



news from MAY GURNEY

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May Gurney hosts event to build bridges with Lowestoft teenagers

Teenagers from The Denes High School, Kirkley High School and Benjamin Britten High School in Lowestoft competed against each other yesterday (Thursday, 21 February) to win a fictitious engineering contract to build a bridge across a river.

At the 'May Gurney Challenge', scale model bridges were designed, built and put to the test as part of a drive to inspire and educate young people about the construction and engineering industries. The event was run by May Gurney, the integrated support and construction services company, and held at The Denes High School (see Notes to editors for the full brief given to the students).

Sixty students, aged between 14 and 16, presented their solutions to a panel of May Gurney consultants who marked the teams on model design and originality, team working, marketing and presentation skills. Each model bridge was tested by suspending them across an 80cm gap that acted like a river valley and then loading them with 6kgs of weights.

The winning team, the five-strong 'SGCCE' from the Benjamin Britten High School, was presented with a £500 cheque for the school while each winning team member received a £20 voucher.

The event was held to raise awareness of the diverse career opportunities within the construction services industry, in a way that engaged and excited the pupils, teachers and parents.

Dave Horkan, Head of Operations at May Gurney Building Services, said: "We've found that many young people are unaware of the various careers available in the construction services sector.

“We wanted an event that will stimulate the interests of young people and hopefully lead to them pursuing careers in the industry. The level of enthusiasm and commitment the students demonstrated in Lowestoft definitely fills us with a positive outlook for the future.”

Cheryl Willis, Enterprise Advisor at Kirkley High School, said: “This is the first time that Year 10 students from the three schools have been brought together to take part in this kind of activity. We feel it has been of real benefit to the students, not only to instill a bit of healthy competition and to open their eyes to the opportunities available in the construction and engineering industries, but also to foster a sense of community between them.”

A number of May Gurney Challenges have now been held across the country. As part of its continued commitment to encouraging school leavers to consider construction services as a career, the company runs a Starting Out programme, which involves a variety of initiatives aimed at education, recruitment and career development.

Liz Sugden, Starting Out Officer at May Gurney, said: “We’ve been really impressed with the Lowestoft students and their bridge designs. In one day, each team has come up with their own unique design, constructed their model and presented it to all the other teams and the judges from May Gurney.

“We always want to attract talented people into the industry and May Gurney Challenges are a great way of giving young people a hands on and enjoyable experience of the kind of skills used every day by engineers, designers and construction workers.”

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