant advantages. The programme will include reasons for strengthening, strengthening systems, system design and installation.

If you are interested in these aspects of concrete repair, rest assured that you will be notified as soon as they become available.

NEWS from CRA Members

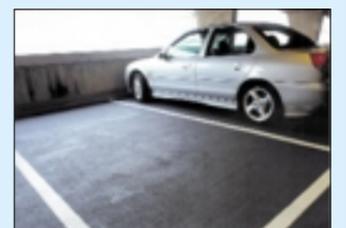
Use the enclosed Fax-Back to obtain more information

FLEXCRETE ENHANCES CAR PARK DECKING RANGE

Following the successful introduction by Flexcrete over two years ago of the Flexideck Xeros System, a liquid applied waterproofing and wearing surface for car park decks, the company has launched a new addition to the range.

Flexideck 100 - a two component, solvent free polyurethane coating - provides a more cost-effective solution to the waterproofing of both concrete and asphalt substrates on car park decks, as well as elevated walkways and balconies, whilst still providing exceptional durability and effective resistance to vehicular and foot traffic. Formulated using advanced in-house coatings technology developed over 20 years, Flexideck 100 cures to form a tough, chemical resistant, seamless membrane, which is capable of bridging construction/day joints and both existing and new cracks.

For further information contact: Flexcrete Ltd, Tel: 01772 255074. Fax: 01772 882016. Email: info@flexcrete.co.uk



ENQUIRY NO: 904



Llewellyn Stonecare Ltd has produced a new brochure covering its specialist refurbishment activities:

- SURVEY, INVESTIGATION & TESTING
- CONCRETE REPAIR
- PLATE BONDING
- HYDRO CUTTING LF20
- ELECTROCHEMICAL TREATMENTS
- CATHODIC PROTECTION
- STEEL FRAME CORROSION
- CAR PARK REFURBISHMENT
- TERRACOTTA, MASONRY & BRICKWORK RESTORATION
- EXTERNAL REFURBISHMENT
- STRATEGIC PARTNERING



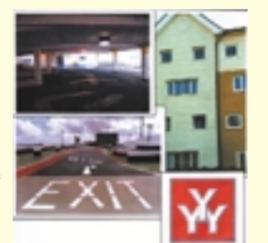
Whether your concrete refurbishment project is big or small, you can benefit from nearly forty years of Llewellyn experience and get free expert guidance. Talk with the Llewellyn Team - contact Brian Gardiner Tel: 01908 679222. Fax: 01908 235250 www.llewellynstonecare.co.uk

ENQUIRY NO: 905

NEW WEBSITE HERALDS START OF A NEW ERA

With a significant move forward into main contract refurbishment projects, Hailsham based contractors Yoldings Ltd are making full use of the internet as an information highway to further improve already high levels of service. With fully interactive project information and a user-friendly format, the new site enables potential clients to gather significant amounts of information from a single visit, with the option of detailing specific requirements in an easy to use messaging system.

Managing Director, San Bohloulzadeh said, "In the last eighteen months Yoldings has developed at a strong, but controlled rate, expanding our skills and widening our horizons but always maintaining our reputation for quality." This philosophy, coupled with proactive marketing and stringent quality control on and off site, has enabled a steady growth of 38% in profit and turnover in the past financial year with a similar rise predicted for this period. There can be little doubt that Yoldings is the Name in Structural Refurbishment in the 21st Century. Visit www.yoldings.com



ENQUIRY NO: 906

Specification Lottery

By: David Bowen Bravery, Partner, Mitchell, McFarlane & Partners

The fifth in a regular series of articles covering various aspects of concrete repair work. This piece highlights the importance of ensuring relevant specifications are followed when repairing concrete - especially when alternative products and systems are decided upon.

A good repair specification can go a long way to ensuring that concrete refurbishments achieve best value for a client. However, no matter how well written a specification may be, it is only as good as such intentions are carried out on site, and meaningful supervision of operatives by both the contractor and structural engineer is therefore essential.

Yet people still embark on repair contracts with woefully inadequate concrete repair specifications. On one very major contract, where we became involved because of a serious dispute, it transpired that the only "specification" for the concrete repairs was contained in a five line Bill description! When this was questioned a one page affidavit was produced to confirm what had *allegedly* been verbally agreed between the client and the contractor (and yes, this dispute did collapse with huge cost implications for both parties!)

On one very major contract, it transpired that the "specification" for the concrete repairs was contained in a five line Bill description!

Specification writing alone will not overcome this problem but it can go a long way to achieving best value if properly handled and discussed with a responsible specialist contractor prior to his appointment. In the writer's opinion it is grossly inadequate to expect a material supplier to write a specification for the works and then for it to be incorporated verbatim into the contract specification, often ignoring the manufacturers' qualifications as to its efficacy. Firstly, such specifications will be written purely for the manufacturer's own products and, secondly, they will invariably contain no meaningful workmanship or testing requirements. This is hardly surprising as the material's manufacturer is primarily concerned with selling his products, not his competitor's, and workmanship/ testing may "upset" contractors, who, after all, are the manufacturer's real clients (they order and buy the stuff, not the client or the structural engineer!!) Then, on top of this, the inevitable happens and tenders are

submitted using other materials from a different manufacturer. If such materials are accepted - and I believe that specifiers must look very carefully at this before accepting a substitution - the original specification is rendered largely meaningless. Thus one is embarking on a "specificationless" project unless a completely new specification is drafted and substituted for the old one. In the writer's experience this seldom happens. Accordingly, should things then go wrong it usually results in a stand off between the two parties. The material supplier blames the contractor's workmanship and contractor blames the material. The client is stuck in the middle and is often expected to foot the bill.

I have talked with many contractors and material's suppliers about this problem and both admit the situation is completely undesirable. They would much prefer to have a good specification clearly defining the materials, standards of workmanship and testing requirements. This way they know exactly where they stand. However they point out, with some merit, that many Engineers/Surveyors are incapable of writing such a specification without their assistance, and, 'assistance' is usually defined as 'please write it for us'!

Therefore the use of Engineers with the necessary 'hands on' expertise is clearly important. So, if Engineers and Contractors agree that this state of affairs is so unsatisfactory, why isn't something done about it? The answer to this is not at all straightforward, due to one or more of the following:

1. Professional fees can be saved by not involving a specialist engineer to diagnose, specify and monitor the works.
2. Detailed specifications can only be written with specific materials in mind yet regulations for Public Authority work are interpreted as precluding the naming of precise brand name materials unless accompanied by a clause permitting the use of alternative "equivalent" products, all in the name of fair competition.
3. Thus, substitution of materials is rife. As are specification reductions to meet inadequate budgets - often under the guise of "value engineering".
4. Short-term decisions to accommodate current budgets override long term durability considerations and best value.
5. Best Value procedures continue to be very slow in coming into practice. The cheapest procurement route is generally the route taken.

Although hard to fathom, there is a belief by some people that the material supplier is all seeing and can therefore write technical repair specifications without any recourse to site testing and diagnosis. They also consider that the manufacturer's occasional visit to site during the course of the works is a satisfactory substitute for monitoring by an independent Engineer. Such responsibilities are sometimes even written into the contract! - much to the alarm of the material supplier who generally has no professional indemnity insurance to cover such

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MAKERS

MAKERS ESTABLISH PARTNERING CHARTER

The recent establishment of contract partnering agreements, in conjunction with nine individual clients and worth a total of £20m, has prompted specialist main contractor **Makers UK Ltd** to introduce a specific formal Partnership Charter.

The new Charter promises to engender trust, co-operation, respect and honest communication. Included among its aims are the completion of quality contracts on time and within budget; the submission of information for approval - clearly and promptly; the early identification of problems, as well as their fair and timely resolution and the setting up of efficient, productive and regular meetings.

The Charter sets out to minimise impact to the public and/or residents as contracts progress, to minimise changes whilst encouraging innovation and to provide a safe project.

For copies of the new Makers Partnering Charter Telephone: 01462 477333 Fax: 01462 477339 Email: marketing@makers.co.uk

ENQUIRY NO: 907

CRL REFURBISHMENT



ADDED SHELTER FOR ARBOUR HOUSE

Extensive concrete repair work, the installation of 1600m² of 60mm thick external wall insulation (EWI), 900m² of insulated roofing, new heating systems, new doors and soft landscaping has been carried out at Arbour House, a five-storey residential block of flats, located in and owned by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The flats, constructed in the 1930s, were in desperate need of refurbishment and the £1.5m project to fully refurbish the structure, carried out by **CRL Refurbishment** (a division of Concrete Repairs Ltd) acting as main contractor, took 40 weeks to complete. CRL Refurbishment provides nation-wide, multi-disciplined services such as pitched & flat roofing, window replacement or repair, external wall insulation, overcladding and visual improvement, structural repair and protective coatings, corrosion prevention, security systems and lighting, mechanical and electrical services, soft landscaping, drainage works and environmental improvements. For further information Tel: 020 8288 4848, Fax: 020 8288 4847. Website: www.crlrefurb.com

ENQUIRY NO: 908

BAGNALLS CONCRETE PROMISE

Bagnalls considerable resources and flexibility within its management structure allows a high standard of care to be applied to all contracts from comprehensive refurbishment projects to the smaller concrete repair schemes. Bagnalls aim to meet the ever-changing needs of varying industries by its professional understanding of the client's requirements and its commitment to providing a quality service. Bagnalls provides a comprehensive repair service inclusive of structure survey, concrete testing & analysis.

Contact us on 020 8311 3910, or email: neil_perring@bagnalls.co.uk Alternatively visit our web site - www.bagnalls.co.uk



ENQUIRY NO: 909



STRUCTURAL RENOVATIONS

Visit Structural Renovations Ltd on their new website at www.structren.co.uk



ENQUIRY NO: 910



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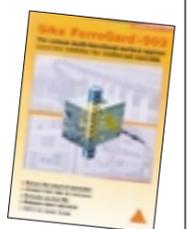
Sika is a world leader in proven, high performance construction chemicals. Our unrivalled portfolio of systems for concrete repair and protection includes **SIKA FERROGARD-903**, a surface-applied penetrating corrosion inhibitor.

It offers the following benefits:

- ▲ GREATLY REDUCED BREAKOUT - less noise, less dust
- ▲ COST EFFECTIVE - 30% saving achieved on one housing project
- ▲ FAST, ON-SITE PROOF OF PENETRATION
- ▲ TREATS CARBONATION & CHLORIDES SIMULTANEOUSLY
- ▲ ALLOWS POSSIBILITY OF FIXED PRICE CONTRACTS
- ▲ OVER 1/4 MILLION SQUARE METRES OF CONCRETE TREATED IN UK

We offer a free and comprehensive technical support service. Please contact Jimi Fadayomi on 01707 394444 for assistance.

ENQUIRY NO: 911



Specification Lottery

Continued from page 3

duties. No conscientious material supplier can accept such responsibilities and it is totally unreasonable to expect them to do so. Be that as it may, pressure is often exerted and relationships sour when a negative response results.

The fair competition regulations can usually be overcome by the drafting of a detailed performance specification that can also contain sound workmanship clauses and testing requirements/quality standards. Such a specification of course will then be applicable no matter which material is finally selected. Contractors that I have spoken to certainly do not object to 'tough' specifications as it often eliminates 'cowboys' and should ensure that tenderers 'are playing on a level field'. It is my understanding that the CRA has been actively promoting such an approach for years, but it is by no means accepted throughout the industry.

Workmanship specification clauses must address a whole range of matters but most importantly those concerning surface preparation standards, rebar cleaning, curing and minimum dry film thickness (not consumption rates). Testing requirements should be clearly 'spelt out' including those for sample panels, breakouts/pull off tests etc. Indeed these particular two topics - the dos and do nots - warrant a much larger article alone. Something for a future time!

However, as regards to specification writing the golden adage must be; always consult with both a reputable specialist contractor and a materials supplier and use their expert knowledge by all means - they will usually be only too pleased to help. But draft a final specification that has guts in it. Don't leave it to other people to decide what is good for you. You will not necessarily get what you want!

ENQUIRY NO: 912

CRA MEMBERS DIRECTORY UPDATED

The CRA has updated and published the latest edition of its popular Members Directory, which is specifically designed to be of every-day practical use to Specifiers, Consultants, Surveyors, Local Authorities and Clients.

The latest edition includes details of new members and updated information on the CRA's thirty-six other members, who comprise the vast majority of the UK's established concrete repair contractors and product manufacturers.

The comprehensive, 52 page, one-third A4 booklet, provides information on each member company. Head Office and Regional Office details, contact names, a description of the company's specialist concrete repair activities (in the case of manufacturers - its products), areas of operation and third party accreditations, are all included. To assist when compiling tender lists for concrete repair work, each contractor's entry includes information on contract values catered for, the company's largest contract to date, its total turnover and approximate annual business in specific concrete repair related work.

The Directory also contains details of the technical advisory assistance available from the Association, its NVQ related training scheme, Codes of Practice and publications. In addition, it lists a bibliography of related literature and names and addresses of associated organisations.

The CRA Members Directory is also included on the Association's CD-ROM entitled 'The route to a successful concrete repair'. Copies of either the hard copy or the CD-ROM can be obtained free of charge from: The Secretary at Association House, 99 West Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EN Tel: 01252 739145 Fax: 01252 739140 Email: info@associationhouse.org.uk Web site: www.concreterepairs.org.uk



'THE ROUTE' SECOND EDITION

Continued from page 1

The 'Route to a successful concrete repair' programme includes details regarding types of repair product, alternative repair techniques, the causes of concrete deterioration and methods of carrying out concrete repairs, but these are not the primary areas of focus. The programme concentrates more on aspects of overall project control such as: safety of the structure and environmental hazards; assessment of damage, deterioration and diagnosis of its cause; definition of the clients objectives; design of the repair work and choice of methods and materials; preparation of contract documents, specification and Bill of Quantities; contractor selection and evaluation and supervision of the work.

To be useful as possible to those with responsibility for specifying such work, the CD-ROM also includes copies of the Association's publications, including its extremely useful 'Standard Method of Measurement for Concrete Repair' working document.

The updated version of the CD-ROM does not signal the end of personalised CPD presentations, which are available to professional groups and organisations. The CRA is prepared to present the programme at no charge, provided 10 or more delegates are able to attend.

The CD-ROM is available free of charge. Those wishing to obtain copies, or in organising a personalised presentation, should contact the CRA Secretary.

Are we mad, or are Morris Minors still manufactured?



When I next change my car, I'm going to have a brand spanking new Morris Minor with a soft top, pop-out indicators and that good old cold-weather stand by - a starting handle.

Of course, the fact that these cars have not been manufactured for years may prove to be a handicap. But lets face it, we live in a consumer-oriented society where what the customer wants the customer gets, don't we? All I have to do is to find a solution to the trivial problem that these vehicles are no longer manufactured.

So, who thinks I'm mad?
Or, who thinks I'm a wishful thinker
or, who thinks I'm completely serious?
Thank you sir - there's always one!

I'm afraid that the foregoing three paragraphs of apparent nonsense rushed through my mind when a recent tender arrived with the concrete repair work so perfectly detailed that the specifier must have memorised the CRA Standard Method of Measurement in order for it to be his specialist subject on Mastermind. Such perfect billing had the estimators fighting over who was going to price the job. Phrases like "a piece of cake" were much in evidence. Then they turned to the product specifications. There, in the same meticulous detail that had shown up in the bills of quantity, were the repair materials to be used. It was a shame that, like the Morris Minor, this particular range of products had ceased production some years ago.

Now if this were an isolated incident you would be forgiven for putting it down to basic human error, but unfortunately this is not the case. All too often bills are written and issued specifying products that are either no longer made, or materials that have been superseded by an improved version. As one R&D person put it to me some time ago, "It makes you wonder why we bother!"

Of course not everyone is to be tarred with this particular brush. CRA manufacturer members spend a lot of time and effort in educating the industry as a whole about the new products on offer. I suspect that there are two main problems.

One is an inbred suspicion that we have of trying out anything new. We dignify this by claiming to want to see a track record, but lets face it, if nobody makes that first move then a track record is going to be hard to come by. Secondly, and this is perhaps a more serious a problem, is the fact that it's a sight easier to cut and paste an existing specification than it is to write out a new set of criteria.

Now, I have no solution to the British (and perhaps international) reserve over new products, mainly because I'm as guilty as the rest of us about letting someone else be the guinea pig. With regard to the second point, however, there is a fairly simple solution. All of the CRA manufacturers will produce a written specification if asked and in this day and age of electronic formatting, once written it will take just seconds to update an existing specification.

With the spotlight being firmly focused on the concept of best value, it will become increasingly difficult to justify outdated specifications with the inherent risk of non-supply as the least of the problems that can arise. Within the CRA we are concerned not just with how our members perform on site, but also with the products that are used to create that performance. Get them both right and you are well on the way to a successful job. Alternatively, ignore the advice that our members (manufacturers and contractors) can offer and you are likely to ultimately pay the price.

The CRA is there for you to use, to be of assistance both with specification and site procedures. The final choice is yours of course. You can go for an up to date specification or, as we said at the beginning, you could wait for them to start making Morris Minors again.

One final thought. Since getting involved in the concrete repair business it has been repeatedly drummed into me that when encountering site problems, the snag that needs resolving seldom involves 'rocket science'. What I really want to know is, does the Mission Controller at Cape Canaveral, in the face of a failing Mars landing, egg his staff on with the phrase "C'mon guys, its not 'concrete repair', y'know!" I think we should be told.

PASTURES NEW FOR CRA

Regular readers will notice a change of banner design for this issue of 'Cracking Matters'. It incorporates the new CRA logo introduced earlier this year and reported upon in the last issue.

And now there's another new development to note. In May, the Association moved to new premises in Farnham, Surrey. Enquiries should now be addressed to:

Association House, 99 West Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EN
Tel: 01252 739145. Fax: 01252 739140

The Association's email and web site details will not, of course, change. They are:
Email: info@associationhouse.org.uk
Website: www.concreterepairs.org.uk

'CRACKING MATTERS' is published by the Concrete Repair Association (CRA), Association House, 99 West Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EN. Tel: (01252) 739145 Fax: (01252) 739140 Email: info@associationhouse.org.uk Website: www.concreterepair.org.uk

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