

JUNE 2021

The Micron



The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo

AJE ASSISTS WITH GULL TRIAL

AJ Engineering is supporting a gull management trial in the Pilmuir Primary School area of Forres.

The one-year pilot is being joint funded by AJE, the Forres Common Good Fund and the school itself.

Gull nesting is prevalent in that area of Forres and it's hoped that the removal of nests and eggs will allow residents and landlords to take action to prevent ongoing nesting.

Alan James, MD of AJE decided to support the trial after being approached by local councillor George Alexander.

Alan said: "Everywhere I go in Forres there are seagulls as they have an easy source of food and good places to nest. In the country they used to follow the farmer's plough for earthworms but now they have become urban and are a menace.

"It is difficult for individual house holders or businesses to tackle the problem legally and in isolation, so when George Alexander approached me for some financial help, I thought it worthy of some AJE support. Moray Council has the resources to properly manage the safe removal of nests and

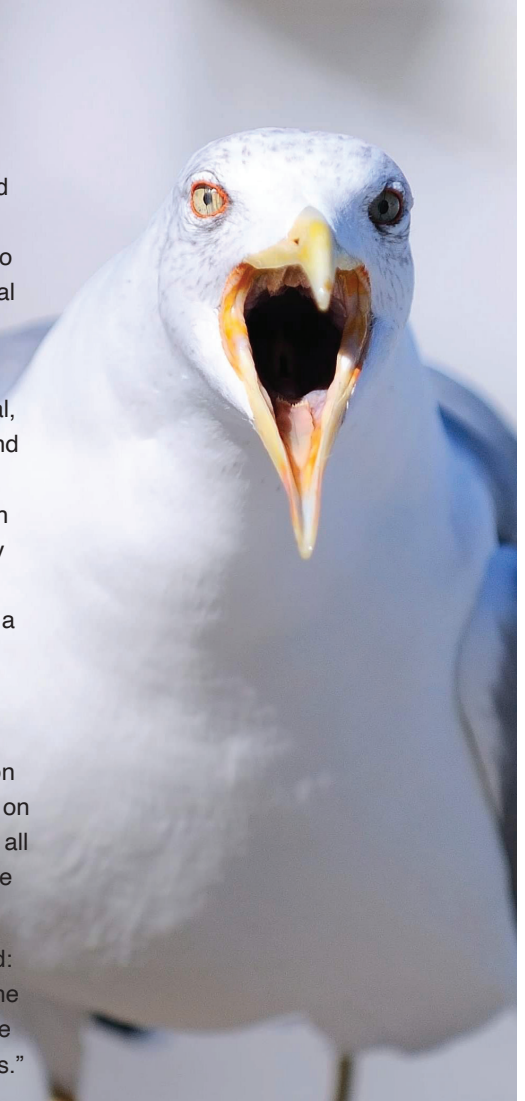
eggs in a controlled manner."

He added: "Hopefully the trial will be a success which will allow the Pilmuir residents to have some gull respite. Presently at the Greshop and Waterford sites we have too many gulls and nests and it is a problem, so I will be interested to see how this trial goes."

Local councillor, George Alexander, said: "This is very much a one-off trial, in a limited area, which aims to remind residents and property owners in the area that they do not have to live with the scourge of marauding gulls every year, however clearing nests and eggs is not a long-term solution. It is a short-term solution and the costs are prohibitive.

"The only long-term solutions lie with property owners who must take action to prevent the seagulls from building on their roofs, and local people must do all they can to avoid food being available to the seagulls."

Local councillor, Lorna Creswell, said: "I'm looking forward to the trial and the impact it makes, so residents can see there's the potential to improve things."



VILLAGE CHURCH PROJECT PROGRESSES

AJE has in a small way been involved in a project to improve facilities at a village church.

Working on behalf of Darroch & Allan Joiners and Builders, AJE has supplied and installed stair access for a project

taking place at Dyke Parish Church.

The Church was recently awarded over £13,000 from the FCC Communities Foundation to make improvements.

The money is being used to install new toilets as part of ongoing refurbishment.

The works are part of an overall project to make the church more accessible.

Phase One of the project was completed in 2017 with the installation of a new disability complaint access path linking the church to the village hall car park.

facebook.com/ajengscotland • twitter.com/ajengscotland

FIVE NEW TRAINEES HAVE JOINED THE EVER-EXPANDING TEAM AT AJ ENGINEERING

The company which was formed in 1999 with just two employees now boasts 114 staff members between its sites at Greshop and Waterford in Forres and its sister company NEWCo in Fort William.

Four of the new trainees - Ross Murdoch, Joseph Finlayson, Phil Stephens and Ewan Storrer will complete a 16-week intensive course at Nigg Skills Academy to obtain their National Certificate (NC) and SVQ level 2 before completing their SVQ Level 3 in the Forres workshop.

The fifth trainee, Aidan Morrison already has his NC and SVQ Level 2 from Inverness College and will now complete his SVQ Level 3 at Forres.

Fabrication manager Craig Johnston said: "The last time we took on trainees in this way it was really successful, so we have decided to do it again. The company is expanding, particularly with the development at Waterford so that means our team needs to expand too.

"The 16-week course at Nigg Skills Academy has worked well for us in the past, with a modern apprenticeship the guys are learning in 16 weeks, what a standard apprentice could take up to two years to achieve. It means we can get them into the workshop a lot quicker so they can put what they have learned into practice and also work towards their SVQ Level 3 at the same time."

From left: Ross Murdoch, Joseph Finlayson, Phil Stephens Aidan Morrison, Ewan Storrer



Historic buildings get new roofs

Two roofs on the historic Forres drill hall are being replaced by AJE.

Designed by Charles C Doig in 1909-10, the complex which is also known as the Forres Joint Cadet Centre comprises several buildings including a rifle range and classroom which are the two buildings that AJE will be renovating.

The rifle range is 21 metres long and has a corrugated asbestos cement roof and the classroom currently has a slate roof.

Project Manager James Attridge said: "It's a great project to be working on as the building is historically important to the town. It's been fascinating getting to see it. As well as replacing roofs, we have also demolished two brick lean-to extensions to the rear of the drill hall."

He added: "The roof on the rifle range will

be replaced with a composite cladding whilst the classroom roof will be replaced with new Spanish slates. It is expected the works will begin on 5th July and be completed by end July.

Forres Joint Cadet Centre was constructed shortly after the 1908 reorganisation of the Territorial forces, brought about by the Territorial Forces Act 1907. An Aberdeen Journal newspaper article from 1907 reports that a bazaar was held to raise funds for a drill hall for A and H Companies of the 3rd Volunteer Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

The building was officially opened in March 1910 by Brigadier-General Forbes Macbean and cost around £1300 (Aberdeen Journal, 1910).



OUT WITH THE OLD



A new piece of equipment has been installed in the CNC workshop at AJE HQ which will help increase capacity.

The new XYZ milling machine is the next size up from the previous machine and has the added benefit of having a PROTO TRAK control system compared to the older machine which was predominantly manual.

The CNC workshop has been increasingly busy and the new piece of equipment will help with output.