ISSUE 3 / SUMMER 2025

KILKERN NEWS

HONOURING HISTORY: KILKERN JOINS WINVIC IN VE DAY BAILEY BRIDGE INSTALLATION

The Kilkern team was proud to partner with Winvic in an exceptional project to commemorate VE Day – the installation of a historic Second World War Bailey bridge at the Royal Engineers Museum in Gillingham, Kent.

Undertaken as part of Winvic's social value commitments through the National Highways SDF Framework, and in collaboration with supply chain partner EKSPAN, the project involved constructing a new concrete base, replacing missing bearings, and installing the bridge in its permanent home.

Bailey bridges were vital to the Allied war effort – ingeniously designed to be assembled by hand without heavy machinery, yet strong enough to carry tanks. Their legacy continues today in civil engineering, where they are still used for temporary pedestrian and vehicle crossings around the world.

Winvic described it as a privilege to help preserve this important piece of engineering history and ensure its educational value endures for future generations.

A LASTING LEGACY OF MILITARY ENGINEERING

Kilkern Director Patrick Curran joined colleagues and dignitaries at the official unveiling.

"Bailey bridges have long been recognised as essential tools in military engineering," he said. "We were honoured to contribute to the installation of such a significant exhibit. While the components can be assembled by hand, our team was pleased to use a crane to lift and position the bridge in three four-tonne sections."

The importance of Bailey bridges was perhaps best summarised by Field Marshal Montgomery, one of Britain's most distinguished WWII commanders, who wrote in 1947:

"Bailey bridging made an immense contribution towards ending World War II. As far as my own operations were concerned... I could never have maintained the speed and tempo of forward movement without large supplies of Bailey bridging."

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COMPANY UPDATE

Patrick Curran, Director

Welcome to our latest newsletter update. Once again we are pleased to be able to share with you some of our business highlights, insights into the business and just a few of the many projects we have recently completed.

As with previous newsletters, we have also taken the opportunity to include a couple of longer pieces: one which celebrates a big moment for us – our move to new premises at Kearsley in Bolton and their official opening by Yasmin Qureshi MP; and one which takes a hard look at a construction industry matter which sits front-and-centre for our vac ex business – the question of service strikes, the risks they bring and the considerations that almost every site and project manager should be assessing.

Services strikes are also closely linked to the wider question of site safety and we are very proud of the work we have done over the last 12 months to elevate further our No Harm initiative within the business. This multi-dimensioned programmed is promoting our safety culture not only across our team but also to include all people who work on our sites, visit or who make use of the depot's, office and workshop areas so they know they are being provided a safe place to work.

No Harm is an ongoing focus across the business and we have ambitious plans to take it to the next level over the coming months.

Our operating companies continue to go from strength-to-strength. Our civil engineering continues to benefit from its clear focus on highways and infrastructure, working on some eye-catching projects including the high-profile Lostock Energy from Waste plant in Cheshire. We've also engaged on or have completed M60 motorway schemes on, among others, the M6, M54, M57 and M62. In fact, just about anywhere you could find a motorway in the North West you could find a Kilkern team.

Of course, its not just been the high speed road network where we have been making a difference: We are delighted to have been appointed to Stoke-on-Trent City Council's new £16M Highways Framework and a number of projects in Lincolnshire including Dysart Road in Grantham and Marsh Lane in Lincoln which have helped to improve things dramatically for road users and residents alike.

Vacuum excavation occupies an increasingly important position as a vital tool for engineers and the global market for hire is expected to double over the next ten years.

The market growth is partly being driven by better awareness and understanding, and partly by the introduction of new applications. Our VAC UK team has been at the forefront of innovation: we are now working with extension hoses of up to 100m in length enabling excavation in confined spaces or where ground conditions or topography restrict access. We have also adopted new technology such as the Brokk 120DII demolition robot, specialist attachments such as road sweeping equipment and, what is believed to be, the only example in the UK of an asbestos cyclone - a step change in the safe extraction of contaminated materials.

This is a very exciting time for our business. I am very proud of the work we are delivering, of our outstanding team and of our positive and valued relationships with our clients and I look forward to continuing to build on our success to date.

I hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative and look forward to sharing further updates.

KILKERN SECURES TOP-LEVEL CONSTRUCTIONLINE STATUS

Kilkern's supply-chain management has had a resounding thumbs-up following its most recent Constructionline review.

The civil engineering and highways infrastructure specialist has been awarded Platinum status after its latest audit which verifies and assesses the management systems used by the supply chain for both quality and applicability.

Our Head of Health, Safety, Environment, and Quality compliance (HSEQ), Martin Gallagher believes that achieving the Platinum award is a real feather in the cap for the business and an important recognition of the hard work put in by the team to achieve the necessary standard.

"Platinum status is a fantastic reflection of the values and commitment within the business," he said. "To achieve and maintain the membership level, we put ourselves through an additional level of scrutiny and it's testament to the quality of the systems that we have in place that we've done so well.

"A large part of the audit relates to matters of health and safety – a subject we place huge emphasis on both within Kilkern and also at our vacuum excavation specialism VAC UK. The report recognised the contribution of our No Harm campaign and how it was contributes to an increased level of safety maturity.

"We are proud to have set a high bar for ourselves and for our supply chain. We know it gives clients great confidence and we will continue to push to new levels in coming years."

Constructionline collects, assesses and monitors over 30 million pieces of information, from more than 45,000 suppliers to provide efficiency savings and opportunities to suppliers working with public and private sector buyers within the construction industry. It does so by providing a single source of accreditation, streamlining procurement procedures and improving the supply chain management processes. 4,000 buying organisations are now registered with Constructionline.

COMPOUND INTEREST

The Wyre Beach Management Scheme is a £40M, 11 kilometre coastal defence scheme at Fleetwood in Lancashire.

Kilkern was brought in by principal contractor Balfour Beatty to construct a new site compound adjacent to the Rossall Point Car between Princes Way and the existing sea wall.

The work is the second collaboration with Balfour Beatty on the scheme after the team delivered a first compound at Thornton Cleveleys.

Used by Balfour Beatty as a base of operations throughout Phase Two, it provided secure space for parking, site offices and plant and materials storage, including for the substantial quantities of rock armour used to reinforce the sea defences.

Within the 6432m2 compound, Kilkern stripped the existing top soil prior to completing a reduced level dig, constructed a new haul road and new foot paths, installed all necessary ducting and drainage and built fuel pads.

Additionally, the Kilkern team widened access to the beach to ensure it's suitability for heavy machinery.

More than 4000m2 of tarmac was laid, partly within the compound but also, to provide a lasting community benefit, to the surface of the existing Rossall Point Car Park.

Kilkern's commercial manager Patrick Rodgers is pleased at the part the business has played in the ambitious four-year coast defence project.

"The Wyre Beach Management Scheme aims to reduce significantly the risk of coastal erosion and flooding to over 11,000 properties and critical infrastructure along the coastline," he said. "When completed it will provide additional peace of mind for local residents and businesses.

"We are also very pleased to be working with Balfour Beatty on this scheme again. It is the second element delivered by Kilkern after our successful completion of a compound and site accesses further south at Thornton Cleveleys ahead of Phase One.

The project was awarded under the national SCAPE framework.

A drone image looking West over Kilkern's construction of a new compound for Phase 2 of the Wyre Beach Management Scheme.

A composite aerial image showing the overall compound. The improved beach access and the re-surfaced public car park can be seen to the left of the picture.

Laying the compound's tarmac surface.

An aerial view of the widened beach access.

KILKERN WINS PLACE ON £16M STOKE HIGHWAYS FRAMEWORK

Kilkern has achieved a triple success with appointment to Stoke-on-Trent City Council's new £16M Highways Framework.

After winning a place on three lots (Lot 2A Civil Engineering (works up to £500k), Lot 2B Civil Engineering (works above £500k) and Lot 5 (Section 278 works)), the team will deliver works including: vehicle access crossings; carriageway and footpath reconstruction; drainage and ducting installation; the construction of kerbs and paving areas; the construction of car parks; Section 38 works (forming new junctions and accesses to the public highway); Section 278 alterations to the existing highway; small elements of road marking; and the installation and removal of traffic management.

Patrick Rodgers, Commercial Manager at Kilkern believes that the appointment to the framework marks an important step in the business's development.

"At Kilkern, we have made a significant investment in our people and equipment and have remained very clearly focused on building expertise and delivering high-quality civil engineering," he said. "We are extremely pleased to have won a place on three lots – it's a real achievement for the business and fantastic recognition of our continued commitment to excellence.

"We are looking forward to working closely with Stoke Council to help deliver schemes across the city."

Highways have been identified as a key priority for Stoke-on-Trent Council which has announced projects to alleviate traffic congestion, improve road safety and promote sustainable transportation options.

A recent council report emphasises the critical role of the transport network in daily life, stating: "The transport network is essential to almost every aspect of our daily lives. Very little happens without us needing to walk, cycle, use public transport, or a private vehicle."

The framework runs until 2028.

NEW HOME FOR KILKERN

Following substantial growth over the last few years, Kilkern has relocated to a new 90,000 square feet yard and workshop in northwest Manchester.

The new base at Kearsley, Bolton offers massively improved access, is better suited to the expanding fleet and will allow for future growth across all operations.

The new offices will provide additional accommodation for admin and support teams and will increase the capacity for training and development.

The new depot was officially opened by local Yasmin Qureshi, Member of Parliament for Bolton South East who unveiled a plaque making the occasion, before being shown around the new facilities and watching an equipment demonstration from one of our specialist vac ex operators.

She said: "'It is brilliant to see an industry leading business move to Kearsley. These are the kinds of jobs we need to attract to the area and I hope Kilkern will make Kearsley and Bolton their home for years to come. It is testament to the leadership of Kilkern that they are a growing and evolving business, ready to meet the challenges of the future."

Yasmin Qureshi was welcomed by Kilkern Director, Patrick Curran who believes the relocation to Bolton is already proving an excellent decision that is already unlocking growth.

"Our move to a bigger, more centrally located yard and office is key to the next stage of our evolution," he said. "It will give us the room we need to keep increasing the size of our fleet and team to ensure we continue to meet client demand.

"We are very pleased at the welcome we have received in Bolton. We have ambitious plans for the future and want the business to play a positive role in the wider community."

Highlights from the day

KILKERN DELIVERS LOSTOCK ENERGY-FROM-WASTE UNDERGROUND SERVICES PACKAGE

Kilkern has successfully carried out the installation of all underground drainage and ducting services to meet the needs of the high profile Lostock Sustainable Energy Plant (LSEP) project at Nantwich in Cheshire.

The contract was awarded by LSEP, a joint venture between Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) and FCC Environment. The Kilkern team worked alongside Black & Veatch, the engineering, procurement and construction management (EpCM) contractor on the £480m Energy-from-Waste project.

Overall, almost 8.5km of drainage and ducting including deep drainage, cast iron pipework, pressure mains, bypass separators, septic tanks and an attenuation tank were installed.

Once operational, LSEP will export 69.9MW of electricity to the grid using residual waste – the waste material remaining once materials that can be recycled have been removed – as a fuel.

Kilkern Operations Manager Craig Winter said: "This is one of the most significant projects underway in the region which will have major impacts for waste management – the plant will prevent 600,000 tonnes of waste from potentially going to landfill – energy generation and the environment.

"When it is completed and operational, LSEP will be able to generate sufficient sustainable energy to power 125,000 dwellings – equivalent to more then two-thirds of households in Cheshire West and Chester.

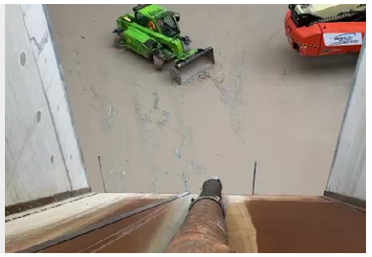
"Having previously constructed the access road to the site, we are delighted to be working with Black & Veatch and LSEP again and look forward to continuing to play our part in this exciting project."

LSEP is scheduled to become operational in 2025.

CLEANING UP AT LSEP

VAC UK is also in action at Lostock Energy to Waste Plant (LSEP).

The unusual picture shows a vac truck removing slurry from a part of the site that was temporarily being used as an overflow for a siltbuster. Limited access and a 15 metre drop to the point where we needed to deploy the vacex's nozzle saw us breaking out the extension hoses again. Working in conjunction with a Merlo Group telehandler fitted with a shovel we were able to remove 60 tonnes of spoil across a four day period.



KILKERN AND VAC UK WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE TO DRIVE FORWARD LINCOLNSHIRE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

VAC UK and Kilkern civil engineers teamed up to help deliver the £2 million Newland highway improvements project in Lincoln.

The scheme, to rebuild the carriageway along Newland, between Wigford Way and The Avenue – along with some of Wigford Way, Mint Lane and Lucy Tower Street, has been led by Winvic on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council.

Work included the replacement of kerbs and footways, installing improved highways drainage and replacing two sets of traffic lights – along with some of Wigford Way, Mint Lane and Lucy Tower Street – has been led by Winvic on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council.

Following completion, it will help alleviate standing water in the area and provide improved infrastructure for pedestrians' and motorists' journeys.

According to Sean Gallagher, VAC UK General Manager, the scheme was a great example of how vacuum excavation is increasingly the preferred choice for relatively tight urban excavations.

"Vac ex's reduced footprint compared with traditional forms of mechanical excavation means that it's easier to maintain traffic flows through busy urban settings," he said.

"Also, vacuum excavation allows considerably more precise digging and most importantly, given the density of other infrastructure in the ground, it is both safer and reduces the threat of costs from service strikes."

Kilkern's Operations Manager Craig Winter believes the scheme will have a transformative effect for people on foot or driving through Newland. "The road and pavement infrastructure had started to show its age," he said. "This project has provided a big improvement to the carriageway and to footpaths – both in terms of its surface and also with the improved traffic flows from the new traffic lights."

WHAT LIES BENEATH – HOW VAC EX IS MINIMISING THE RISK OF £100K SERVICE STRIKES

Never underestimate what you might find in the ground when digging.

Dense underground infrastructure in Keighley, West Yorkshire provides a powerful illustration of why vac ex is first choice for excavation around utilities.

Years of uncharted services and utilities infrastructure installation, an as yet incomplete National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) and the uncertainty of pre-excavation scanning methods means that is difficult to know what's beneath our feet when excavating. It is estimated that there are around 4 million kilometres of pipes, sewers, and electricity and telecoms cables buried across the country – and most of it is unmapped.

A few years ago, the UK government calculated that the average direct cost of a service strike was £3,371 and indirect costs typically add 29 times as much again[1]. That means that a single incident can now carry financial implications of a staggering £100,000 plus.

Threat to safety pushes costs even higher

In 2017 a Tier 1 contractor was fined £600,000 when a subcontractor hit an electrical cable and was injured[2] and in April 2024 a housing company based in Kent was fined £528,000 after an employee repairing a fence post struck an underground cable suffering burns to his face[3].

That's before the threat of workers paying the highest price of all is considered. In the five years to 2020, the Energy Networks Association reported that 354 people suffered life changing injuries after striking a live underground electricity cable with four out of five incidents involving a construction worker or tradesperson[4].

Alarmingly, a recent snapshot revealed that manual excavation accounted for more than 600 strikes in a single year, double that of mechanical excavation and more than 20 times the number of incidents involving a vacuum excavator[5].

The Utility Strike Damages Report identifies that the highest volume of strikes is on low voltage (LV) electricity cables (<1000V). These sorts of cables are found throughout the built environment and can sometimes be difficult to trace using CAT and Genny.

Telecom and water assets come in at number two and number three.

The report expresses concern at the increase in reports of telecoms assets being deployed rapidly without sufficient surface features to warn of their existence, together with being laid at depths shallower than expected.

Low pressure gas and water pipes are often laid in PE which cannot be detected with CAT and Genny without using additional equipment. They are often not recorded on plans and may even be invisible to Ground Penetrating Radar.

Vac ex meets unmapped infrastructure challenge

The congested and unmapped nature of the UK's services and utilities infrastructure is a persistent challenge to contractors. While there is progress with the National Underground Asset Register (NUAR)[6], the government-led programme to deliver a new digital map, it is still far from a complete picture. The NUAR Minimum Viable Product was launched in North East England, Wales and London in April 2023 and it has targeted operationalising the service countrywide by the end of 2025. Ultimately, it will help, but the information will not be exhaustive – or at least not for many years – and the prudent contactor will still exercise caution when excavating.

Similarly, while there are advances in scanning equipment, often the most sophisticated equipment is either considered too expensive or is not available. Sometimes, in an emergency situation, there simply isn't time and it is no coincidence that the greatest rate of service strikes occur on unplanned or reactive works.

It is small wonder then that, if it is not possible to identify conclusively what cables and pipes are in the ground, smart project, site and plant hire managers are increasingly looking to deploy vacuum excavation to give them and their teams an extra layer of protection against services strikes.

The economic costs of utility strikes to the UK economy alone have been estimated at £2.4bn every year. Vacuum excavation dramatically reduces the likelihood of a service strike compared with arduous hand digging or taking a chance with an excavator and it is up to 16 times more effective.

It is fast, safe, reduces operating and carbon footprints, is generally kinder to the environment and generally works out as significantly more cost-effective than alternatives on anything but the smallest of jobs.

[1] National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) – Economic Case Summary Published 4 November 2021 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-underground-asset-register-unlocking-value-for-industry-and-the-wider-economy/national-underground-asset-register-nuar-economic-case-summary.

[2] Digging disasters: rise in injuries amongst construction workers https://www.energynetworks.org/newsroom/digging-disasters-rise-in-injuries-amongst-construction-workers.

[3] USAG Utility Strike Damages Report https://utilitystristg.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/usag_2020_utility_strike_damages_report.pdf.
[6] NUAR project update – November 2023. Updated 19 January 2024 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-underground-asset-register-project-update-november-2023/nuar-project-update-november-2023.

[4] Digging disasters: rise in injuries amongst construction workers https://www.energynetworks.org/newsroom/digging-disasters-rise-in-injuries-amongst-construction-workers.

[5] USAG Utility Strike Damages Report https://utilitystristg.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/usag_2020_utility_strike_damages_report.pdf.

[6] NUAR project update - November 2023. Updated 19 January 2024 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-underground-asset-register-project-update-november-2023/nuar-project-update-november-2023.

KILKERN ACHIEVES INITIAL WIRS ACCREDITATION

Kilkern has taken a strategic step forward in expanding its utility capabilities, having successfully completed assessment and achieved initial accreditation under the Water Industry Registration Scheme (WIRS).

Administered by LRQA (Lloyd's Register's Business Assurance & Inspection Services division) on behalf of the UK's water utilities, WIRS certifies "self-lay" organisations (SLOs) that install new water or sewer connections to existing infrastructure.

Kilkern has initially pursued accreditation for Design, the Construction of Mains and Services (all works) (CMS) and the Construction of Routine Mains Connections (CRMC).

The accreditation builds on the success of contracts such as the installation of all underground services at the £480 million Lostock Sustainable Energy Plant Ltd (LSEP) project in Cheshire where Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP) and FCC Environment, appointed Kilkern to install drainage and ducting to meet the needs of the Energy from Waste facility.

Working to Black & Veatch, the engineering, procurement and construction management (EpCM) contractor, Kilkern completed works totalling almost 8.5km of drainage and ducting at the site, including deep drainage, cast iron pipework, pressure mains, bypass separators, septic tanks and an attenuation tank.

A Milestone for Growth and Credibility

Kilkern Director Patrick Curran described the accreditation as a significant endorsement of the company's capabilities in civil engineering and utilities infrastructure.

"We've developed deep expertise in drainage and underground utilities over many years," he said. "Achieving WIRS accreditation is a clear validation of our high standards and compliance with industry best practice. It also offers important reassurance to clients—many of whom now require WIRS-accredited partners.

"This is not just a mark of confidence in our current performance but also a platform for future growth. WIRS is recognised by all 22 UK water companies and opens up new opportunities to build relationships and deliver further value to our clients.

"Strategically, we're committed to best-in-class performance, and our next goal is to complete full WIRS accreditation."

LRQA ACCREDITED WIRS WATER INDUSTRY REGISTRATION SCHEME

M53 AT ELLESMERE PORT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Proud of our team's work on the M53 south of Ellesmere Port and the M53/M56 Stoak interchange.

We have been working with COLAS and Winvic Construction Ltd on National Highways' £7m project to replace large sections of ageing steel safety barriers on the M53 motorway in Cheshire between junctions 9 and 11.

In a little over four weeks, we planed out the road surface in front of the central reservation's kerb line; removed the existing kerbing and drainage kerbs; broke out and removed the exiting central reservation hard standing; and conducted a deck scrape and removed the existing waterproofing.

Once completed, we managed the waterproofing and fine milling to the concrete surfaces.

Our Kilkern team then installed new kerblines and drainage kerbs and drilled for and fixed reinforcement steels. Pull tests were conducted to confirm anchor force. Concrete was poured and brush-finished and the road surface was reinstated in tarmac to the new kerblines.

Posts for the vehicle Restraint System (VRS) were installed to Series 400 Road Restraint System specification.

Operations Manager Craig Winter believes the project has been an excellent example of Kilkern's team drawing on its extensive highways civil engineering expertise and experience.

"Although a relatively small element of the overall programme, this was none-the-less an important project which will improve road safety and we were pleased to be collaborating with Winvic to deliver a first-class result to time and budget," he said.

"Working on busy roads like the M53 will always bring operational challenges and it is a testament to the team that they have delivered an excellent outcome."

VAC EX SHOWS WHY IT'S 1ST CHOICE FOR CONFINED SPACE EXCAVATION

Vac ex again proved its worth and ability to get into those tricky, hard to reach places at a sub-station in Blackpool.

VAC UK was brought in to excavate the gravel backfill that had been used to insulate and firmly secure the power cables beneath the electrical cabinets in order that engineering work could take place.

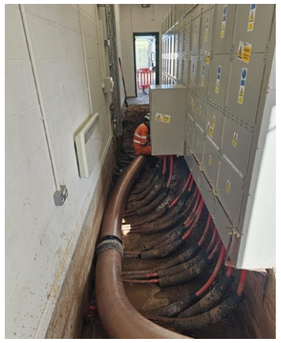
The excavation site presented some access challenges so VAC UK's team deployed one of its powerful RSP vac ex trucks fitted with a megaboom to get as close as possible to the substation and then used a 15m extension to reach inside.

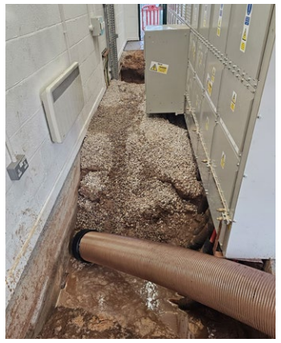
Sean Gallagher, VAC UK's General Manager explained that that suction excavation is in increasing demand for this sort of confined space working.

There are a number of reasons," he said. "The vacuum nozzle offers excellent manoeuvrability, even in the tightest spots, meaning that even quite complex digs can be easily dealt with quite easily; in the hands of our highly-trained operators there is very little chance of any damage to machinery or components; it is inherently safer than other forms of powered digging; and it offers little to no risk of any form of service strikes.

"We are seeing a real shift in hirers' thinking around vac ex. It is no longer seen as something to be brought in to deal with fairly specific types of excavation but as a genuinely versatile tool that is first choice for many other applications.

"If you take this job in Blackpool as an example, you can see the benefits. Unlike a mechanical digger the machine is able to get onto a site with a minimum of fuss – so you are dealing with one vehicle movement rather than at least two – which means there's a carbon saving.





"There's no need for spoil wagons because it can all be collected in the onboard skip – so there's no mess and further carbon savings. And, of course, it is much, much quicker than hand excavation.

"We are seeing our fleet being hired for everything from trial holes to road sweeping and demand continues to grow."

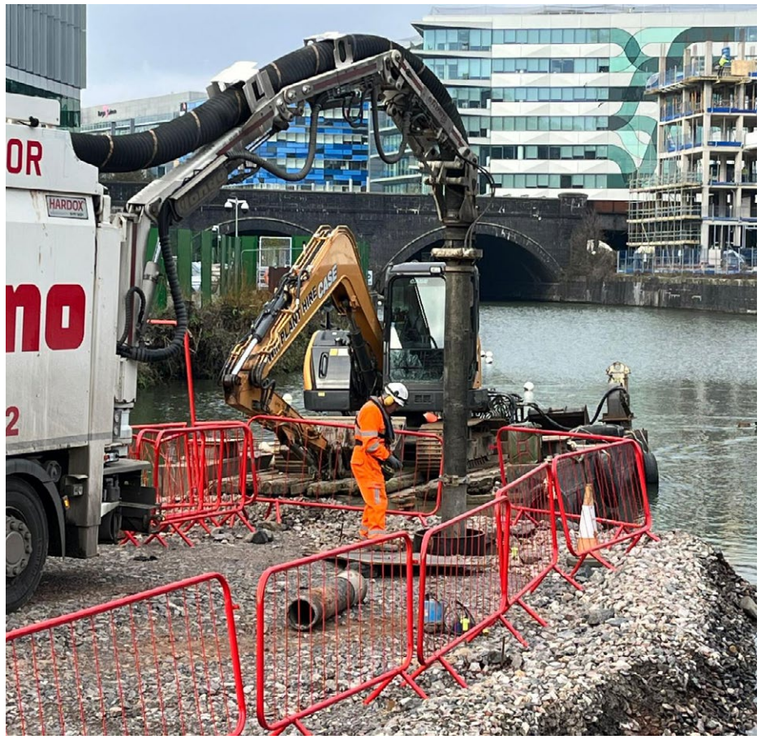
DOWN BY THE RIVER

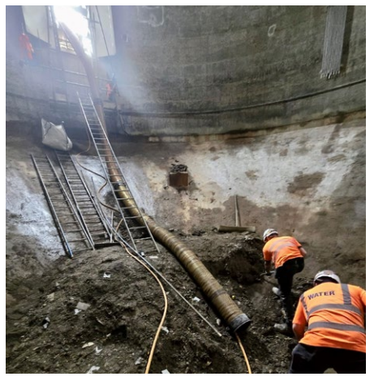
VAC UK was brought in to clean out the piles that will support a new walkway on Temple Island outside the University of Bristol's impressive new Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus and alongside the waters of Bristol's Floating Harbour.

The piles had been sunk down to 4.5 metre depth, through the made up ground and into the original more rocky material below. In just one day, the vacuum excavator cleared five of the six piles on the south side of the railway bridge.

The work forms part of the Bristol Temple Quarter, the UK's largest regeneration scheme, that is transforming this part of the city – on both sides of the waterway.

The £300M university campus is seen as a catalyst for the wider development of the 70-hectare development zone which is expected to feature a mixed-use quarter comprising up to 11,000 homes and a revitalised transport interchange near Temple Meads station – as well as a huge upgrade for the station.





TOUGH CHALLENGE IN POOLE

The boys were probably as thankful as the client for the long reach on this job – clearing a waste digester tank at a treatment works in Dorset.

The tank, which was being cleaned for maintenance and rehabilitation, was deep and had only limited access through a tight aperture. We used one of our RSP vac excavators together with an extension hose to reach right to the bottom where the slurry in the tank was shovelled into the nozzle by specialist wastewater operatives.

The hose and nozzle were laid and secured across a supporting system of scaffolding to ensure the position of the nozzle remained fixed. The twin fan RSP vac truck had no difficulty sucking out the material which could all be contained within the truck's skip.

It's another classic example of how vacuum excavation can make a big difference when it comes to relatively large scale excavation in difficult to access places. It would have been impossible to deploy a mechanical digger on the job and would have been an extremely arduous manual excavation task. As it was, the job was successfully completed in just one day.

RISE OF THE MACHINES

8 REASONS WHY OUR BROKK DEMOLITION ROBOT IS A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

One of the most useful technologies to the join the fleet is our BROKK 120DII demolition robot which has quickly established itself as a favourite tool among customers and operators.

We think the BROKK is a fantastic bit of kit and we thought we'd share a few of its key features and benefits:

1. PACKS A SERIOUS PUNCH (I)

The BROKK 120DII is the world's smallest diesel-powered demolition robot. Its excellent power to weight ratio provides an extra dimension to our vac ex capabilities because it is able to carry the suction nozzle up to 100 metres from the location of the truck. That can be really useful if, for example, the operating site will not bear much weight or if its difficult to access.

Working on the Transpennine Route Upgrade, the multi-billion pound rail engineering programme to improve rail travel between Manchester and Leeds. This digging site could only be reached up a steep embankment. Thanks to the BROKK the vac ex's digging power could be delivered over distances of more than 75m from the truck.

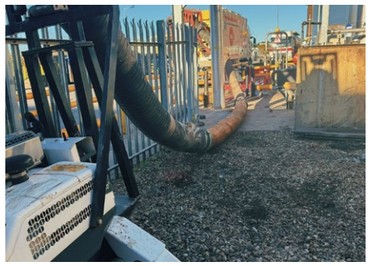
BROKK working with extension hose and able to easily manoeuvre past overhanging trees.

2. GOOD IN A SQUEEZE

It may come as a bit of a surprise, but the 120DII is small enough to pass through a standard doorway. That makes it ideal for operation in confined spaces. Pairing it again with long-reach hoses makes for a potent combination able to project the excavation power of the vacuum excavator into the tightest of spots.

Using the BROKK means that human entry is not required to many confined space workings. The robot is unaffected by the adverse conditions that can make it difficult and dangerous for human beings so it provides greater safety and comfort for operators and reduces overall site risk.

The BROKK working at an industrial complex in Peterborough.



The narrow access through which the BROKK was easily able to pass.

3. GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

Its compact dimensions also mean that the BROKK is an ideal solution in many urban environments where the vac ex may need to reach down narrow streets or alleyways.

4. A LIGHT TOUCH

While it is a robust piece of equipment, the BROKK weighs significantly less than a vacuum excavator truck. So it has a much lighter footprint with much less potential impact on the landscape and flora. This makes it ideal for use where it is important to protect trees, hedges and grass.

5. DIESEL POWER

The powerful 24.8hp engine will work longer and harder than comparable alternatives. One tank will allow 8 hours of continuous use, minimising downtime for refuelling or Ideal for places that do not have reliable power supply.

6. TOUGH CUSTOMER

BROKK has more than 40 years pedigree of building tough equipment that can be relied on to deliver in the most challenging environment. Not only are the physical components manufactured to stand up to the rigours of day-to-day site use, all of the electrical components are also hardened to meet the most rugged requirements. It's no accident that the machines are named after the legendary dwarf who was strong enough to forge Thor's hammer, Mjolnir.

Thanks to its relatively light weight, the BROKK was able to cross the soft ground alongside the highway in Penrith, Cumbria to excavate a new trench so a power cable could be moved and a new bridge installed.

BROKK and control unit.

The breaker attachment, the BHB155, the most powerful that can be fitted to the chassis.

7. REMOTE WORKING

No not that kind. But the BROKK 120DII does offer a unique remote control system which means it can be deployed as far as 300 metres from the operator who will still enjoy instant response to the control inputs. The lightweight control box weighs in at under 3kg increasing operator comfort and minimising fatigue. The highly responsive system ensure accurate manoeuvring of the robot in confined space or distant working.

8. PACKS A SERIOUS PUNCH (II)

The BROKK also comes with its own breaker attachment, the BHB155, the most powerful that can be fitted to the chassis, is rated as hitting harder and faster than anything in its class.

We have been very impressed by the BROKK's capabilities and it has quickly become an important and in-demand member of our fleet.

We believe it is pointing the way for an increased use of robot technology across civil engineering and excavation and, at VAC UK, we will continue to explore options to add new technology-driven service enhancements and innovations to ensure our fleet and capabilities remain at the forefront of the field.

BOXING CLEVER

Kilkern is proud to be extending its community and sport programme with the sponsorship of new kit for Oughterard Boxing Club.

Kilkern director, Patrick Curran, said he was delighted that the business is able to offer some practical support to the County Galway club.

"The history of Oughterard Boxing Club is one of endeavour and commitment and the club has flourished despite starting with slender resources – legend has it that on formation there was only one pair of boxing gloves," he said.

"It is now an important part of the town's social and community life and has produced many talented boxers over the years that have gone on to achieve success both at amateur and professional level.

"At Kilkern we set great store in supporting grassroots sports and we are proud to be playing our part in Oughterard Boxing Club's story."

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES WITH NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

Kilkern was delighted to be able to support National Highways' initiative to provide more than 1,000 personal care items to some of the most vulnerable communities in West Yorkshire.

National Highways staff, suppliers and sub-contractors such as Kilkern have united to support people experiencing homelessness by collecting products and donating them to St George's Crypt.

At National Highways' offices in Wakefield and Leeds, tables were laden, and bags were filled with bottles of hair and body care products and essential personal hygiene items thanks to the generosity of donors.

NEW BENCH DONATED TO POPULAR PUBLIC SPACES

The move to Kearsley earlier this year was a big, positive step for the business.

It was a real pleasure when Bolton South MP, Yasmin Qureshi, officially opened the new headquarters back in May and Kilkern and VAC UK already feel we are part of the community.

So all of the team were pleased to be able to make a contribution to the area by installing this new bench at The Square on Stoneclough Road. It looks very well in its new surroundings and hopefully it will become a popular place to rest legs and watch the world go by. Carrying out a thorough road testing are Kilkern/VAC UK's Dave Weatherilt, Fitter, and Adam Bell, Depot Manager, who took time out to make sure the bench was correctly installed.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT KILKERN & VAC UK

The Kilkern group of companies comprises three core divisions: Kilkern Civil Engineering, a leading highways and infrastructure contractor; workforce-supply specialist Kilkern Labour, recognised across the sector for the quality and professionalism of its operatives; and VAC UK, the UK's fastest-growing and best-equipped operated vacuum excavation company.

To find out more either about the stories in this newsletter or any of the services provided by the Kilkern Group, please contact:

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