

SPECIAL ISSUE – SUMMER 2016

outperformance

People, projects and services for the construction industry

VGC receives a key award for maximising employment opportunities in Crossrail's fifth annual Sustainability awards

**BREAKING
NEWS**

**Prestigious
Crossrail award
for VGC**

award



Prestigious Crossrail award for VGC

Crossrail's annual Sustainability awards recognise teams and individuals across its supply chain that are committed to a sustainable railway and a sustainable legacy. VGC is honoured to have won the award for maximising employment opportunities.

In July Crossrail launched its fifth Sustainability report at an event to celebrate the past year's work to promote environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Speaking at the event, Andrew Wolstenholme, Crossrail's chief executive, said, "We have continually sought to raise the bar in sustainability. As the fit-out advances, businesses across the United Kingdom continue to secure work on the project and use the opportunity to create apprenticeships and help their staff obtain new skills."

At the launch event Crossrail presented five Sustainability awards.

VGC was delighted to receive the award for "Maximising Employment Opportunities". The award citation congratulated us "for running three innovative training programmes which have resulted in 10 people being recruited as general operatives and traffic marshals."

Commenting on the award, VGC Group Chairman Sean Fitzpatrick said, "We are proud to work with our clients on many aspects of Crossrail over the past five years, and to have received many commendations from them. To now be selected for this award direct from Crossrail is especially pleasing as it shows that our commitment to the project and our initiatives, especially in developing people, have been noted and appreciated."

"We are very grateful to Crossrail and our clients for the recognition this award entails. I would like to thank all of my VGC colleagues who have worked so hard to earn this important acknowledgement of our efforts."

VGC's nomination for the award was based on our work with the Crossrail Brokerage, which helped unemployed people find work on local projects associated with the railway. The aim is to offer them a long-term career in rail.

Ten years ago VGC set out a formal commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in all areas of our business, from recruitment to service provision. An initial project in 2007 with local communities in East London proved rewarding and it continued into our work on construction projects associated with the London Olympic Games.

"Our commitment to the EDI agenda has proved its value and we've been recognised by Crossrail for our role in getting young people into work," says Chris Ryan, Director of VGC Labour Solutions.

"Special thanks are due to Operations Manager Chris O'Sullivan for his hard work with the Brokerage."



Above: Sir Terry Morgan (Crossrail chairman), Chris O'Sullivan (VGC operations manager), Chris Ryan (VGC director) Orimar Ramirez (Build London), Anne-Sophie Blin (Crossrail social sustainability officer) Valery Todd (Crossrail talent and resources director)

VGC is a leading provider of skilled trades and labour on both a temporary and permanent basis. Our specialist knowledge covers all major sectors including building, civil engineering, infrastructure, mainline rail, London Underground, utilities, nuclear and airports. Among the high profile projects we have worked on recently are the M25 widening, London Heathrow terminal 2, the M1 junction 19, the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvement Programme and the Mersey Gateway.

The experience and expertise gained on these projects and on Crossrail has resulted in the award-winning commitment and innovation that has positioned VGC as the leading provider of comprehensive personnel support to the construction and engineering sector in this country.

Years of investment in best practice pays off

There is quite some background to our latest accolade.

The story goes back to the mid-2000s when we began our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and good employment practices in all areas of the business. "For us it's not about processes and procedures," says Ciara Pryce, VGC Group Services director, "it's embedded in our culture throughout the entire organisation."

EDI is a routine part of VGC's operations; most obviously in the emphasis on local recruitment to support our drive to make the workforce representative of the local population. This has the added benefit of contributing to the local economy and cutting the environmental impact by minimising commuting distance.

VGC's training department responds to talent management needs across the organisation. Staff who would like extra support, including those who speak English as a second language, are given help to develop literacy, numeracy and language skills to ensure they reach their learning goals. Multi-skilling staff across a range of sectors gives improved labour flexibility and increased career satisfaction.

Accreditation on the National Equality Register is testament to our work on removing barriers to employment and development for people from under-represented groups.

Our policy of continual development benefits individuals, teams, clients and communities. Encompassing essential areas such as training and constant vigilance in all areas of health and safety, the policy also embraces diversity and encourages internal promotion, recognising that the best person for the job is likely to be the one with a long-standing emotional investment in the company.



Operations Manager Chris O'Sullivan, who manages the labour supply for VGC's Crossrail projects, is one of numerous key staff to have risen through the ranks at VGC. "If you are serious about your job, and serious about safety, VGC is an excellent place to work," says Chris. "VGC is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Anyone who wants to go places in a career in engineering should consider working here."

In 2015 VGC received the Training category award in the inaugural Infrastructure 21 awards, which recognise best practice in key supply chain competencies. We were one of only eight companies throughout the country to be shortlisted for Construction News magazine's "Employer of the Year 2015" award which 'turns the spotlight on diversity and corporate social responsibility as companies rise to the challenge of tackling skill shortages and community engagement.'



Lee Van Cliff

Lee began his apprenticeship with VGC in 2013 and is now a full time chain person on Crossrail Whitechapel. He has a short 15-minute walk to work. "I feel that VGC has been there for me. Doing an apprenticeship has been a good alternative to going to university and getting into debt," Lee says. "With an apprenticeship you're earning money from the start and there are good opportunities at the end of your training."



Michael Fairweather

Michael joined VGC last winter and is working on the Crossrail Anglia site at Chadwell Heath. "I saw the note about the Brokerage at my local jobcentre so I applied," he says. "After I did my CPCS through the Tunnel Academy, I was taken on by VGC. I find my new job very rewarding. Being in the construction industry teaches you a lot. I want to do my NVQ next and progress my career with VGC."



Donatas Jausicas

Donatas joined VGC in 2007 as a shuttering carpenter. Promoted to formwork supervisor in 2010, he gained NVQ qualifications and his CIOB (Chartered Institute of Builders) level 3 and 4. Working as part of the team at Crossrail Farringdon, he was one of our first key influencers. In March 2016 he was promoted to contract supervisor, based at our east London office. VGC is now funding his CIOB Diploma in Construction Site Management.

Not the first

While all at VGC are understandably proud to have received this award direct from Crossrail, it is by no means our first award on the project.

Crossrail Anglia north-east spur project - Costain

Network Rail's programme manager presented a STAR award to VGC, after our project team achieved a score of 97% in a series of health, safety and environmental inspections.

This followed commendations by Network Rail and Costain for Telehandler Bill Braiden, Supervisor Rock Osayomwanbor, Apprentice storeperson Reece Skingley and Telehandler Steve Hodges.

Bond Street station - Costain Skanska JV

The VGC team won the Costain Skanska JV 'Safety Contractor of the Year' award in 2014 and 2015, and are on track for another win in 2016.

In addition, Groundworker Bereket Kidane, Traffic marshal Mohammed Hasan, Section foreman Adrian Iliuta and Dumper driver Pastorel Caplea have received safety, health and environment awards from Costain Skanska.

Abbey Wood – Balfour Beatty

Machine operator Naven Bhanot and Section engineer Cliff Harvey were recognised by Balfour Beatty for the way they had shared improvement opportunities for safe access and vehicle safety. Traffic marshal Robert Agyei was commended by Network Rail for his vigilance in enforcing exclusion zones.

Quality manager Charmaine Bailey has received two Network Rail Quality Coin awards.

Crossrail west - Balfour Beatty

Balfour Beatty complemented Telehandler Darragh Byrne on his work ethic.

Whitechapel station – Balfour Beatty Morgan Vinci JV

James Andrews, lead site person in charge, was given a 'Step up' award by Crossrail senior management.

In August 2016 BBMV presented the health and safety supplier forum award to our team.

"VGC has added value and enhanced our delivery to Crossrail," commented a BBMV senior manager.



Crossrail – at a glance

Crossrail is currently the largest infrastructure project underway in Europe. The ambitious railway scheme will eventually provide a high frequency, high capacity service, linking Maidenhead and Heathrow in the west to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east, via 21 kilometres of new twin-bore tunnels under central London.

The overall length of the new railway will be 118km. Its ten-car trains will run at frequencies of up to 24 trains per hour, bringing an additional 1.5 million people within 45 minutes commute of London's key business districts.

Services are due to start on the Elizabeth Line, the operating name for the new railway, in December 2018.

Get involved – we'd love to hear from you

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