

# THE ASH NEWSLETTER

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## OUT OF ADVERSITY WE THRIVE

*Our Return from the Coronavirus Lockdown*



Picture: Nadin Dunnigan Photography

***After 3 months of government-imposed lockdown because of the coronavirus pandemic, Ashwood Scotland has returned to work stronger than ever. According to managing director Archie Meikle, he remains “positive and determined about the future.”***

The firm’s live sites have reopened across Scotland and staff have been gradually returned from furlough.

And, in an early boost to the company, 3 new contracts have been picked up all of which feature in this edition of The Ash.

“We began planning how best to come out of lockdown as soon as we went in,” explained Meikle.

## THREE NEW CONTRACT AWARDS

*New contracts totaling £900,000 have been awarded to Ashwood Scotland as the firm’s return to work gathers pace.*

The trio of projects will commence at Townsend Place, Kirkcaldy; Greenrigg Primary School, Harthill and at the University of Edinburgh’s School of Geosciences.

At Greenrigg Primary, the largest of the 3 jobs at £390,000, Ashwood’s extensive experience of working in educational buildings will be applied to carry out alterations, downtakings, a range of mechanical and electrical works as well as new works to the building’s exterior and play areas.



*Wireless Meikle: How Ashwood's MD crashed the airwaves – Page 3*

“Our priorities were to ensure the wellbeing of all our people, to re-open our live sites and for all Covid-19 health and safety measures to be properly communicated and implemented.”

The company is back at Edinburgh Zoo working on the Giraffe Enclosure – thought to be one of the largest in Europe – whilst the major restoration project at West Register House in Edinburgh is progressing well towards completion at the year end.

Meanwhile, investment in staff training has continued apace with new apprentice and graduate recruits planned this year.

“Building on our excellent 2019 figures we continue the hard work of steering Ashwood prudently and responsibly through. We are confident we shall survive with everyone in time coming back full-time with no job losses at all,” added Meikle.

## EDINBURGH ZOO'S TALL ORDER



Picture: Contributed

***A door almost 6 metres in height and 2 metres wide is being built at Edinburgh Zoo's new Giraffe Enclosure.***

It's the latest part of building what will eventually be the largest enclosure of its kind in Britain, possibly even Europe.

In Kirkcaldy, meanwhile, Ashwood has been appointed by the Coal Authority to repair three domestic properties suffering from settlement and subsidence caused by underground mine workings.

The mine workings have, of course, long since halted but their impact can still be felt. Over a 13-week programme one house and two flats will be refurbished with repairs to fit wall and floor angles and anchors to secure existing masonry structures and timber floors. Repairs to chimney stacks and external render are also amongst the planned works.

And in another contract win from the University of Edinburgh, a raft of external remedial works will be carried out. Re-pointing stonework, roof repairs and replacement of rainwater goods will all form part of a 22-week programme.

“These contracts are a tremendous boost so soon after lockdown” says Ashwood's Bid Manager, Andrew Simpson.

“We look forward to applying our knowledge and skills to these diverse projects.”



**Recruitment  
Drive  
Ongoing –  
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It comes after Ashwood were also responsible for constructing a new multi-million-pound home for two giant pandas at one of the country’s most popular visitor attractions.

Works to form and surface the new paddock are ongoing, including the laying of 232 tonnes of specialist Holme sand, a particular equestrian sand imported from Hampshire, as well as building the new raised timber viewing platform and walkways.

“We hope to be complete in about six weeks,” said Contracts Manager Lee Westerman.

## **GOLD LEAF REVEAL AT WEST REGISTER HOUSE**

*A major restoration project at one of Edinburgh’s most recognisable buildings has reached its latest milestone with the reveal of its iconic gold leaf feature.*



Picture: Nadin Dunnigan Photography

The Charlotte Square building, which is home to the National Records of Scotland, dates back to 1811 and is undergoing major restoration works to its external fabric.

As the massive scaffold structure which has enveloped the building for months began coming down in July, it was clear that its iconic copper dome and gold leaf cross have been returned to their former glory.



## **WIRELESS MEIKLE**

*Whilst steering Ashwood Scotland through the choppy waters brought about by Covid-19, its Managing Director was also busy making a name for himself on the radio.*

During lockdown, Archie Meikle was a regular contributor to BBC Radio Scotland’s flagship news programme Good Morning Scotland. His dulcet tones were heard during several interviews by the programme’s business reporter, Andrew Black, as Meikle gave his views on the construction industry and the steps he and others would have to take to get the industry back working again.



Picture: Nadin Dunnigan Photography

“This is a prestigious project for Ashwood and very high profile considering its location,” explained Ashwood’s Construction Director, Graeme Hadden.

“The access scaffold alone is one of the largest structures anywhere in the city and we are now starting to take it downwards as we move towards completion.”

## RECRUITMENT DRIVE ONGOING



*“...Training and development remains focused and strong”*

*Plans for a raft of apprentice and graduate level recruits are being revealed by one of Scotland’s fastest growing construction firms.*

But it was not all plain sailing for the bold businessman.

One radio appearance was cut short after he caused significant on-air feedback by not turning off his own radio while he was live on air.

A source told us: “After crashing the airwaves, Archie is taking some media training.”

## TRIO OF VANS

*Ashwood’s continued investment in its business has been extended with the addition of three new vans.*



It takes the company’s fleet of vehicles to a total of 15.

“It’s important our staff are driving new, efficient, well-maintained and fully liveried vehicles as they go about their business,” commented Commercial Director, David Charman.



The recruitment drive is being kicked off by the appointment of Jamie Stephenson, formerly of Deans Community High School, Livingston, who starts in August as an apprentice joiner.

“We are looking to recruit further at apprentice and graduate levels this year and next”, said Construction Director, Graeme Hadden.

“Our company-wide training and development remains focused and strong.”

As well as plans to create new posts, the West Lothian-based company has also revealed a number of its existing staff have gained new qualifications.

Accounts and Administration Manager Michelle Burns recently attained a Human Resources Level 3 Certificate from the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development. Meanwhile, Site Managers Willie Heggie, Billy Maxwell and Tony Reddington have all picked up SVQ Certificates in Construction Site Management whilst Contracts Manager Lee Westerman has an HNC in Construction Management.

“As a company it is vitally important that we invest in our staff to ensure that we are at the forefront of not only bringing through the future workers of tomorrow, but also improving the skills and knowledge of our team today.”



