Football Focus: Assent brought into Salford City FC stadium build team

News
Assent launches Clerk of Works scheme in Manchester
See page 3

Feature
Starting and commencing - what’s the difference?
See page 6

People
HQ expand with new trainee surveyor
See page 8
As 2016 draws to a close many of us are reflecting on what has been a startling year in many respects and ‘expecting the unexpected’ is starting to become the norm! There has been a rapidly changing political landscape in 2016 and many much loved celebrities and household names have passed away.

2016 has seen some major changes at Assent not least with the retirement of Director Martin Conlon. Those of you who know Martin will be well aware that Martin is not the kind of person to slow down in retirement. Assent are delighted that Martin continues to provide structured training support to our many offices that are expanding throughout the country. Martin’s wealth of knowledge is also much in demand with the bodies that regulate and shape Building Control at national level. Denby Dale Cricket Club has also gained an enthusiastic new committee member!

2017 will herald the introduction of new Approved Document R on the 1st January. Approved Document R requires the infrastructure for high speed electronic communication networks to all new buildings. In the year 2000 it was normal for homes to not have an internet connection and smart phones have only gained popularity in the last decade. Many of us cannot think how we used to live without these services and devices now! It will be interesting to see how our buildings develop in line with the speed of ever changing technology.

I hope you enjoy the winter newsletter and may I take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!
Assent expands its service offer

A NEW Clerk of Works service has been launched by Manchester’s Assent branch.

The service is being led by Pete Atherton and Maria Dobson, who are both accredited by the Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate (ICWCI), and is currently on offer to all clients with projects in the Greater Manchester area.

It is the first time that Assent has been able to offer a Clerk of Works service to help clients ensure the quality and workmanship of their projects meets the ICWCI’s tough guidelines.

One project currently being overseen by Pete is a new mixed retail and apartment development in Sale, Greater Manchester.

The project will see 34 one and two bed apartments being constructed above a row of ground floor retail units.

Pete, who has more the 25 years experience as a Clerk of Works, said: “This service gives comfort to the client that quality control is being monitored as work progresses.

“It works alongside Building Control in assessing both the quality and regulatory aspects of the work.

“It is a new service for Assent Manchester but one myself and my colleague Maria have over 35-years combined experience in and it is one we hope to be able to offer to more clients in the future.”

The Cross Street scheme is one of eight projects currently being overseen by Assent Manchester’s Clerk of Works team.

For more information, contact Pete or Maria at the Manchester office on 0161 236 7158.

Lincolnshire office opens for business

ASSENT has strengthened its coverage in Eastern England with the opening of a new Lincoln branch.

The new associate office is headed by Alex Flavell.

Alex, who boasts 17 years experience in Building Control, said: “Our main aim is to create a professional, user friendly service and form strong relationships with our clients which is achieved by providing a tailored quality service that works with our clients’ needs.

“We are happy to offer advice at the inception of a project and provide plan assessments, project management and inspection regimes to suit the client.”

Have you tried Assent’s online quote tool?

It is available 24 hours a day at www.assentbc.co.uk
ASSENT have teamed up with Manchester United’s legendary ‘Class of 92’ to help them achieve their dream of transforming Salford City FC into a footballing power house.

Ex-Reds Gary and Phil Neville, Nicky Butt, Paul Scholes and Ryan Giggs famously bought into the club in 2014.

The footballing friends have already seen their team rise to the National League North and have set their sights on getting into the Football League.

To do that, the club’s Moor Lane home is set to be transformed into a 5,000-capacity stadium with state-of-the-art hospitality and supporter’s facilities to rival their more illustrious neighbours at Old Trafford and the Etihad stadium.

Assent have been brought in as the scheme’s Building Control provider with project manager’s Maria Dobson and Peter Atherton taking the lead.

Maria said: “The Club has high ambitions on the pitch and we are looking forward to helping them achieve the same standards with their new stadium.

“It’s a real landmark project not only for Salford City Football Club but Manchester in general.

“Myself and the Manchester office are looking forward to helping the Club achieve a fantastic stadium that works for them while also meeting the standards set out in the Green Guide and other supporting documentation.”

Assent will work closely with Zerum Consult Ltd and its partners to deliver the development.
Lindsey Hall is a 79 bed nursing home with a difference. The Building Control service was undertaken by the Assent Wakefield office with the building completed in September 2016.

On the site of the former Lindsey Lower Grammar School the existing school building has been converted and extended in order that dementia patients can visit their own street scene to help trigger memories from the past.

Assent worked closely with designer Matthew Coulson of Fluid Design Associates from an early stage of the project to help achieve a safe, secure sanctuary whilst maintaining the highest standards of fire safety.

The nursing home is equipped with a bowling green, hair salon and shopping arcade with the shop windows displaying original products from the 1960s.

Residents and their families can spend time together in the real pub, tea room or mini cinema. Grandchildren can visit the working sweetshop with their Grandparents for a quarter of goodies.

Run by Yorkcare, Lindsey Hall gives the residents the opportunity to feel like they are going out into the community in a way that they wouldn’t normally be able to. The specialist design has caught the attention of the national media and has been praised as a way forward for dementia patients.
Assessing when a project has commenced has been a hot topic this year. Here, we take a look at the implications of efforts to better define a project start.

The site hoardings have gone up, the welfare facilities are in place and labourers are feverishly working to clear old buildings and vegetation from the area to make way for a new service road to be laid.

It sounds like work is well underway doesn’t it? Well not quite.

In an attempt to better define when work has started, or to use a more accurate term, commenced, the Welsh Government released a circular earlier this year setting out what does and what doesn’t constitute a commencement for Building Control bodies.

The document states that work has only commenced if something permanent is being carried out—excavations for foundations and piling are two of the examples given. Anything leaning towards preparatory works doesn’t count.

The document establishes a distinction between work starting on site and work commencing on site.

But why does any of this matter?
The Building Regulations change over time and the requirements that are applied to a particular development will depend on transitional rules set out which are used when the project was lodged and, in some circumstances, when the work commences, to determine if the new or old regulations apply.

If the new regulatory requirements become more onerous then there is clearly an advantage to submitting and potentially commencing the project before the deadline imposed.

Efforts to clarify the meaning of commencement has arisen exactly for this reason as

The Circular which attempted to define commencement to assist developers in Wales understand how to comply with transitional arrangements around sprinkler provisions.
developers in Wales have been keen to avoid the more onerous requirements to install sprinklers in residential dwellings. This was achieved by submitting their applications before January 2016 and commencing before the January 2017 deadline imposed under the specific transitional arrangements.

The Welsh government became concerned that projects that had been lodged with little more than a token effort to commence before the 2017 deadline. In reply, developers argued they had started on site. It was clear that more clarity was needed to help all understand what activities triggers commencement.

That led them to define what actually constitutes a commencement in order to separate schemes that were genuinely underway before the 2017 deadline. This excludes them from the new requirements around sprinklers. It also identifies those which have no realistic chance of commencing until after the deadline had passed.

By doing so, the guidance of the Circular provides clear rules on what clients need to do to commence their projects in order to be able to apply the old requirements around sprinklers in Wales.

While the rush to meet the January 2017 commencement deadline may be over in Wales, the constant change within the Building Regulations mean we’re likely to see a similar situation when the next big change comes along and the transitional arrangements are laid down.

Understanding how commencement has been defined during the most recent significant change around sprinkler provision for Wales ensures staff at Assent will be well placed to advise clients how the upcoming Building Regulation changes will affect them and what they should do to stay ahead of the transitional arrangements set out around them.

Watch this space.

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### Start and Commencement Trigger Activities Defined in the Circular

- Demolition of old buildings on site
- Removal of top soil or vegetation
- Removal or treatment of contaminated soil
- Excavation of trial holes
- Dynamic compaction
- General site servicing works (e.g. roadways)
- Excavation for strip or trench foundations or for pad footings
- Digging out and preparation for raft foundations
- Vibrofloatation (stone columns) piling, boring for piles or pile driving

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**CALL:** 01924 229180  **EMAIL:** admin@assentbc.co.uk
Claire Hall and Steph Brooks

Claire Hall (left) and Steph Brooks (right) have recently joined the ASSENT team and will be working out of HQs in Wakefield.

Claire, the Quality Administrator, will head up the quality assurance for the Company and Steph, the Finance Assistant, will join the existing Finance team.

Jayne Mead

ASSENT Broughton Astley has recently appointed its new Office Manager Jayne Mead. Jayne will be responsible for ensuring the office and administration processes run smoothly.

Tiffany Wratten

The Norfolk office expands once again and it welcomes Tiffany Wratten onto the team Tiffany has started as an admin apprentice and will join the existing admin team.

Alex Flavell

ASSENT Lincoln opens its doors for business and Associate Alex Flavell puts his name on the map to join the ever expanding ASSENT team.

David Phythian

ASSENT Liverpool has increased its surveyor network by recruiting a Project Manager David Phythian. David brings with him a wealth of experience and knowledge within the field of Building Control.

Zaakir Jahangir

Zaakir is our newly appointed Apprentice who is now on his journey of becoming a Building Control Surveyor. Zaak will work out of our HQs in Wakefield and will join the team of existing surveyors.
would like to wish everybody
a very merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year

In place of sending Christmas cards we have made a donation to Levi’s Star a local children’s brain tumour charity