

# Preparations for the Olympics gather pace

Haringey, a borough bordering the site of next year's Olympic Games, is in a race of its own – to upgrade its street furniture, as **Surveyor** finds out

With London 2012 fast approaching, the world is setting its sights on the UK. The energy and buzz of the games are just around the corner, and the speed of preparations are gaining momentum.

The whole country will feel the impact of this event, with the transport system taking the brunt of the visitors. The need for cost-effective, efficient traffic management is key to the UK and, in particular, London.

Haringey, a north-east London borough, will not be a site for any of the games. However, it will be impacted as a route into others.

With this in mind, Steven Lain, streetlighting manager at Haringey LBC, took the decision to install Solaboll™, a new bollard product designed and produced by Pudsey Diamond Engineering.

A major incident in the area on Christmas Day 2010 prompted Mr Lain to look around for other illuminated bollards to fulfil street-lighting requirements.

In January, Pudsey Diamond Engineering literally arrived with the new product in hand, ready to demonstrate its capabilities.

By February, 20 of the bollards were ordered. On delivery to Volker Highways – part of the Volker Wessell Group – the borough's official contractor, the bollards were installed quickly and were ready for use instantly.



'Despite having ducted the road prior to the decision to use Solaboll™, I could see the advantages of this bollard,' says Mr Lain. 'For a start, the solar panels meant an instant reduction in electricity costs.'

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Due to incidents, bollards installed in the area were not expected to last more than 12 months without needing attention.

With the self-righting capabilities of the Solaboll™, it continues to work, despite being impacted, greatly reducing the manpower requirements.

With changes in the pipeline led by Transport for London, Mr Lain confirmed that the need for lit bollards would not change.

Having been in lighting for 37 years, he has seen the industry change and evolve with the new technology available.

He says: 'Haringey is constantly busy with road-management projects. This means I have to be up-to-date with new technology on the market.'

Pudsey Diamond Engineering's bollards have worked so well that Haringey is currently evaluating whether it is worth replacing illu-

minated bollards at traffic signal islands, for which a trial is planned near the Tottenham Football Club's stadium.

'The product works well, fulfils our needs, and has even caused colleagues to comment on how striking and effective the bollards are... since when did they notice bollards?'

Pudsey Diamond Engineering is not an ordinary company in the 'making things' business. It is unusual, adaptable and experienced in the engineering field. Focusing on niche areas within the public lighting industry, they are well able to apply new technology to create the innovative, contemporary performance products needed in today's environment. The breadth of the

*continued overleaf*

## streetscene

company spans wide, and encompasses latest thinking, design and technology.

Peter Diamond bought the defunct company almost 30 years ago, and has developed it to what it is now. The firm has found its way down an unusual path.

Following an engineering apprenticeship at Chatham Dockyard, Mr Diamond started his working life designing and building racing dinghies. However, as work was hard to come by, he replied to an advert in the local Post Office looking for a boat builder.

It proved to be the turning point in his career. The work involved helping a local man complete the yacht he had built for his retirement in the Mediterranean. After 18 months, the boat owner was ready to leave, and offered his engineering company, such as it was, to Mr Diamond.

Worth no financial muscle, Mr Diamond was unable to get a bank loan to fund the purchase but, with the help of friends, He found the cash to take it on.

'I went straight out to meet a few customers the business had at the time, and they took me in, held my hand, and taught me how the industry worked. Many of them are still customers now.'

Initially working from a stable block and old mushroom sheds in Warsash, the company moved to Andover in 1991.

The business grew steadily, and by 1998, the need for even larger premises was realised and staff moved to a second factory in Andover. Under Mr Diamond's careful nurturing, the business has thrived.

Where possible, equipment and machinery has been, and still is bought from liquidation sales and auctions, which enables the firm to get into new markets without breaking the bank.

However, the company's success hangs on the back of technology. In looking ahead Pudsey Diamond Engineering has been able to lead the way in its field.

The early introduction of CNC (computer numeric control) machinery, being driven from office-based PCs allowed the company to excel in manufacturing small batches as required, and to welcome variation.

Production control software was



installed in 1994, which enables the company to control the production of diverse streetlighting fabrications. Also at this time, Mr Diamond looked at robotic welding systems and invested in one of the most advanced systems of the time.

Being in complete control of the engineering process has meant a smoother production line and enabled time and, therefore, costs to be kept to a minimum.

This, in turn, has enabled the company to grow and be successful. A focused vision has kept Mr Diamond successful, a man driven by self-achievement rather than money has kept the company building year on year to where it is today. 'I am a concept person surrounded by finishers,' he says.

The company is now at its third site in Hampshire and is steadily growing, introducing better facilities and wider product ranges to suit the needs of its clients.

The company produces everything from streetlighting keys to bespoke lighting packages for unusual situations. A particular skill as a company is to take an architect's concept and translate it into well-engineered, modern, easily-maintainable infrastructure.

'It was only a few years ago when I got involved in BGP (business growth programme) at Cranfield University that I fully realised why my company was so strong.

'It is the breadth of our technology and knowledge of public lighting that is so impressive. The experience and skills of our engineers together with the use of technology has enabled us to prosper where others have thought there was no

market.'

Solaball™ is just one of a range of products which combine innovative technology designed and produced by Pudsey Diamond Engineering. It has just been successfully launched in the UK. Solaball™ offers free energy for six years, zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from in-

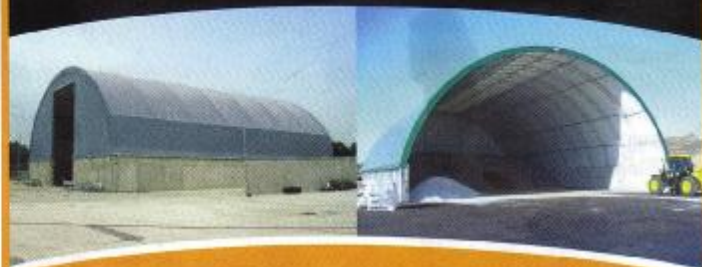
stallation, alongside its passive safety, self-righting capabilities. Recently awarded best 'Energy product/Service award' at the Environment and Energy Awards 2011 it is proving its worth in the marketplace. It boasts:

- no electrical supply, since all power is generated from solar panels, illuminating multiple low-power LEDs to give class-leading luminance within BS EN 12899:2007
- reduced installation time and costs
- a low risk to workers, as manpower needed is significantly lower than others
- batteries, housed below ground, which ensure they are not subjected to high impact
- a bollard which has been proven to withstand multiple impacts and still illuminate and switch on
- compliancy with BS 8442 and achieved passive safety classification 50 NE 4 and 70 NE 3 under BS EN 12767
- authority from the Department for Transport.

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