



# Awards 2013 Case Study

Award Winner

## Health & Safety

Willmott Dixons All Safe Health & Safety System

Construction workers have some of the most dangerous jobs in the world. Yet we live in a society where the mention of 'health and safety' tends to provoke a negative reaction, often stemming from the feeling that someone is meddling in our lives.



It is a paradox not lost on health and safety professionals such as Steve George, a member of the Willmott Dixon team that won the CEW Award for Health and Safety 2013 with their All Safe campaign.

Keen to maintain an excellent safety record, the company set out to achieve a step change in attitudes that would embed responsible behaviour in all members of staff, as well as supply chain partners.

"Safety has been seen by some as an inhibitor," explained Steve. "But the All Safe system has been designed to cut through the red tape and get to the core principles of safety.

"We are asking people why it is important for them, as individuals, to get home safely at the end of the working day, getting them to look at the things they love about their lives and consider the associated consequences of a serious accident at work."

Those important factors in their lives – from family and friends, to hobbies or simply the desire to enjoy good health - are written on a 'commitments card' and prominently displayed in their workplace, as a constant reminder of the reasons they need to return home safely. The

All Safe emphasis is on education, raising awareness, changing the way people think and rewarding good habits, rather than punishing mistakes. Everyone is required to be a role model for safety, so there is specific focus on intervention and the techniques required to communicate in a positive way the need to change 'at risk' behaviour.

The four principle components of All Safe are: values (no one should suffer pain); beliefs (all accidents can be prevented); attitude (everyone has a zero tolerance of unsafe behaviour); and behaviour (everyone looks out for themselves and others). Onsite reminders and warnings reinforce the message and suppliers are asked to sign the All Safe Supply Chain Charter.

Award Sponsored by



# Willmott Dixon is one of the largest privately owned capital works, regeneration and support services companies in the UK.



A green card system is used as a means of acknowledging a positive contribution to site safety – whether that is consistently taking care to work cleanly and safely, or perhaps taking the time to approach a colleague who has failed to take the correct precautionary measures to safely carry out a particular task.

“One example of this is when a contractor was seen to approach another site worker he’d noticed was doing some cutting without wearing goggles,” said Steve George. “It took him 30 seconds but he may have saved that man’s eyesight.

“That epitomised the change in culture we are aiming for. We have to change the way people think and use peer pressure to discourage unsafe behaviour, as well as rewarding good habits.”

Willmott Dixon is one of the largest privately owned capital works, regeneration and support services companies in the UK. It has been well established in Wales since acquiring E Turner and Sons in 1991, a business whose own history in the region goes back to 1885.

The company launched All Safe in April 2012 with a conference involving all safety officers, senior management and supervisors. It was followed by a road show in each region, with visits to all on-going projects, supply chain contractors, clients and design teams. While based on a firm foundation of statutory and OSHAS 18001 compliance and corporate governance, All Safe goes much further than other schemes by tapping

into the emotional intelligence of those on site and addressing the fundamental thinking behind attitudes towards Health and Safety.

The result has been a significant reduction in reportable accidents and a good track record in meeting health and safety KPIs. In the year the programme was launched, only one reportable incident occurred from 22 projects with a total value of £85million. And to ensure the message is constantly reinforced, an on-going programme of education and re-evaluation is underway. One of these will reflect on the emotional associations of Christmas, asking individuals to consider what made the festive season special for them and what might change if they were injured at work.

Apart from material costs, the real investment made Willmott Dixon has been in allowing its passionately committed staff the time to develop and promote the scheme.

All Safe is already having a knock-on effect within the industry with some suppliers implementing their own schemes based on the model of positive rewards. And with a ‘nomadic’ construction workforce, the hope is that the improved safety awareness and All Safe principles will stay with each individual, ultimately permeating the industry as a whole. “It is a moral issue rather than one of company loyalties,” commented Steve George. “We want people to go home safely whoever they are working for.”

