

Work begins on the Mineral Policy Planning Statement



Following intense and frustratingly long lobbying by QPANI Planning

Service have begun work on the long awaited Mineral Planning Policy Statement, to be known as PPS 19 in the current suite of policy statements. The Association will be invited to nominate a representative to the PPS

Stakeholder Working Group. Involvement in this group will provide the appropriate forum for the QPANI to outline our thinking on the approach that we consider should be taken. We expect a formal invitation in February.

Sustainability Fund to be raised at Westminster



The Association has put forward a Parliamentary question to the Secretary of State asking about the Government's intention to implement the Sustainability Fund. Despite intense lobbying, meetings and letters to Senior local and National Government officials we have come up against a brick wall.

“To ask the Secretary of state for Northern Ireland

Could the SoS inform the House as to when his Government intend to implement the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund in Northern Ireland. The fund is delivering environmental benefits to local communities in other devolved regions of the UK . Will the SOS undertake to ensure that immediate steps are taken to initiate a mechanism whereby money raised through the ALSF can be allocated to projects that will result in real environmental benefits across Northern Ireland.”

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Minister Announces Major Investment in Roads Maintenance



Regional Development Minister David Cairns has welcomed additional funds for roads maintenance.

Mr Cairns said: **"With almost 15,000 miles of road network to maintain and develop, this is very good news for road users. The additional funding represents an overall increase of 23% for Roads Service's structural maintenance budget and will result in expenditure of around £65m in 2006/07.**

"The additional £12m allocated at this time will be directed primarily towards the resurfacing of lo-

cal roads and will permit the resurfacing of some additional 220 lane km of carriageway."

In making his announcement the Minister also referred to the Quarry Products Association Northern Ireland (QPANI), the voice of the quarrying industry, and expressed his thanks to them for the very constructive and helpful meetings that have taken place throughout the past year with both himself and officials from the Department for Regional Development and for the association's overarching commitment of ensuring that the additional allocations would be spent within this financial year.

The Minister added: **"The additional funding will bring benefits right across the roads network throughout Northern Ireland and will make a much needed contribution in addressing the impact of many years of under-investment, as well as helping to meet the objectives set out in the Department's Regional Transportation Strategy."**

In response to the Ministers announcement QPANI Regional Director, Gordon Best stated, "This is excellent news for the industry and our employees" The extra funding is much needed as our roads network has been deteriorating at an ever increasing rate due to inadequate investment. However we will not be getting carried away as the extra £12 million still leaves us short of the funding for last year and way below the £95 million that all expert

states is required to maintain the network. A roads network that is valued at some £20 billion.

The QPANI, along with a number of other organisations Politicians and Councilors, have been lobbying intensely over the past two years to have the maintenance of our roads given a higher priority by Government. Hopefully the message has now got through and we will now see a change in Government policy that will see funding for roads maintenance ring fenced and set at levels envisaged in the Regional Transportation strategy.

The industry now looks forward to working with Roads Service to deliver excellent value for money and quality to the Northern Ireland tax payer,"



Association Calls for Mineral Safe Guarding Areas

QPANI have called for the implementation of Mineral Safeguarding Areas as part of an overall Mineral Planning Policy Statement.

Minerals Policy Statement 1 (MPS1) published in November 2006 in England has introduced a new obligation to define Mineral Safeguarding Areas.

MSAs are required to be shown in all development plan documents to alert prospective applicants for planning permission to the existence of valuable mineral resources.

The clear directive to Planning Authorities at all levels in England and Wales is to ensure that the new safeguarding process is put into practice as soon as possible and used effectively following the strong lead given to them in MPS1. As Northern Ireland continues to see significant economic growth and development over the next few years and beyond, the time has long since past when we require a similar Mineral Safeguarding Areas to that now estab-

lished in England and Wales.

As well as MSAs the Association will want to see significant changes to the Permitted Development Policy in relation to quarries and an agreement on recognised buffer zones around sites as part of an agreed MPPS.

“As Northern Ireland continues to see significant economic growththe time has long since past when we require a similar Mineral Safeguarding Areas to that now established in England and Wales”



Laverne to speak at ICF conference

The growing recognition of the work that QPANI are doing on Biodiversity issues will be recognised when our Biodiversity Officer speaks at the forthcoming Irish

Concrete Federation Environmental Conference which will be held at the Marriott Johnstown House Hotel, Enfield, County Meath, on 21st February 2007. There is a

packed program of items of interest to the Extractive Industry, especially geology, hydrogeology, biodiversity, and archaeology. Laverne will be speaking on Biodiversity op-

portunities in quarries both during extraction and after use.



QPANI Carbon Challenge – Be part of it!!



Following a recent meeting between the Association, the Carbon Trust and Invest NI a number of events will be taking place over the next number of months. The QPANI has entered into a partnership with the Carbon Trust (www.carbontrust.co.uk) to provide a range of services designed to better understand and reduce the energy consumption (& hence carbon emissions) in the Northern Ireland minerals and quarrying sectors.

Part of this activity

relates to the updating of energy performance and benchmarking figures across the main industry sectors e.g. to produce typical and best practice indicators such as kWh of energy used per tonne of produce. This will include updating Energy Efficiency Guide 47. In order to ensure any subsequent energy assessment tool is a useful as possible we are keen to conduct energy surveys in as many companies as possible and we would encourage you to participate in this effort by re-

questing a free energy survey from the Carbon Trust.

If your energy bill is over £50,000 per year you can request a free energy survey by ringing the Carbon Trust Customer Centre on 0800 085 2005. An account manager will discuss your needs with you, and may arrange for an expert consultant to come to your premises and show you where you can save energy. A subsequent energy survey report will provide detailed, costed recommendations on the cost effective opportunities that exist within your facilities.

As part of the benchmarking effort, the QPA would like to collate and analyse information concerning the specific energy performance of your site and if you are agreeable this information will be anonymised to ensure that company specific data remains confidential and used as part of the sector study.

In the coming months the Association intend to carry out the following initiatives and events

Updating of energy efficiency guide 47

Information workshop on energy audits and grant schemes

Training on energy efficiency and carbon reduction schemes.

Introduce a reporting system for the Industry in order to benchmark performance.

Proposal to reduce Northern Ireland's high Electricity costs not delivered



In a meeting as part of a CBI NI working Group it was learned that the proposal to reduce Northern Ireland's high electricity costs has not been delivered. For several years to come businesses in Northern Ireland will continue

to face high electricity costs with exceptionally high Public Service Obligation (PSO) costs.

CBI believes the funding set aside to reduce electricity costs should be used sensibly and effectively to benefit the business community in other ways. As the manufacturing sector is most exposed to high electricity costs industrial rates should be capped at least until the CBO

costs in the PSO have been eliminated.

The allocation of £3.7m from these funds to reduce the increase in industrial rates in the 2007/8 period i.e. manufacturing premises will pay 30% of the full rateable value rather than the 35% previously indicated is to be welcomed. Capping beyond that must now be a priority within the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Actions agreed to reduce cable strikes

Following the recent Business Breakfast at which proposals were put forward by key industry managers to reduce cable and utility service strikes and subsequent consultation the QPANI / Roads Service safety group in Association with NIRAUC, CEF and the HSENI will shortly be announcing a range of seminars and other initiatives that will be rolled out over the coming months.

Equipped Environmental Students available to survey your landholdings

QPANI companies can offer a mutually beneficial relationship with students who want to prove their technical, management and interpersonal skills to future employers. Students studying a Foundation Degree in Rural and Countryside Management at College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) Greenmount Campus are well equipped to carry out a habitat surveying to produce a biodiversity management plan for your site. This information identifies opportunities to create, enhance and/or maintain the different habitats found on aggregate sites.

Please contact Laverne Bell, QPANI if you are interested your company is interested in hosting a student to carry out a biodiversity management plan.

The CBI have put forward proposals to the DETNI as to how to spend £17m outstanding expenditure in 2007/8 following withdrawal of application to reduce electricity prices. These include:

1. **Extend the Environment and Renewable Energy Fund by a further c £5-8m.**
 2. **Put a further £2m into the Carbon Trust.**
 3. **Develop the Interest-free Loan Fund.**
 4. **Introduce a NI Networks Programme.**
 5. **Extend current Invest NI – NIE grant scheme.**
 6. **Support for Interim managers.**
 7. **Develop two or three 'Block Purchase' Schemes.**
 8. **New fund to promote Demonstration Projects.**
- Put additional funds into innovation support for companies.**

Public Liability Claims down

At a recent meeting the Central Claims Unit of DRD informed the Association that public liability claims continue to show a downward trend. This is obviously good news for both the road contractors and the Roads Service. As to why this is happening one cannot be definitive but it could well have something to do with better management of health and safety and record keeping on site. The communication and consultation between QPANI and CCU has had many benefits including and a reduction in late no-

	Personal Injury	Vehicle Damage	Property Damage & Other	Total
2005/06	1044	1268	220	2532
2004/05	1149	1394	216	2759
2003/04	1504	1580	205	3289

“Given the fairly mild conditions to date we are hopeful that the downward trend will continue.”

To date in 2006 / 2007 there is a reduction from 1759 to 1716. However experience in the past has shown the fourth quarter from 1 January to 31 March usually has higher quarter claim rates due to winter conditions claims coming through.

Given the fairly mild conditions to date we are hopeful that the downward trend will continue.



QPANI to respond to Code on Sustainable Homes

The Association will be responding to a Government consultation paper on the Code for Sustainable homes. There will be a requirement to review the Code for Sustainable Homes to ensure it aligns with the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland, and the departmental implementation plans

developed from the strategy.

The Department of Social Development (DSD) and the construction industry will be key stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Code in Northern Ireland. DSD will have responsibility for implementing the requirements of the Code within social

housing. The Code will also require the industry to review and refine its house building practices in order to meet the requirements of the Code.

In order that stakeholders can plan for the implementation, it is proposed that a programme of consultation and approval be undertaken during the next few months. The

consultation documentation containing the NI proposals will be based on that issued in England..

Subject to the findings of the scheduled consultation with the construction industry and other stakeholders, it is envisaged that the Code will be introduced in Northern Ireland from the 1st April 2007.

Greening of Government – implications for the Concrete industry

One couldn't help but notice recently how the main national political parties are falling over themselves to highlight their green credentials. The main outcome of this is that environmental issues, notably climate change, have seen a step change in political importance. This step change leads to the likelihood of significantly more aggressive policies to limit carbon emissions, with potential knock on policies in other areas of environmental policy,

In terms of carbon, what does this mean for the Concrete industry?

It means, as a start, that industry will be increasingly expected to participate actively in reducing carbon emissions. Clearly the climate change levy, and the emissions trading scheme for energy intensive industries, are examples of taxation and trading policies which could be extended.

For less intensive energy sectors, such as most of the aggregates and quarry products industry, opportunities exist for industry approaches to measuring and reducing carbon use. The QPA has started to measure site based carbon emissions and is beginning to look at the carbon emissions from transport within the SD reporting. In NI we are entering into a formal partnership with the Carbon Trust to provide a range of services designed to better understand and reduce the energy consumption (& hence carbon emissions) in the Northern Ireland minerals and quarrying sectors.

Part of this activity relates to the updating of energy performance and benchmarking figures across the main industry sectors e.g. to produce typical and best practice indicators such as kWh of en-

ergy used per tonne of produce. In order to ensure any subsequent energy assessment tool is as useful as possible we are keen to conduct energy surveys in as many companies as possible and we would encourage you to participate in this effort by requesting a free energy survey from the Carbon Trust.

However, there is clearly some way to go from these initiatives to the implementation of a carbon reduction scheme / commitment across the sector. On the basis that early industry consideration of how best to reduce carbon emissions in the sector may result in initiatives more suited to the industry than measures proposed by Government, it is clear that QPA should take a more active approach to sector carbon reduction?

Local Members to the fore in ICF Awards

Local Members Barrack Hill Quarries and RJ Mitten & Sons have picked up awards at the 2006 Independent Concrete Control Management Safety Awards. Barrack Hill was the winner in the small and medium firm category and RJ Mitten won a certificate of merit for consistent high safety performance.



Left to Right – Seamus Owens of Owens Safety Consultants, H&S Consultant, Robert Willis, Willis & Company Insurance Brokers, Angela Morgan, Office Manager, Barreck Hill, Cormac Og McDonnell, Barrack Hill



Left to Right Eric Mitten – Partner, R J Mitten & Sons, Debbie Cartwright - Health & Safety Representative, R J Mitten & Sons, Robert Willis, Willis & Company Insurance Brokers.

Many congratulations to both companies from all in the Association.

Threats to the Concrete Sector

Timber frame Housing

Recent figures show that one in 13 new homes in Northern Ireland is now built using timber frame construction. Although the smallest of the UK'S housing markets, Northern Ireland recorded the highest increase in rate of house building in 2005. Overall 4% more new homes were built here compared to growth of just 2% in England, a decline in Wales of 0.2% and a fall in Scotland of 8%. Timber frames market growth in 2005 was 3% in Scotland and 11% in Wales, but in NI it shot up by 14%. The latest success brings timber frame industries market share up to 8% in Northern Ireland. There were more than 1,100 timber frame homes started in NI in 2005. The number of timber frame units sold in NI is expected to rise to more than 2,200 by 2008.

We believe that the Concrete Industry here in Northern Ireland need to take a proactive role in highlighting the positive aspects of Concrete construction particularly in the area of sustainability.

It will be essential that the Northern Ireland Concrete Industry taps

into the already vast experience and information that our colleagues have in the Irish Concrete Federation and the Concrete Centre.

Sustainable Development Agenda and the perception that Concrete is not a sustainable product.

Concrete is a versatile material that is vital to our society. The issue of global warming and the need for carbon reduction is now at the top of the political and media agendas. The facts are that 50% of the UK's emissions of carbon dioxide is related to the occupancy of existing buildings. Of all buildings the housing sector has the greatest impact at 27% of the UK total. 90% of



environmental impact from buildings is from heating, cooling and lighting and only about 10% is from embodied energy used to produce the fabric of the building itself.

Concrete is already

playing a key role in an new generation of energy efficient buildings across Europe. Concrete is a genuinely environmentally friendly material for buildings, infrastructure and civil engineering projects. It has the qualities that make it the eco-designers material of choice, such as excellent sound and fire protection and high thermal mass, low embodied energy and potential for re-use and recycling.

We need to carry this message to clients, planners, designers and engineers as well as Government departments such as housing executive, roads service, water service, health estates, educational establishments and main private sector clients such as the main supermarkets and retailers.

Conclusion

The NI Cement and Concrete sector needs to raise its profile, highlight the many positive aspects of using concrete and head off any threats that would see the sector experience a reduction in market share of the construction industry. The projections for growth of the NI Construction industry in Northern Ireland means that we need to maximise market share and return on

investment for our member companies and the overall sector. The vast amount of expertise and information that is available through ICF, the Concrete Centre, Concrete Society and BRMCA means that we have vast pool of information and expertise. This will be enhanced by the already excellent links that QPANI and CS has on the Construction Industry Group, the Construction Industry Forum and Construction Excellence and relationships with key individuals within many Government Departments, the Sustainable Development Forum for NI, ICE, CBI and the Universities.

Biodiversity**Geodiversity****Archaeology****TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR THE QUARRY INDUSTRY**

**Lough Neagh Discovery Centre,
Oxford Island**

Wednesday 28th February 2007

10.00 - 16.00

Workshop purpose: *To provide guidance and support to furthering good practice on your site;*

- **Understand your legal compliances** regarding wildlife legislation
- **How to go beyond compliance** - biodiversity enhancement
- **Consider potential impact on wildlife and how to mitigate**
- **Timing of work** - breeding season, surveying,
- **Responding to an unexpected discovery** - archaeology and geodiversity response plans

Who should attend: This workshop is open to all members and non-members of the QPANI. It is particularly focused on attendance by Environmental Managers, Quarry Managers, Site Operatives and those who have a role in implementing your company's environmental improvement measures specified in the Aggregates Levy Credit Scheme.

Information provided on the day will support setting up your own staff training sessions

To book your place: It is essential to book in advance by emailing

Fiona Taggart on info@qpani.org

Workshop costs: QPANI member £30.00

Concrete Technology Course now available.

The Association are appealing to all Concrete producers to support and avail of the excellent new Concrete Technology Course at Omagh College. The commencement date for the concrete technology course is:

Monday 5th February 4-8pm.

The following training modules will be made available on-line for participants:

- What is concrete
- Placing and Compaction
- Sampling and Testing
- Good Formwork Practice
- Specifications and Supply
- Site Organisation and Planning
- Safety on Site
- Concrete Checks
- Good Reinforcement Practice
- Concrete Repairs
- Curing and Protecting Concrete
- Setting out on site
- COSHH
- Transport and Handling
- Finishes in Concrete

Safety is Everyone's Responsibility

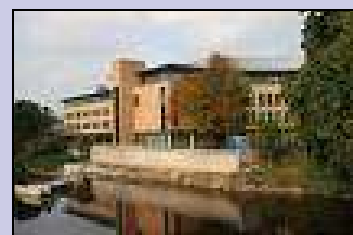
I would appeal to all members to consider this very valuable course. Much of it will be done through distant learning and the number of visits to Omagh will be kept to a minimum.

Please contact Kerry Jo Chesters at Omagh College on

Kerry-Jo Chesters

Project Administrator

028 8224 5433 Ext 5233



QPANI Annual General Meeting

This years Quarry Products Association NI Annual General Meeting is being held on **Thursday 1st March at 7.30pm in Lylehill Suite at the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick**. The evening will start at 6.15pm with a fork supper being served, kindly sponsored by Whitemountain Quarries Ltd.

We are pleased to welcome Professor Peter McKie CBE, Chairman of the Health & Safety Executive for Northern Ireland who will be speaking on his extensive experience within the Quarry Industry and the need for visible felt leadership in the effort to achieve zero accidents.

AGENDA FOR 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 1. Notice of Annual General Meeting**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of 2006 AGM**
- 4. Matters Arising**
- 5. Regional Directors Report**
- 6. Chairman's Report**
 - . Elections**
- 7. Executive Committee**
- 8. Financial Report**
- 9. Guest Speaker – Professor Peter McKie CBE, HSENI**
- 10. Presentation by QPANI Committee Chairmen**
- 11. Chairman's Closing remarks**
- 12. Open forum discussion on key issues**



Tarmac History

It was the start of a new century. The Boer War raged, Queen Victoria's long rein had just ended and the civilised world was starting to feel the effects of the new age of the motor car. The search was on for a material that would create better road surfaces. . .

As if by chance, on a road near Denby ironworks in Derbyshire in 1901, the county surveyor of Nottingham - Edgar Purnell Hooley noticed a barrel of tar had fallen from a dray and burst open.

To avoid a nuisance, someone from the ironworks had thoughtfully covered the sticky black mess with waste slag from nearby furnaces. . . and the world's first tarmacadam surface was born by accident!

Hooley noticed that the patch of road, which had been unintentionally re-surfaced, was dust-free and hadn't been rutted by traffic. So he set to work and by the following year, 1902, Hooley obtained a British patent for a method of mixing slag with tar, naming the material Tarmac.

By June 1903, Hooley formed the TarMacadam Syndicate Limited, the origin of what is now known as The Tarmac Group, the UK's leading supplier of building materials.



The lighter side of rock

Did you know?

No one really knows who St Valentine actually was, the most likely theory is that Valentine was a priest during the reign of Roman Emperor Claudius II.

The story goes that Emperor Claudius had issued a decree that Roman soldiers were not allowed to marry - because marriage would inhibit their ability to fight.

But romantic Valentine continued to marry soldiers in secret, until eventually his clandestine activities were discovered and he was jailed. Before being beheaded he fell in love with his jailer's daughter, for whom he left a note signed 'Your Valentine' before he was led away to his death.

~

The flower snowdrop appears in February and is a symbol of hope. According to legend it became this when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. When Eve was about to give up hope that the cold winters would never end, an angel appeared, she transformed some of the snowflakes into snowdrop flowers, proving that the winters do eventually give way to spring.

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A fully grown oak tree expels 7 tons of water through its leaves in a day.

~

In the stone age around half of all people were left handed but today only 5% of us are left handed.



Northern Ireland - Members Website

Access to a wide range of issues briefs, links and recourses

Accessing the Members Site, is slightly different to other websites to allow extra security for the information being held within. The process looks like this:

1) Enter the following address into your Internet browser (such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer) - members.qpa.org. There is no need for the usual "www" with this address.

2) If you are a first-time visitor to the area, you will need to fill in a short form with your details, this takes just thirty seconds or so. When you click submit, an email will be sent to you a short time later informing you that you have been granted access to the site. The next time you log on, you need only supply your user name and password to enter.

3) You're in!

If you have any problems accessing the site, please contact [Tim Parry](mailto:tim.parry@qpani.org) at the QPA who can talk you through the procedure. You can also phone him directly on 020 7963 8014 for advice.

Dates for your Diary

DATES FOR THE 2007 DIARY

Wednesday 21st February - ICF Environmental Seminar Marriot Hotel Johnstown

Wednesday 28th February– QPANI Wildlife workshop, Oxford Island

Thursday 1st March – QPANI AGM Hilton Hotel Templepatrick 6.15pm

Thursday 31st May – QPANI Regional Meeting Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown 6.15pm

Thursday 13th September - QPANI Regional Meeting Omagh College 6.15pm

Wednesday 12th September (tbc) – QPANI 2007 Industry Showcase in W5 at the Odyssey Arena Belfast

Wednesday 3rd October (tbc) – QPANI Environmental Conference, Glenavon House Hotel, Cookstown

Wednesday 24th October (tbc) – QPANI / HSENI Safety Conference

Thursday 29th November - QPANI Regional Meeting Tullyglasss Hotel, Ballymena 6.15pm

Other dates to be agreed include

Two Safety Awareness days.

Launch of the QPANI Biodiversity Action Plan

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