



Welcome to UK NEWS



Your bi-weekly update from around Cemex UK
27th February 2026



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Health & Safety

Latest Safety Alerts from EMEA



The latest four Safety Alerts relate to incidents in EMEA.

that shows the benefits of always adopting a defensive driving style.

Also, [HERE](#) is a short video from a road-facing camera in one of our own Aggregates trucks in Israel

You can find these Safety Alerts at the end of this document and on the UK News download page: www.cemexuknews.co.uk

As well as discussing these with team members, please also take the opportunity to carefully review the learning points and address any gaps that are identified.

✦ Please ensure they are shared on workplace notice boards.

Health and Safety information and resources can be found at the following location:
<https://cemex.sharepoint.com/sites/UKHealthandSafety/SitePages/Safety-Alerts.aspx?web=1>

Keeping Our Sites Secure and Trespass-Free

As we move into the spring and ahead of the warmer months, all Site Managers are reminded of the increased risk of trespass across our sites. Historically, improved weather, longer daylight hours and school holiday periods lead to higher footfall around site boundaries. This is particularly noticeable at known or informal access points and at sites located near residential or recreational areas.

Now is the time to proactively review and reinforce your site boundaries and security measures to help reduce the likelihood of unauthorised access and associated safety risks



Why this matters

Trespass presents a serious safety risk. Quarry sites and other operational areas contain significant hazards, including open water, excavations, access to height, mobile plant, confined spaces and stored materials. Open water can appear inviting during warm weather, while inactive or disused sites may give a false impression that they are safe to enter.

Key actions for Site Managers

As part of your routine site inspections and forward planning, please ensure the following actions are completed and kept under review:

- **Secure site boundaries and known entry points**
 - Inspect all site perimeters, focusing on previous or potential access points.
 - Ensure fencing, gates, bunds and barriers are secure and fit for purpose.
 - Repair or replace damaged sections promptly.
- **Update and Increase Signage**
 - Ensure no-trespass, danger, CCTV and site safety signage is in place.
 - Position signs at regular intervals and at higher-risk locations such as gaps or informal access routes.
- **Manage vegetation to deter access**
 - Where appropriate, encourage the growth or retention of natural vegetation along boundaries to help restrict access – it's also GREEN!
 - Vegetation can act as an effective visual and physical deterrent when managed correctly—without creating safety hazards.
 - Avoid creating dense planting in areas where visibility for plant movement or safety monitoring is required.
- **Carry out regular boundary inspections**
 - Continue your regular boundary and perimeter inspections, taking note of emerging weak points and document findings with photos where possible.
 - Report issues promptly and ensure maintenance actions are tracked to completion.
- **Review risk assessments and procedures**
 - Ensure risk assessments remain current and reflect seasonal increases in trespass risk.
 - Confirm controls address key hazards such as open water, excavations, heights, mobile plant and confined spaces.
- **Check inspection and maintenance regimes**
 - Confirm all inspection and maintenance schedules are up to date, including fencing, signage and security measures.
- **Open water and lifesaving equipment**
 - Ensure life-saving equipment (e.g. throw lines, life buoys) is present, accessible and fit for purpose.
 - Consider temporary or additional security where there are concerns about trespass.
- **Security of fuel and equipment**
 - Review diesel and equipment security measures.
 - Apply the same level of scrutiny to active, dormant and vacant sites.

Taking these steps now helps reduce the likelihood of trespass, protects the public from harm, safeguards our assets and reduces the risk of incidents before they occur. A proactive, well-maintained site sends a clear message that access is controlled and hazards are real.

Thank you for your continued commitment to keeping our sites safe, secure and well managed throughout the year.

National Technical Centre Celebrates ZERO LTI Milestone



Congratulations to the team at the National Technical Centre in Southam who've recently celebrated a remarkable milestone, reaching 21 years without a Lost Time Injury (LTI) — an incredible achievement.

This is a significant milestone – well done to everyone involved. LTI and TRI milestones demonstrate that ZERO is possible, even with challenging environments and working processes. With the right level

of focus and attention to Health & Safety, our Zero4Life objective can be met and sustained.

Take 5 – Your Personal Risk Assessment

Take 5 is a simple process of STOP, THINK and ACT - the three key words that we all should follow before starting a new task.

The Take 5 initiative is a simple, yet powerful tool designed to help identify hazards, evaluate risks, and establish controls before proceeding with tasks.

Whether completed using a pocket notebook or through a digital application, the process follows a structured and practical methodology that reinforces safe behaviour on the job.

A Take 5 must be used before routine and non-routine tasks.

A single Take 5 approach can be applied at the beginning of the day/shift and reviewed halfway through, for certain **routine roles** that are:

- Repetitive
- Low risk
- Usually do not change in requirements **and** if it's been agreed with the Line Manager

A Take 5 should be applied for each **non-routine** task: In all cases after carrying out a Take 5, another must be completed if there is a significant change, for example, a change in conditions, the working environment, or a new variation of a task.

The essence of Take 5 is to create a deliberate moment to Stop, Think, and Act safely. It's an extra layer of defence to keep you and everyone around you safe.

If you're not sure how or when to make a Take 5, or how to carry out a task safely, always ask your Supervisor before starting the task.

Zero4Life: Let's do it!

New - Safety & Driving Essentials: February–March Focus

As part of our 2026 Health & Safety Improvement Plan, our EMEA Health and Safety team are introducing a targeted bi-monthly focus on Safety and Driving Essentials. For February and March, the focus is on two simple but critical behaviours that play a key role in keeping everyone safe.

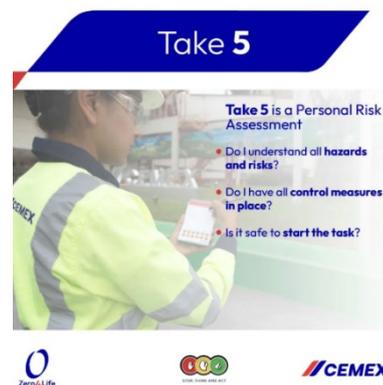
Safety Essential – Get a Grip

This focuses on safe vehicle access through deliberate entry and exit, always using **three points of contact**. Getting in and out of vehicles is one of our most frequent daily activities, and maintaining good grip, wearing suitable footwear and giving it our full attention are essential to preventing injuries.

Driving Essential – Watch Your Speed

This highlights the importance of driving at a **controlled speed**, adapted to site conditions, weather and surrounding activities. Speed directly affects reaction time, visibility and vehicle control, making it vital to slow down and avoid distractions—both on site and on public roads.

By consistently applying these straightforward behaviours, we strengthen our safety culture and help protect ourselves, our colleagues and everyone around our operations.



To support this initiative, materials have been developed for use during February and March, including:

-  A short **toolbox talk** - [TAKE 5 when you getting in and out of a truck_posters_2026_up](#)
-  **Simple graphics and key messages** for both Essentials
 - [Watch Your Speed - Graphic](#)
 - [Get a Grip - Graphic](#)
-  A **VFL Focus Guide** for managers, particularly useful during VFL interactions - [2026 VFL Focus](#)

This initiative is about using everyday opportunities such as meetings, site visits and conversations to raise awareness and keep safety front of mind.

Please help by cascading these messages to your teams and ensuring they reach colleagues involved in VFLs, as well as Drivers, Site personnel and Supervisors. Local Health & Safety teams are also supporting with translations to ensure the messages reach everyone.

Customer Centricity

UK Technical Centre Maintains its UKAS Accreditation



Congratulations to Technical Manager, Willam Elson, and his team at UK National Technical Centre in Southam. They have celebrated maintaining their UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) Accreditation following a surveillance visit last week.

Lex Russell, MD UK Materials, shared: “Congratulations to the team at Southam. This is a fantastic achievement and is recognition of the effort and commitment of everyone.”

Future in Action

Latest Earthly Matters



The February 2026 edition of Earthly Matters, the blog dedicated to the partnership between Cemex and the RSPB, is now available for you to read.

You can find the latest edition at the end of this document and on the UK News website [HERE](#).

In this edition...

Partnership Update: Volunteers are busy at Kensworth
Feature: Focus on Chalk Grassland
Actions for Nature: National Nest Box week

We hope you enjoy this latest edition.

Cemex Ventures Strengthens Investment in WtEnergy to Boost Clean Energy Innovation

Cemex Ventures has announced a new investment in Waste to Energy Advanced Solutions (WtEnergy), reinforcing its commitment to advancing the circular economy and accelerating clean energy production. The move builds on the success of the CLYNGAS project and follows WtEnergy securing a €4.4 million grant from the European Union’s Innovation Fund.



WtEnergy specialises in converting non-recyclable waste and biomass into low-carbon syngas, clean hydrogen and other bioproducts. The technology has strong potential to support Cemex’s global cement and clinker operations by integrating alternative, lower-carbon energy sources.

The increased investment reflects growing recognition of WtEnergy’s progress, including its leadership of the HYIELD project at Cemex’s Alcanar plant in Spain. Backed by a €10 million Horizon Europe grant, the project focuses on producing high-purity clean hydrogen from bio-residues.

This latest step supports Cemex’s *Future in Action* programme and its ambition to achieve net-zero CO₂ emissions by 2050, with alternative fuels playing a key role in its decarbonisation roadmap.

You can read the full press release [HERE](#)

Employees

Materials Roadshow are Rolling

This week the first of Lex Russell’s Materials Roadshow for 2026 took place in the North West, Sheffield, Dove Holes and at our Head Office in Binley, Coventry.

Over 200 people during this first week have joined Lex for an update on health, safety and wellbeing, an overview of business performance, employee and customer engagement, digital strategy and Future In Action, plus a look ahead to 2026. Colleagues also had the opportunity to ask Lex any questions they have about our business.



The Roadshows continue next week at more venues further South. All Materials employees or those who support the business are welcome to attend, and we encourage everyone to join a session at a location that works best for them. If you haven’t booked your space yet, see table below for times and venues. Please contact the organiser to book a space.

Date	Venue	Contact	Session start times (Sessions last approximately 1.5 hours)
Tuesday 3rd March	Southampton Football Club Britannia Rd, Southampton, SO14 5FP, Matt Le Tissier Room	Graham Osman graham.osman@cemex.com	Session 1: 10.00
Wednesday 4th March	London The Alma Inn, 499 Old York Rd, Wandsworth, London SW18 1TF	Nigel Bateman nigel.bateman@cemex.com	Session 1: 13.00

Thursday 5th March	Cemex Luton Concrete Plant Selbourne Road, Luton, LU4 8LS	Marcus Rappensberger marcus.rappensberger@cemex.com	Session 1: 10.30 Session 2: 13.30
Wednesday 18th March	Arden hotel at the NEC Arden Hotel, Coventry Road, Bickenhill, Solihull, B92 0EH	Rob Sims robert.sims@cemex.com	Session 1: 09.30 Session 2: 11.30
Thursday 19th March	Northfleet Building Products (Blockworks meeting room) Botany Marshes, Lower Rd, Gravesend, DA11 9BB	Bayram Kose bayram.kose@cemex.com	Session 1: 10.00

Long Service Celebrations

We would like to wish congratulations to the following colleagues for reaching long service milestones in January and February 2026. We appreciate all your contributions and hard work over the years and hope you enjoy your celebrations.



- Robert Sims, General and Commercial Manager in South Gloucestershire, celebrates 25 years (January)
- Sally Tokens, Sales Executive in Bedfordshire, celebrates 40 years (January)
- Graham Jones, Operative in Flintshire, celebrates 25 years (February)
- Noel Gibbs, Leading Hand in Derbyshire, celebrates 25 years (February)
- Alastair Longdon, Supervisor in Lincolnshire, celebrates 15 years (January)
- Bobby Prasath Natarajan, Electrical Engineer in Warwickshire, celebrates 15 years (February)
- Philip Brewer, Assistant Quarry Manager in Flintshire, celebrates 15 years (February)

Jonathan Celebrates 20 Years of Service



Congratulations goes out to Jonathan Waller, Planning Team Leader (Cement), who recently celebrated his 20 years Long Service Award.

In the photo you can see Jonathan celebrating with his colleagues at Cemex UK's Head Office in Binley, Coventry.

Congratulations Jonathan, we hope you enjoyed your celebrations.

Tim Saves the Day

Working in an industry which relies on machinery, our Operations teams know that even the most robust equipment can occasionally test their resilience. That's exactly what happened recently at our Dove Holes site.

The team experienced a breakdown on the feeder that loads the trucks from the drystone bins – a broken shaft on the motor that drives the feeder. This motor had served us faithfully for many years but was old and no longer something we could simply replace off the shelf.

With the bin above the feeder now full, the process plant could no longer continue producing. At the same time, one of our key customers, Marshalls, was awaiting product that must come specifically from this bin (due to its moisture content). The clock was ticking.

A new motor was sourced, but it required a brand-new cable to be run from the control room to the feeder and a new control panel to be made. That work would take time, time our production schedule and customer commitments didn't have.

This is where Tim Kearney, one of our Maintenance Engineers, stepped in and refused to let the situation impact our key customer. He proposed a temporary fix that would allow the team to continue supplying the customer while the permanent solution was being installed. Going above and beyond, Tim took the failed motor home and used the lathe in his own garage to machine a new thread onto the output shaft, enabling the stub to be securely reattached. With the repair complete, he returned to site, reinstalled the motor, and got the feeder back up and running.

Thanks to Tim's quick thinking, initiative and skill, production resumed, customer commitments were met, and operations continued smoothly right through until the weekend, when the new motor and upgraded cabling were successfully installed.

As a well-deserved thank you for his outstanding effort, Tim was presented with an Amazon voucher from Cemex in recognition of his dedication. Well done Tim, and thank you for demonstrating what great teamwork and pride in our work really looks like.



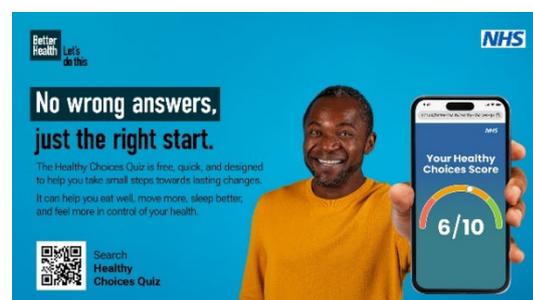
Check Your Healthy Choices Score

The NHS Healthy Choices Quiz offers a simple way to assess your lifestyle across six themes. Upon completion, it provides an overall score and signposts users to relevant free NHS digital tools and content.

It's quick and easy:

Taking around five minutes to complete, the quiz asks a series of questions about your lifestyle. You will then receive an overall score out of 10 and advice on how you are doing in each area. You'll also

receive personalised recommendations and a wealth of NHS resources including free apps to help you act where it's most needed. The Healthy Choices Quiz aims to empower adults, particularly those in middle age, to make positive changes to their behaviour and create meaningful steps towards a healthier life.



Why making healthy choices matters

Preventable health conditions are costing lives, burdening the NHS and damaging our economy. More than a quarter of the population now have a long-term health condition, and health inequalities are also widening – people in the most deprived areas of England die eight years younger and spend 19 fewer years in good health than those in the least deprived areas. Key risk factors such as smoking, obesity, drinking alcohol and mental

health problems affect millions of people. But making small changes to the way we live day to day can have a big impact on our health in the immediate and longer-term.

👉 Do it now! Start your journey to a healthier lifestyle: take the free NHS Healthy Choices Quiz here: <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/healthy-choices-quiz/>

Do You Need Support?

Did you know that Cemex offers all employees a free, confidential employee assistance programme called Lifestyle Support?

You can find a guide all about How Care first can support you in the UK News website: [here](#)

Lifestyle Support is easy to access, available 24/7 and can provide help and support with a wide range of issues or concerns such as family matters, debt, relationships, bereavement, depression and anxiety.

It is run by a separate provider and not part of Cemex; we don't receive any employee specific information from them.

Contact the Employee Assistance Line (Lifestyle Support) for confidential advice and support – call 0808 168 2143 or visit www.lifestyle-support.co.uk (Username: cemex Password: cemex).

Do you need support? Care first

Cemex offers all employees a free, confidential employee assistance programme (EAP) called Lifestyle Support, operated by Care first.

Lifestyle Support is easy to access, available 24/7 and can provide help and support with a wide range of issues or concerns such as family matters, debt, relationships, bereavement, depression and anxiety.

It is run by a separate provider and not part of Cemex – we don't receive any employee specific information from them.



Call 0808 168 2143
Visit www.lifestyle-support.co.uk
 Username: cemex
 Password: cemex



Internal Vacancies

IVC Ref	Position	Company	Location	Closing date
24-02-2006	Plant Manager	Materials - Readymix	York	03/03/2026
26-02-2026	Plant Manager	Materials - Readymix	Chichester	04/03/2026
27-02-2026	Maintenance Fitter	Building Products	Northfleet	27/02/2026
28-02-2026	Multi Skilled Operative (Finished Products)	Materials - Aggregates	Dove Holes	05/03/2026
29-02-2026	Operative	Materials - Aggregates	Raynes Quarry	09/03/2026
30-02-2026	Quarry Manager	Materials - Aggregates	Ryall Quarry	10/03/2026
31-02-2026	Supervisor	Materials - South Coast	Hamer Warren Quarry	06/03/2026

We would love to hear from you for the next edition

To send us a story: either click on 'submit a story' on the UK News website or email gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com

If you can, please include a photo too, Thank you.

SAFETY ALERT

Employee TRI – STF during a cleaning operation

DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT

An employee was performing cleaning work using a Bobcat. Upon reaching a water drainage trench, the Bobcat could not access the area, so the employee proceeded with manual digging to clean the trench. During the activity, he slipped and fell onto his hand, resulting in a fracture.

KEY FINDINGS

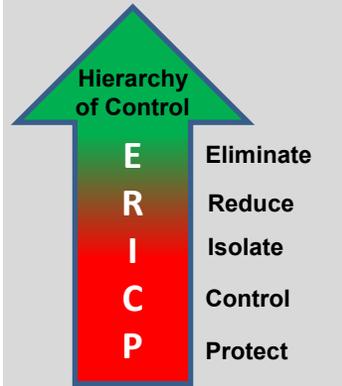
✓	Employee received H&S induction and all required H&S training
✓	Employee used all required PPE including laced safety shoes
✓	Employee is experienced and is professional in using the bobcat for this routine cleaning activity
✗	Due to the rain and ongoing plant operations, the area was wet, containing water, mud, and cement residues that caused it to be slippery
✗	Employee did not perform Take 5 prior of the activity

HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

- Take 5 – identify risks prior of performing the activity.
- Cleaning the area with bobcat before performing the manual work.
- Stay alert and adapt your actions to ground conditions

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- STF prevention by awareness and hazards removal.
- Take 5 – identify and address risks.



Look after yourself and each other 🙌

Don't let anyone act unsafely, always stop unsafe practices.

Housekeeping 🧹

Keep designated access routes and work areas tidy and free from trip/slip hazards.



STOP THINK ACT

SAFETY ALERT

HIPO – Tipper truck roll over while unloading aggregates on a readymix plant

DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT

A tipper truck rolled over during sand unloading on a readymix plant aggregates yard.

After completing the unloading, the driver moved forward to release the rear door.

During its movement, a hydraulic cylinder failure caused the tipper truck body to tip sideways and overturn.

KEY FINDINGS

✓	The ground was level and free of materials. The truck was positioned on stable and even ground.
✗	After stepping outside the cabin contracted driver did not use the required PPE, loading shovel operator who was supposed to supervise the unloading did not intervene.
✓	Rear door was opened and the material was released during the unloading.
✓	Driver is familiar with unloading on this specific readymix plant and other CEMEX sites, 7 months of experience. Received general H&S induction.
✗	Driver did not stop the unloading upon identifying a malfunction of the third piston.
✗	Loading shovel parking was less than 15 meters from the unloading tipper truck.
✗	Mechanical failure of the truck's piston led to the roll over (probably a pre-existing mechanical issue in the truck led to the hydraulic cylinder failure).

HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

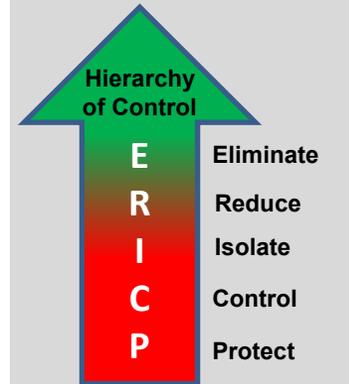
- Maintain awareness of the truck's condition during unloading and stop immediately if something is wrong
- Maintain the truck in safe working condition.

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- Maintain a minimum 15-meter exclusion zone during tipper truck unloading
- Contractor's management
- Maintain the truck in safe working condition

Loading shovel parking location during the incident

Piston failure



Personal Protective Equipment

Always wear the correct PPE.

Tools and Equipment

Use the right, well maintained, tools/equipment for the job. Never make do.

Safe Systems

Follow safe systems of work, site rules, signage and traffic signals.

Look after yourself and each other

Don't let anyone act unsafely, always stop unsafe practices.



STOP THINK ACT

SAFETY ALERT

Contractor TRI – Fall from truck ladder at a customer site

DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT

Contracted driver arrived at the customer site with the mixer truck. While waiting in line for loading, he climbed the truck ladder to clean the mixer.

During the climb, he lost his grip and fell to the ground.

The incident occurred on a rainy day, and the ladder steps were wet. As a result of the fall, the driver sustained a hand fracture.

KEY FINDINGS

✓	Contracted driver received the required induction and 3 points of contact training.
✓	Contracted driver received the required PPE and had it with him on the customer site.
✗	Contractor did not use gloves because he claimed that the gloves were wet due to the rain (all other required PPE was used)
	Rainy day – ladder steps were wet and slippery (according to the driver this caused him to lose the grip)
✓	Experienced contracted driver with no previous H&S incidents
✗	According to the contracted driver he used 3 points of contact but lost the grip due to the wet ladder steps
✗	Performance of a non-urgent task at height on a wet ladder during adverse weather

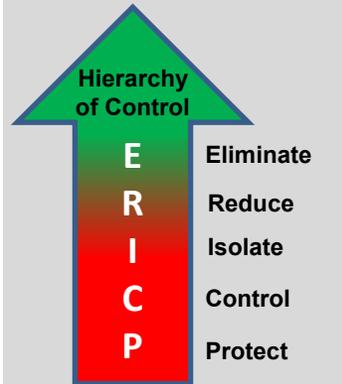
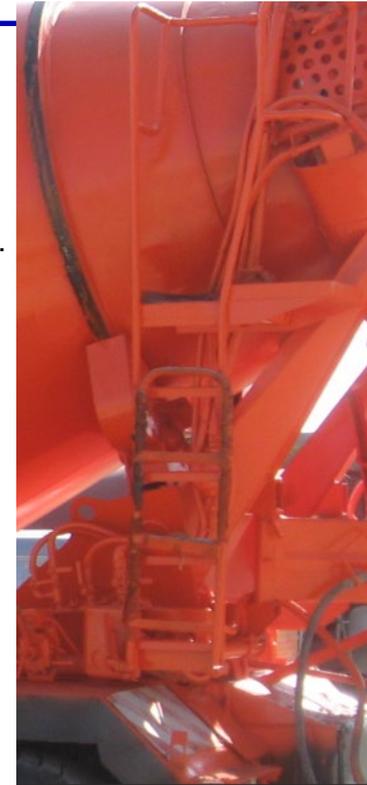
HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

- PPE – use of gloves to get a better grip while using the ladder.
- Take 5 – identify the risks before performing the task – wet ladder steps.
- Delay non-urgent work during adverse weather conditions – No ladder climbing for cleaning activities during wet or rainy conditions unless necessary and controlled.

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- 3 points of contact
- Take 5 – risks identification
- PPE

Ladder steps were wet.



Look after yourself and each other 🙌
 Don't let anyone act unsafely, always stop unsafe practices.

Get a grip 🧤
 Hold handrails on stairways and use three points of contact when getting into/out of vehicles.

Personal Protective Equipment 🧢
 Always wear the correct PPE.



STOP THINK ACT

SAFETY ALERT

TRI – Jaw injury during cleaning at PHT

INCIDENT DETAILS

Two Cemex employees were performing regular cleaning of material buildup in PHT. First, the workers attempted to remove the material buildup using a water lance. The material buildup was very hard, and they did not succeed in removing it with the water lance.

Because of this, the worker began removing the material buildup using mechanical tools, in particular a steel bar.

At one point, the material fell and struck the steel bar, which was ejected and hit the worker in the face shield and jaw. No visible injury was detected when first aid was provided, and both workers finished their shift.

After the shift, the injured worker underwent a medical examination and was diagnosed with a fracture in his jaw.

KEY FINDINGS

✓	The work was qualified for a work activity. The worker participated in all trainings including a practical training at a workplace.
✓	The worker was using proper PPE for this type of activity.
✓	The second worker was involved in the cleaning activity – supported the colleague during using a water lance.
	Using a mechanical tool was allowed according to SOP.
✗	The worker didn't carry out TAKE 5 prior commencing cleaning. No log was found in his notebook from that day (Logs from previous shifts were in the notebook).
✗	The worker was holding the steel bar close to his body, which is against SOP for cleaning PHT.

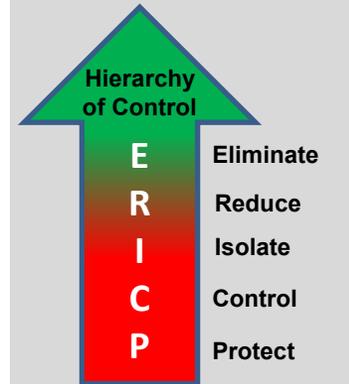
HOW COULD THIS HAVE BEEN AVOIDED?

- Review and update work procedures and SWES for heat exchanger cleaning, and define cleaning methods with consideration of the risks associated with each of them.
- Always carry out a personal risk assessment before the work task when required.
- Replace manual tools used for heat exchanger cleaning, such as rods/tubes, with safer tools from the perspective of grip and handling.

KEY REVIEW POINTS

- Conduct practical training sessions for operators on heat exchangers in the presence of production management and the H&S specialist.
- Verify the suitability and adequacy of PPE for work on the heat exchanger.
- Ensure the presence of the shift supervisor during heat exchanger cleaning at least once per shift.
- During discussions within VFL, verify that employees are familiar with and actively apply TAKE 5.

The place of accident



Safe Systems

Follow safe systems of work, site rules, signage and traffic signals.



Tools and Equipment

Use the right, well maintained, tools/equipment for the job. Never make do.



Look After Yourself and Each Other

Don't let anyone act unsafely, always stop unsafe practices.



ZASTAV SE, ZAMYSLI A JEDNEJ BEZPEČNĚ



Welcome to the February 2026 edition of **Earthly Matters**, the blog dedicated to the partnership between Cemex and the RSPB.



Partnership Update

By Carl Cornish, RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser

This month I've spent a couple of days with the North Chiltern Conservation Volunteers at Cemex's Kensworth Nature Reserve. The reserve is an area of chalk grassland that's important for wildflowers and insects, with several nationally rare and scarce butterfly species present. The volunteers have been doing a fantastic job removing Blackthorn and Dogwood scrub from the grassland – a back-breaking task using tree poppers on shrubs with long, matted root systems. The tool grips the stem in a metal jaw and is pulled back to remove the shrub and its root, providing a more permanent solution than cutting alone. Dead vegetation has also been cut and raked off, helping to keep the grassland open for its specialist plants and insects. Horseshoe Vetch has been planted as it's the larval foodplant of Chalkhill Blue. I found a male on the reserve last summer and, with luck, the species will colonise from nearby sites and start breeding.

Mark Gough, Quarry Manager, has been liaising with the local Wildlife Trust for getting the site grazed by cattle. Seven cows were on site from late autumn into winter, with Mark keeping an eye out for their welfare. The cows help remove taller vegetation.

This demonstrates the successful partnership effort in managing the site for wildlife. Kensworth is one of the priority sites for the Cemex - RSPB partnership this year. Other priority sites focus on managing areas of important biodiversity outside of operational areas (eg, Lowland Heathland at Rugeley), restoration, and supporting the planning team with extensions and new quarry sites.



Volunteers Kate (above left), Claire (right) and Richard (background) removing Blackthorn and Dogwood with tree poppers.



Volunteers Linda (left) and Andy (right) removing cut vegetation.



Cows at Kensworth, photo: Mark Gough

Focus on Chalk Grassland

By Carl Cornish

Last month I mentioned that habitats rich with wildlife often don't look attractive, but Chalk Grassland is both beautiful and biodiverse. It doesn't look it this early in the year but come Spring and Summer it will be awash with the colour of wildflowers and alive with insects. It's a habitat that engages the senses: a palette of colours perfumed with the scent of wildflowers, and the buzz of grasshoppers from within the vegetation and the song of a Skylark as it hovers above. It's also a tasty habitat because it is nature's herb garden, with Basil, Thyme and Wild Marjoram and other plants used to be eaten. There's one called Salad Burnett because its leaves were used in salads.

Like all open habitats in the UK, if Chalk Grassland was left unmanaged it would become colonised by shrubs and trees, going through a process known as seral succession until it became woodland. Large grazing animals would have kept it open in the past and nowadays grazing animals and human work are used. Some scrub is important for wildlife so it's a balancing act of keeping the right amount.

Managing Chalk Grassland is important to keep what is left in good condition for wildlife. There have been drastic losses of this habitat through ploughing up to convert to arable fields or by applying fertilizers and seeding other grass species (known as 'improving') to allow higher stocking densities and weight gain of livestock. That has led to a subsequent decline of species dependent on Chalk Grassland. Quarrying arable land/improved pasture and restoring back to Chalk Grassland is a way to bring back this habitat.



Actions for Nature

National Nest Box Week was in February, but it's not too late to think about putting up a nest box. As with finding a great home, providing one for a bird is all about location, location, location. Location – in a place safe from predators such as cats; location – out of direct sunlight so having the entrance hole facing North through to East is best; location – safe from disturbance from people and other birds, so best not to put near bird feeders.

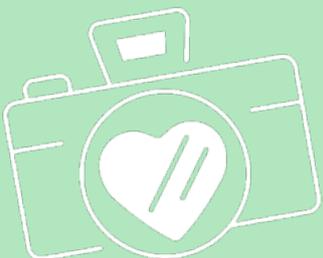
For more information see <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/all-about-nest-boxes>

One species that is increasingly reliant on nest boxes is the Swift. Many communities have come together to help Swifts by putting up nest boxes on their streets.

See : <https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/create-a-high-home-for-swifts>

Contact Carl

If you would like advice or a visit from Carl Cornish, our RSPB Senior Business Conservation Adviser for the Cemex Partnership, please get in touch: carl.cornish@rspb.org.uk



Send us your stories and photos

We are looking for staff stories to include in upcoming blogs, these can be experiences from work or home. We would love to share them in an upcoming blog.

Send them in to: gb-communicationsandpublicaffairs@cemex.com