



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 9th March 2010

COTTINGLEY STUDENT FIRST OF 75 TO WORK WITH WATES

A trainee bricklayer from Cottingley was the first of more than 75 young people in Leeds who will benefit from Wates Construction's work on the new South Leeds Youth Hub in Belle Isle. In addition to a number of site tours and workshops, 12 young people will gain actual hands-on construction experience in both professional and traditional trades.

In total, Wates are offering over 600 hours of site experience to young people in order to use their presence on the site to boost local skills and improve the career prospects of young people interested in construction.

Jordon Dempsey (18) who went to Lawnswood High School, spent the week with Wates in order to gain some hands-on experience to boost his studies at Leeds College of Building that will see him go on to be a fully qualified bricklayer.

During his time on the South Leeds Youth Hub site, Jordon got practical experience laying brick and blocks, whilst becoming accustomed to the daily routine of working on a professional construction site.

Jordon's placement was arranged by Wates in partnership with Construction Leeds. Wates is working with Construction Leeds to coordinate the ongoing site experience and ensure all opportunities are maximised. Wates became a member of Construction Leeds when work commenced at the South Leeds Youth Hub in October 2009. Construction Leeds works in partnership with Wates in order to support their Corporate Social Responsibility objectives of integrating employment, training and business initiatives to the local community.

Dave Price, Regional Manager at Wates Construction commented: "Jordon is clearly a very bright and able lad with a 100% attendance record at Leeds College of Building, so it's fantastic for us to be able to support and develop one of the industry's rising stars. Boosting skills and employability in areas of need is a key priority for Wates and we are keen to make a difference to those communities in which we work. As a significant

employer in Leeds it is our duty to look beyond building and invest in the workforce of tomorrow.”

Jordon added: “I have wanted to be a bricklayer since I was a kid and it’s my dream to work on a large development site so the chance to put what I’ve learnt so far into practice with Wates has been brilliant. The more real-life experience I can get the more employable I’ll be when I finish my training so I’d like to thank all the lads on site for taking the time to show me the tricks of the trade.”

The new £5m South Leeds Youth Hub, which is being built on the site of the old Merlyn Rees High School in Belle Isle, will be a state-of-the-art youth facility that will provide a range of exciting activities and helpful services like motorbike and go-kart workshops; a hair and beauty zone; job and careers advice; a music and media studio; health clinics and an allotment garden.

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For further information please contact Lisa Margis on 0161 236 0008 or 07748 301 005

Notes to Editors

Wates is one of the UK’s largest family-owned construction services and development companies. Established in 1897, it remains privately owned by the Wates Family. Wates employs more than 2,200 people and had a turnover of £1,009 million in 2008.

The company works across a range of sectors, including education, prisons, affordable housing, retail fit out and refurbishment, office interiors, land development and commercial buildings.

Wates has three areas of Corporate Responsibility focus: to reduce the impact of CO2 emissions from our activities, eliminate all non-hazardous waste to landfill by 2010 and boost skills and employability in areas of most need. Wates was awarded Silver status in the 2008 Business in the Community Responsible Business index.

Safety is a top priority and the Group’s excellent record has resulted in RoSPA Gold Awards for Occupational Safety and British Safety Council Awards for the past six years.

Construction Leeds is a business focused, strategic partnership engaging the whole supply chain on major construction developments within the city to ensure they make a real difference to the residents and businesses that surround them.

We are the conduit for construction businesses in Leeds helping the private, public and third sectors work together to address employment issues, training needs and business development.

Our vision is to deliver construction jobs to deprived communities and construction skills to the industry as a route to regenerating Leeds.