

# The Micron



The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo

## IT'S BLOOMING GOOD!

**A garden centre has opened the doors to its new £750,000 extension which AJ Engineering played an integral role in 'making happen.'**

AJE worked alongside other local firms to support Mackenzie & Cruickshank with its new development which began in January. It was the fourth time that AJE had been involved in works at M&C which is just around the corner from its Forres HQ on the Greshop Industrial Estate.

Despite there being a small delay due to winter weather, A J Engineering Project Manager, Allan Martin said the project went well.

"The main structure for the extension used approx. 7 tonnes of steel. The extension went into the existing courtyard at the previous main entrance

at M&C. The old revolving door which had been out of use for a number of years was removed and now, the team at M&C has a very striking new internal entrance to be proud of.

"The new external glazed entrance looks phenomenal and the way the new extension ties in with the existing building is really very clever and looks very natural, as though it was always there.

"We also re clad the side wall of the existing building with composite sheeting and a cement board partial rain screen to create an architectural feature."

The 500sqm extension also boasts solar panels and air source heat pump. The reason for the development is so that M&C, a family run business can increase retail space to offer more gardening and outdoor living products.

Allan said: "Although there were a lot of different local contractors involved, the project was managed very well by Ali Wilson from M&C. They had several coordination meetings with ourselves and the other suppliers to ensure the project went smoothly and apart from the weather at the beginning, which to be honest can only be expected for a January start, it went very well indeed."

Peter Wilson, owner of Mackenzie & Cruickshank which is this year celebrating its 20th birthday at the site said: "We are absolutely delighted with the end result and to have worked with so many great local companies and in particular AJ Engineering. The result speaks for itself, and the customers love it. There's a real atmosphere when you walk into the building now and we are very pleased."



The AJE team worked with other local contractors on the £750,000 development at M&C.



## BEST YEAR FOR NEWCO BIKER



NEWCo's Dave Hollands in action.  
Credit: Brian Gray & Gary McMillan

### A NEWCo employee who took part in the Scottish Six Day Trial has said he has had his "best year."

Dave Hollands, Project Operational Manager has been competing in the event for six years and this year was placed 142 out of 290 competitors.

As the name suggests, the trial take place over six days at different locations throughout Lochaber. Each day, the competitors tackle different routes often covering between 100 to 120 miles. Within that distance there are 30 sections where judges observe the competitors to give them a score.

Dave said: "This is the best year I have had,

I am very chuffed with how I was placed, particularly as I am getting a wee bit older. The miles that we cover don't sound that big if they were all to be done on road, but during the trials we are crossing hills, moors and rivers so it can be hard work."

Dave (47) added: "I have always been a biker and I joined Inverness Trials Club a few years back and got involved in local club trials. The Six Day Trial was always talked about and eventually I gave it a go. People always think it takes you out of your comfort zone, but once you have done it once, you just want to keep going back and doing it again and again."

Dave started his training just after Christmas and explained that although each year the routes differ, this year there were more significant changes because of the problems with the Corran Ferry which has been out of action to vehicles for a number of weeks.

"There are always different routes and but this year it did feel significantly different due to the problems with the ferry," explained Dave, "however, it was a great event and I can't wait to do it all again next year."

The Scottish Six Days Trial is an internationally recognised Motorcycle trials competition, which has been running since 1909 making it the oldest motorcycle trials event in the world.

## Praise for domestic gate job

### A domestic customer has taken the time to thank three members of AJ Engineering staff for a "job well done."

Estimating manager Jim Thompson and installation engineers, Bethany Bass and Graham Robertson were thanked by the client for the design, fabrication and installation of the gates.

The customer personally thanked the staff and also took time to send an email to AJE which says: "The gates installed have been much admired by neighbours and friends and rightly so. The workmanship of the construction is excellent, the attention to detail also merits note as does the installation.

"The two workers who installed the gates deserve my sincere thanks for a job well done. I realise that this job was a very small job for your firm but it was an important one for me! Great to know that Forres folk and a Forres firm made the gates. I wish that I had the names of the two folk who made and installed the gates as I feel they are worthy of a special mention, as is Jim Thomson who designed the gates and organised the work."

Jim said: "It's always nice to get feedback from customers. She was very pleased with the outcome. It was a relatively small job for AJ Engineering, but no job is too small as they say, and it was still carried out in the same professional way as any other project that we take on here."

## AJE a good sport for community events



### Forres' biggest one day event will take place next month, but not without a little help from AJE.

The Forres Highland Games is due to take place at Grant Park on July 8 and once again, AJE is stepping in to offer support with sponsorship.

Alan James, AJE MD said: "The Highland Games is steeped in history and it's important for us as a company to be able to help when we can. Forres has a great community spirit and there is a huge volunteer core and our company is able to be part of that. We are delighted to be sponsoring the tug o' war again this year."

In the past, the company has also offered

use of equipment which helps organisations like the Games keep down costs.

Alan added: "Money is in short supply and offering gestures such as use of some of equipment, can make a big difference to some of the committees and groups that we support who are often run by people who just want to do something for good for our fabulous town."

It's not the only community contribution that AJE makes. Each year, it offers support to the organisers of the Forres Christmas Lights, and previously was heavily involved in supporting the infrastructure for Piping At Forres. It has also supported Forres in Bloom, Forres Friends of Woods & Field and Forres Senior and Junior Football teams.

