

County firm's safety mission at Chernobyl

A new safe shelter to protect the infamous Chernobyl nuclear power station is being built with help from a company in Whitchurch.

Tension Control Bolts' product has been used on some of the UK's most high-profile structures, from the Forth road and rail bridges, to the newly opened Shard building, London's tallest skyscraper.

Olympic

The bolts held together the stadiums used in the Olympic Games and the new 'Cheesegrater' skyscraper currently under construction in London's Leadenhall Street.

But perhaps the most significant and high-profile project to bear TCB's trademark high-tension products lies in a rural part of Ukraine.

Half a million high-tension bolts are being used to pin together a new 100-



Felicity Barrell, Steve Jones, Gary Mason, Andrew Morgan-Wynne and Gilliam Gould from Tension Control Bolts, Whitchurch

metre-high safe containment shelter on the site of the 1986 disaster, which saw one of the reactors at the plant explode.

Sales engineer Gary Mason said: "When the reactor exploded in 1986, the initial thing that was done to make it as safe as possible

was to encase it in concrete, but that is now starting to deteriorate and they are concerned about the radiation leaking and water getting inside.

"They have come up with a new safe containment insulator, which is like an aircraft hangar that's 100

metre high, and which will be safe enough for people to go inside and remove any unstable nuclear waste."

To get onto the site, workers including Mr Mason catch a train from a nearby city, and go through various levels of security and decontamination.

They must work on a purpose built hard-standing area because of the effect of the disaster on nearby vegetation, and monitor the radioactivity level around them at all times.

Mr Mason added: "It has been an amazing thing to be involved with."

The latest move is among several that are leading to a new expansion drive for TCB.

At present, the company has two factories in north Shropshire, but is now opening a third plant in Wrexham which will be used to apply green coating to the bolts.

Strong

The wind turbine industry provides a strong area of growth for TCB, which was set up in Whitchurch in the late 1980s, while the bolt has now been approved for use on road-building projects in Italy, opening up another new opportunity.

The firm has also moved to open up new export markets, including in Azerbaijan where it is helping build a new skyscraper to serve the oil and gas industries.

Special job for care home boss

A Shropshire care home operator is going global after being asked to pass on her expertise in Hong Kong and Australia.

Mandy Thorn, the managing director of Marches Care, which operates the Uplands at Oxon nursing home in Shrewsbury, has been asked to use her knowledge to help improve the standard of dementia care and end of life care in both countries.

It comes after the boss of the Shropshire Business Board returned from the Far East after spending a fortnight researching the methods used in the care industries in Australia and Hong Kong.

She has now been invited back to help spread best practice in the care sector.

"It was certainly a hugely valuable experience for me and I hope it worked both ways," said Mrs Thorn, whose visit to Hong Kong was arranged through the UK Trade and Investment team hosted by Shropshire Chamber.

Concepts

"I have been asked to go back to Hong Kong in February to present concepts as to how to improve standards in end-of-life care in the provision of residential based care, particularly for those with dementia who require high levels of support."

My colleague Corey Bloomer, nurse manager at The Uplands, will be joining me later in the spring to carry out workshops in Australia using our training programme, developed with the assistance of the NHS West Midlands to improve the care for people with dementia at the end of their lives."

It follows a direct approach from Australian care providers who visited Marches in the summer.

Mrs Thorn added: "The Hong Kong government has been keen to encourage businesses from the UK to visit and suggest



Mandy Thorn

what improvements can be made to the care industry.

"The UK is considered by the World Health Organisation as the world leader in end-of-life care, particularly in relation to dementia. I have to say that Hong Kong is, at the moment, quite a long way behind us in health and social care but they are keen to catch up."

"Australia has always taken end-of-life care very seriously, though they perhaps take a more holistic approach to the issue than we do."

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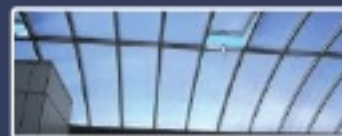
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