

In this issue

- **Improving Procurement** - the next project, volunteers sought
- **What does good look like?** - a great question for great results
- **Meeting to form a Swindon Club** - 26 April
- **Lean Construction and Lean Design in the US** - workshops and company visit - **and in Europe**
- **Performance measurement in Strategic Partnering arrangements** - help requested
- **Bridging the Gap comes to Exeter** -- 29 June Exeter Racecourse + new Plymouth Group
- **Feedback on the last issue** – and a SW construction conference in 2007 – **and what good sounds like.**

Improving Procurement

The regional **CESW Procurement Group** that Martyn Jones has led so successfully for the last three years (see *Bridging the Gap* below for one of its outputs) is looking forward to its next project and for new members.

The purpose of the group is to improve the way procurement is done so as to improve the overall construction process.

At the last meeting of the group it was agreed that the next phase of the research should focus on understanding why more collaborative approaches are not being adopted by clients/main contractors/etc even though senior managers generally espouse them. It was suggested that the research start by trying to understand the procurement process and procurement imperatives from the viewpoint of frontline procurement staff and then go on to explore any disconnect with client and upper management goals and the impact on design and/or site operations. The group were concerned that talk about enlightened approaches to procurement, is often followed, once a project gets underway, by decisions based on lowest cost at the interface with suppliers.

The idea needs further consideration and discussion by an enlarged group that includes to include procurement professionals. The next meeting of the group is on 3 May 1000 at Tiverton Parkway.

If you would like to comment on the above, to see a copy of a draft research proposal or receive an invitation to that meeting (for yourself or members of your procurement team) please mailto:alan@cesw.org.uk?subject=CESW_Procurement_Group

Plymouth Club is setting up a *clienting and procurement study group*. See *Bridging the Gap* below.

What does good look like?

What a great question - it is one Bluestone are using. If operatives don't know the answer to this question how can they possibly do a good job. This question goes straight to the issue of value as, in the end - and from the start, it is the customer/client/end user that defines what good looks and feels and sounds like.

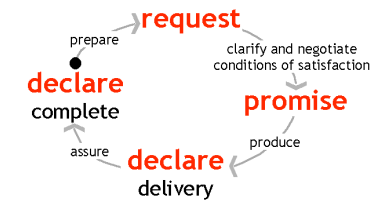
How do we systematically ensure that the construction team are able to answer this simple and crucial question. Its not just operatives - designers, contractors and specialists, project managers

and procurement people all need to be able to answer it for their areas of responsibility.

In the first issue of CESW Newsletter (<http://www.leanconstruction.org/cesw>) I recommended *Lets Play Catch!* I make no apologies for repeating the recommendation - if for no other reason than newsletter circulation has doubled since then.

Lets Play Catch! is a free 10 lesson email course in Securing Reliable Promises. Failing to secure reliable promises from others in the construction supply chain is a major cause of delay on projects. An important step in securing reliable promises is negotiating the conditions of satisfaction (which define what good looks like) and the delivery date.

Based around Fernando Flores' *Promise Cycle* (the diagram below is a simplified version), reliable promising is central to the **Last Planner System** of production management. As part of the *MakeReady* process, one of the key questions Last Planner asks is *do I have the information to do a quality job?* Isn't "do I know what good looks like?" more elegant? (For more information about Last Planner see <http://www.bsria.co.uk/resext/resources/16097/Docs/050109%20Last%20Planner%20overview.pdf>)



Sub-titled *getting BIG things done working with others Lets Play Catch!* is an excellent introduction to securing reliable promises. Learn more at <http://www.letsplaycatch.com/> or just do it - <mailto:mini.course@letsplaycatch.com> - and please let me know how you rate it.

Meeting to form a Swindon Club

At 0800 on the morning of 26 April I plan to be chairing a meeting to explore support for a Constructing Excellence Club for Swindon and set up a steering group if there is support. Meeting will end by 1000. If you would like an invitation please mailto:alan@cesw.org.uk?subject=Swindon_Club

Lean Construction and Lean Design in the US

Greg Howell says seats for the **Introduction to Lean Construction** set for Cincinnati on April 20/21 are going fast. This will be special session with a reception sponsored by Messer Construction and a presentation by Glenn Ballard on "Innovations in Lean Design Practice." Registration info at <http://www.leanconstruction.org>.

[I spent some time with Messer Construction three years ago and they have an impressive track record since they began applying lean - Alan]

A **Design Forum** is set for June 1 & 2 in Chicago. The agenda, posted on the LCI website keeps getting better. Here is where it stands tonight:

- Markku Allison will give a presentation on the American Institute of Architect's *Integrated Practice* initiative.
- Inspired by Todd Brink's presentation on value stream mapping at the December 2005 Design Forum, a team of designers and builders will report on their efforts to map the design process.
- Teams will present recommendations for process benchmarks in three areas:

- o Design planning and control
- o Virtual design and construction
- o Target costing
- Designing how the facility will be used before designing the facility itself: examples from healthcare

For copies of presentations to previous Design Forums and to listen to some of them go to <http://www.leanconstruction.org/files>

And in Europe 22-23 May

Ype Cuperus writes:

The construction industry is notorious for its almost zero percent profit margins and enormous (up to 20%) failure rectification costs. Doing things right first time could reduce these failure costs to zero and contribute to better profit and product quality. Lean Construction is an attitude that creates value and reduces waste. EGLC, The European Group for Lean Construction, is a network of practitioners, consultants, academics and students in the construction industry that meet to share, listen, learn and debate strategies to develop and implement lean thinking in construction.

On Monday and Tuesday, May 22-23 EGLC meets in Delft, the Netherlands, with sessions on theory, design, implementation, cases and a simulation game. In order to allow our international visitors to travel in the morning, we start at 1000 for 1030 (Delft is about 45 minutes from Schipol by train). For Dutch (and other) attendees who are new to the concept of lean, we start the day (at 0830) with an introductory 90-minute talk in English 'Lessons in Lean' by Dutch Lean Construction consultant Ton Hodes.

This is an excellent networking opportunity. Inspire, and be inspired by, colleagues who are applying lean in day to day construction.

Numbers are limited to 50, so be quick to express your interest.

For more information mailto:eglc@cesw.org.uk?subject=EGLC_info_please.

Performance measurement in Strategic Partnering arrangements

Umaru Abdullahi, Student on the MSc Project Management for Construction at Brighton writes:

I am currently researching "Performance measurement in Strategic Partnering arrangements in the UK construction Industry" and am finding it difficult to find contacts/respondents within strategic partnering arrangements to help with my study.

I want to gather data using semi-structured interviews supplemented by questionnaires. My scope includes the use of Benchmarking, KPIs and performance management models (the Balanced Scorecard and EFQM excellence models) to deliver efficient feedback on successive business in (long-term) partnering arrangements. I would be grateful if anyone with experience and/or leads in this area can help me.

Respondent(s) could be managers, core team members, supply chain members or others who are involved in carrying out measurement.

Please respond direct to Umaru mailto:stratsum2003@yahoo.co.uk?subject=MSc_research.

Bridging the Gap comes to Exeter

When we reported on the Bristol Club's *Bridging the Gap* research and final presentation of the project in an earlier Newsletter we received a request to do it again in Devon. Martyn Jones and his team will be bringing the *Bridging the Gap* Roadshow to the CE Westcountry Club meeting at Exeter Racecourse on the morning of 29 June.

The meeting is open to all - email Gill Bridger mailto:gillb@buildsoft.co.uk?subject=Bridging_the_Gap if you want to attend so that she can send you the notice of meeting and booking form when it is ready. Remember, if you are a member of any CE club you can attend the meetings of any other club on the same basis as its own members.

Plymouth Club is setting up a *clienting and procurement study group* so if you live around Plymouth put the 29 June in your diary now to find out what Bristol Club learnt and then plan to join the new Plymouth Club to build on that work.

For more information on Plymouth Club and the Plymouth Clienting and Procurement Group mailto:Chris.Jackson@plymouth.gov.uk?subject=Clienting_and_Procurement_Group

For a copy of the *Bridging the Gap* report mailto:helen@cesw.org.uk?subject=Bridging_the_Gap_report_please

Feedback on the last issue

Bill Haley of Haley Engineering wrote:

I liked the bit about the screws and the way probability mounts up. I think regular features in your newsletters on quality will help to educate companies. Really it would be refreshing to hear a contractor talk like that. I'm sure the first one to do so will be a winner.

Will your company be the first?

What are you doing in your company? Bill has shown me what he is doing in his.

CESW will be hosting a *Regional Construction Conference* in 12 month's time (Mar/Apr 2007) and we want to hear what SW construction companies - contractors, specialists, designers, sub-contractors, clients big and small are doing to improve the end-to-end construction process. Let me know now - even if you don't want me to publish it yet - then I know to invite you to talk in 12 months time - or even the year after next --- and I can let you know about things that are relevant to what you want to achieve that I come across on my travels.

BTW: I'd also like to hear from you if you'd like to get involved in creating this regional conference - I want this to be *by practitioners* as well as *for practitioners*. mailto:alan@cesw.org.uk?subject=CESW_Conference

Jane Stanbridge of Hydrock wrote:

I received a lot of email newsletters and can't possibly read them all, all the time but this one is in a very readable style, covers relevant issues and is informed and informing. Good work.

Thanks Jane

What will good sound like?

Feedback like that from Jane is very “nice” to have, it encourages me to carry on. “Good” newsletter feedback will talk about ideas from the newsletter that you have used to make a difference to your own practice or to operations in your organisation – or will tell me what sort of content will help (you) make a difference.

“Good” feedback will help CESW make a case to SWRDA - the South West Regional Development Agency - for finance to continue our operations.
mailto:alan@cesw.org.uk?subject=Newsletter_feedback

If this has been forwarded to you and you would like to receive future issues and details of CESW events please mailto:helen.davies@cesw.org.uk?subject=please_add_me_to_CESW_mailing_list or sign up at <http://groups.google.com/group/CESW-Newsletter>

Finally – please tell me how the newsletter is or could help you make difference in your organisation, what you want to see in it and what you are proud of doing to improve the overall construction process – or even just the bit you are responsible for.
mailto:alan@cesw.org.uk?subject=Newsletter_feedback

Thanks for reading

With best wishes

Alan

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For the CESW Events Digest mailto:helen@cesw.org.uk?subject=CESW_Events_Digest_please.

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