

# BENCHPRESS



## Welcome back Lee Gallagher

Many of you will know Lee Gallagher, shown here being welcomed back to work by Peter Booth, having just been re-inducted prior to taking on his next role as site manager at our new project for Sisk at St John's Hill, Clapham. Lee has been off work for nearly 15 months following a serious accident on site, at Centurion House, in which three five foot tubes, which were being lowered with a traditional rope and wheel, free-fell approximately 100 feet, narrowly missing his head and striking him on his left foot. His steel toe cap boots protected his big toe but sadly Lee lost his three middle toes in the incident. It has been a long road back involving surgery and physiotherapy, and in early October Lee resumed his duties running one of our projects. Whilst this incident involved human error it could have been avoided had the rope and wheel been of a type that is fitted with a brake, whereby if the load goes into free fall the brake would activate and the load would be held. Although of little consolation to Lee, we as a company immediately banned the use of rope and wheels which do not

have automatic brakes, and embarked on a project to develop systems and procedures to support the use of mechanical hoists and winches in place of the traditional rope and wheel. These mechanical devices ensure that the load being raised or lowered is controlled at all times thus eradicating the possibility of a repeat of this potentially fatal incident. Benchmark have received support and advice on 'Project Hoist' from one of our main customers, Mace, along with input from two of our competitors, GKR and QFS, in ironing out some of the challenges associated with these new procedures. Others may follow our lead, or perhaps they will not, but Benchmark Scaffolding will never again use a traditional rope and wheel.

It may be unconnected, but since Lee's accident Benchmark have not had a RIDDOR accident – which has resulted in an AFR of zero. This measure is a widely recognised KPI (key performance indicator) for our industry, and long may it continue.

In the months following Lee's accident many of you generously donated to a collection which Lee very much appreciated. At the time he sent the following note to me, to be included in Benchpress, but I waited until Lee was back at work to share it with you.

*Hello Everyone*

*I know I have spoken to or text several of you over the last 4 months with updates and news on how I am doing but I would like to again repeat how grateful I am for everyone's generosity in the collection that was done for me. It's been a slow (and boring) process getting back to some sort of normality, a lot longer than I expected but I hope to be back to work in the new year if not sooner. If I don't get to see or speak to you before I hope you have a great Christmas and a happy new year*

*Yours gratefully*

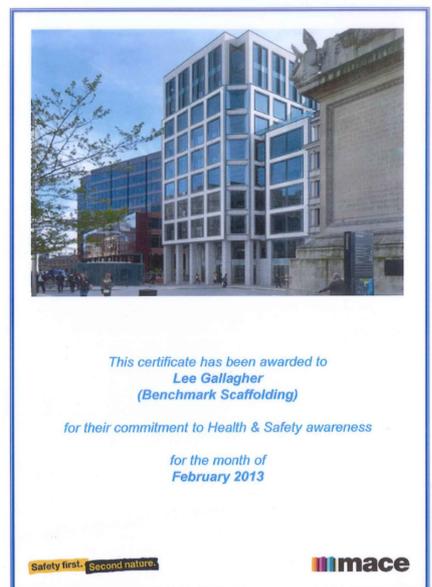
*Lee Gallagher*

Perhaps ironically, prior to the incident, Lee had been recognised for his attitude to safety on the very project where he suffered his injury: his certificate and a photograph relating to this below.



Welcome back, Lee – and to the rest of you out there, please look after yourselves and each other. If it's Not Safe, Don't Do It.

Regards,  
Rob West  
Managing Director



## BENCHMARK SCAFFOLDING



*Setting the Standards*

# Palace of Westminster

Danny McCarthy & our site team consisting of Ray, Chris & Dave Carpenter, Doug Keady, Paul Kench, Steve Richardson plus the weekend team of Dave Hasting, Dave Crawford, Darren Redgrave, Lee Jones, James Munro, Stuart Didd & Simon Dabbs have just completed the latest phase of roofing works at the Palace of Westminster.

The scaffolds, part of the ongoing works to allow the removal and replacement of the cast iron tiles and gutters, are cantilevered out over the river on the end tower sections using our heavy duty Haki 750 deep alloy beams, with the remainder of the river elevation being built up off the battlements.



Again this has been a most complex structure to build and has taken much planning and care to ensure that the scaffolds are built in a safe & secure manner.

Well done to all those involved.

**Bob Young – Technical Director  
London Region**



Our vision is to be the scaffolding contractor of choice to our customers and employer of choice to our people.



# Forth Bridge



At last, the first pour of concrete for the S1 support pier has taken place. The complex build procedure through numerous designs and discussions has successfully come to fruition with the devised system working well. Now the scaffold bridges are ready to lift to the next level and the lower ring and centre scaffolds can be removed ready for the next pour. The lifting of the bridges is done by a Crane Barge so the timing of the lifts has to be perfect according to the condition of the water, which is not an easy feat with the North Sea adjoining the estuary.

**Billy Wood—Operations Manager/SHE Advisor  
Northern Region**

## Race for Life 2014

I would just like to thank everyone for their support & contribution in helping me raise as much money as possible for Race for Life this year.

I know that every penny raised will have gone towards preventing, diagnosing and treating cancer, helping people see another tomorrow.

Thank you again.

Georgina Bradbury  
Northern Region

**Together we will beat it**

Our *mission* is to not only "Set the Standards" but to progressively and continuously raise them across all aspects of our business.

### Your new helmet... PETZL VERTEX VENT... no more sweaty foreheads!

The new Petzl helmets have now been issued to all operatives. In response to a few complaints regarding that the existing headband inserts, which do not adsorb perspiration, we have ordered a new type of insert made of foam.



**Original:** foam similar to that provided with each helmet; does not absorb perspiration. >

< **Absorbent foam:** textile foam ensures better ventilation and absorbs perspiration.



If you require the new absorbent foam head band, please let your line manager know.

By the way – if you're not sweating Rob wants to know why!

**Vicky Hunt-Poore  
PA to Rob West and Buyer.**

If you've recently had a new addition to your family,  
or have a birthday coming up  
send us a photo to the Barnsley office  
and we'll make sure we show them in the next edition.  
Or you could email us:

[barnsley@benchmarkscaffolding.com](mailto:barnsley@benchmarkscaffolding.com)

## Twin Girls



Meet Ivy on the left and Violet on the right, identical girls born 19th August 2014, Ivy at 3lb 10 and Violet at 4lb 14. After 2 weeks in intensive care Ivy and Violet Calvert are home safe and sound and both girls are doing very well, thanks for all the best wishes from everybody—Amy & Robbie Calvert

## A big warm welcome to Vivienne

We would like to congratulate Vicky & Mehno on the arrival of their 1st child Vivienne born on the 11th September 2014 weighing 7lb 6oz.

Vicky is the PA to Rob West and has worked for Benchmark for over 14 years, with a small break during this time to travel around the world.

When asked "How's motherhood?" Vicky replied "Motherhood is overwhelming... but in a good way. I can't believe how small she is, how she can poo so much, how reliant on us she is & also how she can be so bloody beautiful!"

She is definitely beautiful Vicky, so it's now time to relax and enjoy being a new mummy and we will see you again in the summer of 2015.

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