Dozens of West Country Businesses Drawn Together to Improve the Region's Landmark Buildings

Monday 20 April, 2015

Dozens of firms across the West Country and South Wales have been consulted by one of the UK's largest contractors, in a major engagement exercise to help deliver landmark buildings for the region.

BAM Construction drew together its key subcontractors and suppliers this week to involve them closely in how the company delivers a growing workload. Around 60 firms were given interactive voting buttons and allowed to debate the way forward.

After the event, held on Tuesday at the Hilton Hotel Bradley Stoke, Bristol, Nick Goff, BAM's Regional Director said:

"Successful construction is about good partnerships. Everybody says they do it, but for BAM, this is not words, it is carefully focused actions. Our supply chain is critical to our ability to deliver the quality we are known for with the non-confrontational, problem solving approach and social responsibility that are our hallmark.

"They also need to trade efficiently and profitably. This event was about finding ways to involve them in tenders and on site that enables us to be more competitive together, leaner in management, and raise the bar on performance for our clients. I got a genuine sense that this level of engagement with them was new to many and welcomed by all."

They voted on issues such as tender pricing, getting ready to build, and resolving defects. 84% of the suppliers said they emerged from the event with greater confidence as a result of it.

Mr Goff added:

"The diversity of our clients and projects means our work can involve painstaking restoration using traditional skills or highly technological buildings, on any scale. Our supply chain needs to take the same journey we do towards the best possible standards of safety, environmental sustainability, efficiency and quality, and this ongoing close engagement with them is the only sustainable way to achieve it."

In 2014, BAM provided work for well over 700 people, three quarters of these being supply chain companies. Through its skills academy status, the company also provided hundreds of opportunities for young people and those in need of training or personal development.

Mr Goff also handed out the company's annual supply chain awards, and he singled out R M Penny of Green Street, Bath, who won BAM's silver award for 'Contractor of the Year'.

The company has provided demolition and asbestos removal services for BAM and worked on several of its sites such as Winterbourne Academy in Bristol, Penrose special needs school in Bridgwater and Exeter University's Living Systems Building. It previously worked with BAM on Bristol's Imperial Tobacco HQ.

"The award reflects that we're a very hard working company as is BAM, we're a good team player and we've found that BAM projects encourage that teamwork from us. Our work at Penrose stands out, as it was such a compact site with a very tight programme but it was so well organised. Winterbourne Academy was technically challenging as several blocks that had to be demolished were extremely close to live school buildings, but it was clear from the start that the management team, through engaging us very early and involving us in the planning stages, were committed to working together to deliver the project successfully." **Damien Pick** Director of RM Penny

It was pipped for the gold award by Welsh contractor Highadmit Projects.

BAM's many projects across the South West include the delicate restoration of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and the Living Systems Building in Exeter, SimplyHealth building and new headquarters buildings for Imperial Tobacco in Bristol, several new academies in Plymouth, schools in Somerset, and offices and a business park for Bodmin Council. Across the UK, BAM is behind major structures like Leeds Arena,Manchester City Football Academy, Riverside Museum in Glasgow, as well as dozens of schools, hospital, offices and universities.

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