

Full steam ahead

For Exemplar Projects MD Malcolm Ward, there is no time to reflect on the success of his business's first year. But there is a lot of which to be proud. From its launch in January, the project management company is already busy on construction projects worth anything from £1.5m to £14m.

"From day one, it has been extremely busy and that's showing no signs of stopping," Malcolm confesses. And where a new business might have expected smaller, less prestigious developments, Malcolm has been trouble-shooting and generally making things happen on sites of up to 154 residential units.

"My role is typically that of development manager," he explains. "I work on behalf of the client to co-ordinate the design team and contractor to make sure everything is happening in the clients' best interests. I also take on a vital communications role to keep the client aware of progress and issues that arise."

While a number of Exemplar Project's large jobs have been in the North of England, Malcolm is also now busy on projects in the Southeast – including London, Burgess Hill, Rottingdean and Eastbourne.

"I am working with Blue Arc on a 25-unit retirement home scheme in Eastbourne. This is a smaller project and I am enjoying getting more hands-on," he says.

Blue Arc is an example of a developer that understands the need for professional advice. But that is not always the case. If there were one piece of advice Malcolm would like to share with small developers it is to put in enough resource in the early days. "You can't cut corners. Not buying in professional advice and planning from the outset creates problems," he says.

However, Malcolm says that while his involvement and the problems he sees may be different with smaller projects, the Exemplar approach is the same. "It's all about the quality of the service and delivering on promises," he says. And those values are the reason the business is booming.

"The other thing I think that makes Exemplar stand out is our flexibility – flexibility in the level and type of services we can offer and in the fee structure. Because we don't have a big PLC bureaucracy, I can be a lot more on hand to help out and provide the service that is right for clients."



The Overhead Building, Liverpool – a 55 unit residential development for Pierse City Developments Ltd

And that flexibility should, he believes, stand Exemplar in good stead in a "volatile market". "But in the south there is still a development market and demand for housing, I believe that will continue. While development funding will be harder to come by, the developers that know what they are doing will continue to be successful."

Given the market, Malcolm is debating whether this is the right time to bring in the first employees. In the meantime, he is still "keeping the balls in the air". "People are happy and keep coming back so I have to be doing something right," he concludes.

And we have to say that seems something of an understatement.



“Exemplar Projects has provided excellent management and technical services to Blue Arc Developments on a number of projects. It is our supplier of choice and we are delighted with the work and application.”

Michael O'Callaghan, MD, Blue Arc Developments

“Over the past year Exemplar Projects have assisted the Pierse Group with the delivery of a number of development projects in London and the North of England. Exemplar's service over this period has been of consistent good quality and we are looking forward to extending our relationship into 2008.”

John McNally, Development Director, Pierse Group

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