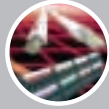




# 9 DOT NEWS

In this issue:



**New Team**  
**Siemon Cabling**  
**PRCA Award**  
**The Perfect Interview**



**PR Negotiation**  
**Merger Management**  
**Mott MacDonald**  
**Clean City Project**



## New Team - New Look



A new leadership team is in place at Hallmark PR following a management buyout earlier this year. Steve Osborne-Brown, Steve Wilson and Helen Symes bought the company from departing majority shareholders and company founders Tom and Jenny Watson.

Steve Osborne-Brown says, "We have a strong team with extensive experience in our core areas of technology, housing, planning, business services and issues management. We're planning to rapidly build on these foundations, as well as developing new service packages for high-growth

SMEs which we believe offer dynamic expansion opportunities in the medium term."

Since concluding the buy-out at the end of February, we've won around £100,000 of business from new and existing clients, says director, Steve Wilson. "We're now embarking on an energetic new business drive and actively developing partnerships with other marketing services companies in the region to provide a flexible full service offer to clients."

Hallmark PR are proud to announce we are now working with the following companies:

- **BDO Stoy Hayward** - specialist advisers to growing businesses
- **Thornfield Properties** - development and town centre regeneration
- **Berkeley Homes** - urban regeneration and community development

## Fast Growing SMEs - LET US GROW WITH YOU!

Our tailored service for fast-growth SMEs delivers the results, at an affordable price. Account director, Eva Lambert-Smith explains: "Small high-growth companies are often unable to commit the funds for a full long-term PR campaign.

That's why we've developed affordable, easy to plan modules tailored to suit SMEs. As the company grows and becomes more profitable, we transfer the business from our SME service to a more comprehensive PR campaign designed to deliver long-term results."

For more details of our SME packages, offering media relations, feature articles, speech writing and publications, in affordable, easy to plan modules, call Eva or email her on [eva.lambert-smith@hallmarkpr.com](mailto:eva.lambert-smith@hallmarkpr.com).



Eva Lambert-Smith

# Cleaning up the City

Hallmark PR has been appointed by Portsmouth City Council to work on their 'Clean and Tidy City' project. The project involves a combination of internal and external communications, media relations and stakeholder communication programmes.

Hallmark PR is working very closely with a number of departments to ensure the initiative, 'Pride in Portsmouth', is communicated effectively to a wide range of audiences.

Not only do we have to influence people's behaviour, we also need to change their perception.

The Hallmark PR team will be providing a wide range of services in support of the Council's initiative in both the lead-up to the launch in the new year and after it is up and running.

Hallmark PR director, Steve Osborne-Brown states, "This is a complex project covering a wide range of services provided by the Council and involves branding, marketing and training in addition to



the communications and media relations elements."

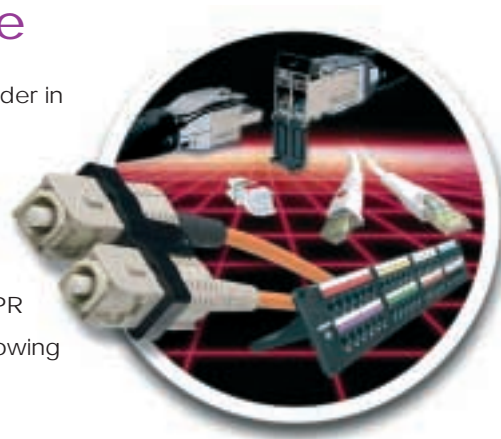
Hallmark PR will be assisting in the launch of the initiative in the new year.

---

# Communicating Cabling Across Europe

Siemon, a global technology leader in the design and manufacture of standards-based structured cabling systems and components, appointed Hallmark PR to develop its first PR programme across Europe, following a competitive pitch.

Headquartered in Connecticut, the company has 20 offices in 12 countries, with its EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) regional headquarters in Woking, Surrey.



Hallmark PR manages the European programme using fellow members of the Worldcom PR Group - Yucatan in France, Business Press in Italy and HBI Helga Bailey in Germany - in their respective markets. Consultancy director, Steve Wilson says that Hallmark's access to Worldcom partners across Europe was an important factor in Siemon's decision to appoint the consultancy.

"We have drawn on the expertise of consultancies with specific knowledge of the structured cabling



sector in Paris, Munich and Milan to extend Siemon's campaign in a very consistent manner. By having a local agency in each country, Siemon is benefiting from local knowledge and local contacts," he said.

"Hallmark PR's enthusiasm, creative approach and strategy is creating rapid and strong brand awareness of Siemon across EMEA. It is differentiating us from competitors and building on our R&D strengths," adds Siemon's marketing manager, Gill Kay.

The programme is now extending across a wider geographic area. Working with Siemon distributors, coverage is now being achieved in Russia, Greece, Portugal, the Netherlands and Africa.



Steve Wilson

# The Perfect Interview

With the help of former Wave and Ocean FM news editor, Karen Woods, Hallmark PR is making clients feel at ease on the other side of the microphone. During recent months, we have trained staff at Gunwharf Quays, RB Housing Trust and Sovereign Housing Association on media interview techniques.

And for those clients who need to brush up their skills for TV, we work with ITN News Channel presenter, Andrew Harvey, on specially tailored training days, with a focus on handling difficult issues.

“There is no substitute for good preparation”, says director

Helen Symes, who has run many of the consultancy’s media training days. “Our training days are designed to give you the confidence, techniques and practice that are essential if you are to look, or sound your best.”

Talking of radio, if you haven’t heard of him already, you probably soon will! Ivan Gould, operations director at new Hallmark PR client, Bridgefast Management, is busy on the local radio circuit, handling phone-ins, interviews and discussions on the company’s services for older people. Bridgefast helps older people to make immediate financial provision for moving into care homes, by advancing funds in anticipation of the sale of their property.



Account director, Eva Lambert-Smith adds: “Early indications are that the PR programme is delivering far superior results in terms of sales leads than the company’s previous advertising-led approach. Local radio, in particular, is proving a very strong medium for reaching the company’s target audience of over 60s.”

---

# Demand for PR Negotiation Remains High

It proved to be a busy summer for Hallmark PR’s PR Negotiation team, which specialises in advising companies on the communications aspects of planning projects.

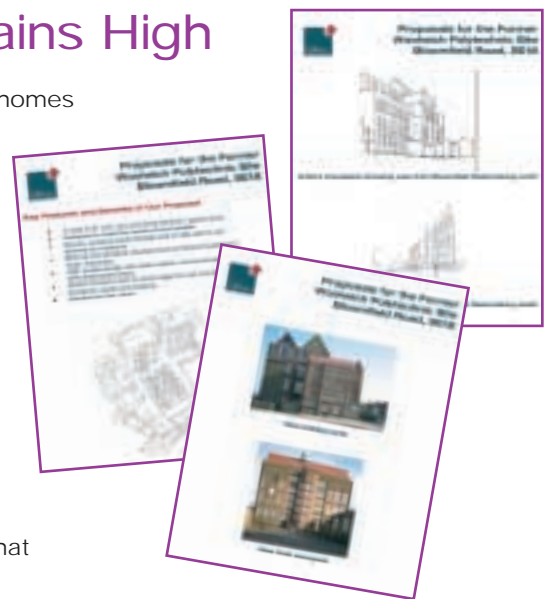
Over the last few months, Steve Osborne-Brown and Sue Hines have been working in the Thames Gateway, London, Hertfordshire, Kent, Cornwall and nearer to home in Hampshire, on a range of housing, industrial and retail projects.

Senior account manager, Sue Hines explains: “A number of growth areas in and around London have been identified by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), including the Thames Gateway. We are working on an increased number of projects in this area, as companies start exploring the potential for regeneration to reclaim former industrial areas and bring them back to economic and social life.”

She adds: “With around 41,000 homes planned for the Medway Estuary and 47,000 homes for the Mid-Gateway, there are huge opportunities for developers and our detailed political and local community knowledge of the area makes us ideally placed to help.”

Steve Osborne-Brown adds: “Recent changes in Government guidance mean that local authorities now require developers to undertake consultation before making a planning application. As a result, we are being brought on board to handle local consultation programmes at a very early stage in the development process.”

So far this year, the consultancy has worked on new projects for Tilfen Land, Thornfield Estates, Equity Estates, B&Q and, most recently, Berkeley Homes.



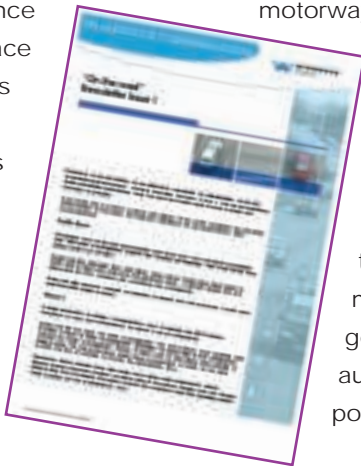
Susannah Hines

## Traffic E-News

Managing the communication of potential traffic delays to those likely to be affected, is a priority for account executive, Hannah McFarlane.

Client Mott MacDonald is contracted by the Highways Agency to maintain the motorway and trunk roads in central southern England, including the M4, M27 and M3. One of this year's main projects was communicating information about a major maintenance scheme taking place on one of the M4's busiest sections between junctions 5 and 7, close to Slough.

Hannah explains: "We worked with Mott MacDonald and



the Highways Agency on a series of information events in the local area, using the Agency's bendi-bus. As expected, there was intense interest in the planned roadworks – on one day in Slough we had close to 1,000 visitors."

"We have also been producing a series of e-mail newsletters to update businesses, the media, local people and organisations which use the motorway regularly, on the progress of the work."

Hannah adds: "Monthly e-newsletters have been an excellent way of keeping people informed. It is easy to read quickly, low cost and means we know we are getting straight to our target audience in the shortest possible time."



## Leading Edge on Quality

Hallmark PR was one of the first three public relations consultancies in the UK to pass the updated, more stringent PRCA Consultancy Management Standard (CMS) when it was launched in the Spring.

Every two years, all 128 members of the Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) must pass the externally assessed CMS to retain membership. PRCA members account for around 70% of the UK market for PR services, by value.

Hallmark PR was chosen to be a test bed for the new version of CMS - we passed with flying colours and a report from the independent auditor said that we "have a very high degree of compliance to the Standard and a clear evidence of best practice".



Consultancy director Helen Symes explains the benefits of the new quality mark:

"CMS covers all areas of consultancy operations including campaign planning, business improvement, client satisfaction, business planning and personnel management.

Together, these help the consultancy put a major effort into achieving our clients' objectives."



Helen Symes

## Got My Number?

In our ongoing quest to improve our service to clients, we've installed a new telephone system at Hallmark PR.

Whilst our main phone and fax numbers will remain in use, you can now contact each of our consultants directly on dedicated numbers. The numbers to keep in your contacts file are:

Main Office Number:	01962 892900
Facsimile:	01962 841820
Steve Osborne-Brown:	01962 892901
Helen Symes:	01962 892903
Steve Wilson:	01962 892902
Eva Lambert-Smith:	01962 892904
Susannah Hines:	01962 892905
Hannah McFarlane:	01962 892906

# Managing Mergers

When it comes to mergers, the importance of a smooth and effective external and internal communications programme cannot be over-stated.

Property consultants Vail Williams, brought in Hallmark PR to advise on a total communications programme for their recent negotiations to merge with Surrey based planning and commercial property consultants, Robert Shaw and Partners.

The consultancy was briefed on the project around a month before it went

'live' by Graham Munday, Vail Williams' marketing manager. He explains: "The strength of our working relationship with Hallmark PR meant we were able to bring them into a highly confidential project at a very early stage. It also made the whole process of planning the announcements and managing approvals within a strict timetable, work very smoothly."

Steve Osborne-Brown led the team advising Vail Williams on communicating the changes to staff, clients and potential targets, the media and the wider business community. "Confidentiality was a key issue in the project, we had a large number of

audiences to reach at the same time and this required careful news management and a detailed internal communications plan."



Bill Baxter of Robert Shaw and Partners, Ian Rudland of Vail Williams

# Steve Voted Chairman of Global Public Relations Group

Hallmark PR director, Steve Osborne-Brown is to be the next Global Chairman of the Worldcom PR Group. Steve, who is currently Chairman of the European Region, will take over from Japanese partner Shuji Hirose in April next year.

The Worldcom PR Group is the world's largest network of independently owned PR companies and Hallmark PR has been a partner for five years. In that time, the consultancy has worked closely with other partners in the USA, South America, Europe, Australia and the Far East.

Hallmark PR has been largely responsible for introducing global quality standards that have now been adopted by all partners. As Global

Chairman, Steve intends to raise the international profile of the Group and generate new business for partners.

One of his first tasks is to differentiate the Worldcom Public Relations Group from WorldCom Inc, the global telecommunications company that made negative headlines last year.

Says Steve: "We were called Worldcom in 1988 - long before the telecoms company adopted the same name. There have been a few queries from clients but most people are astute enough to realise that there is no connection. We are still going strong and growing."

"With more than 100 partners in 35 countries we can roll out comprehensive international campaigns with 'on the ground' local knowledge."



**WORLD COM**  
Public Relations Group



Steve Osborne-Brown

## Teamwork Provides New Look

Since the new team has taken the helm at Hallmark PR, planning for the future has been a priority.

Initially there was a lot of discussion amongst all the staff as to whether or not to change the name of the company. In the end, after consultation with a number of clients, it was agreed that we would keep Hallmark PR, but undertake a re-branding.

Steve Wilson explains, "When we made the decision to overhaul our visual identity, it gave us an opportunity to work with some of our long-standing associates, and to develop relationships with new ones."

For early advice and useful insight into brand strategy, we sought input from Wolfpack Marketing. Development of the visual identity, including the new

logo and stationery, was undertaken by Central Design and our new website brought JUNODESIGN on board.

Broadening our offer of services to clients is a key element of the new Hallmark PR's business strategy.

DETAILS OF ALL OUR PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATES CAN BE FOUND ON OUR NEW WEBSITE.

---

## Helping Hand for Housing

Here at Hallmark PR we've been working with housing organisations across the South for many years. Current and past clients include Atlantic Housing Group, Drum Housing Association, Elmbridge Housing Trust, RB Housing Trust and Sovereign Housing Association.

"Managing a PR campaign for a housing organisation is extremely varied", says senior account manager Sue Hines. "We've been involved in day-to-day media relations, event management and producing publications, as well as project work such as media training."

"The main bulk of our time is spent on conveying positive messages through the media but we also become involved in more unusual work. One project involved the communication of a new payment card to over 5,000 people with tenants, payment outlets, local councils and employees all having to be advised of the change and long-standard patterns of payment altered."

The housing team at Hallmark PR is also heavily involved in producing publications for housing clients and other organisations.

"We have extensive experience of writing, designing and producing publications such as corporate brochures, annual reports, newsletters and other literature that communicate your messages to your tenants, key partners and stakeholders" said account executive Hannah McFarlane.

Events are also a speciality of Hallmark PR's from large conferences dealing with topical housing industry issues and official openings of developments, to small photo shoots that achieved widespread media coverage and information days on new developments. Pivotal in the organisation, Hallmark gets involved in every stage from devising themes, sourcing speakers and



media relations down to booking venues, producing invitations and delegate packs.

If you want to know more about the work we do with housing organisations, or would like to see some sample publications, please contact Steve Osborne-Brown or Helen Symes.



Hannah McFarlane

---

 **Hallmark**  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

HALLMARK PUBLIC RELATIONS LIMITED  
Canister House, 27 Jewry Street  
Winchester SO23 8RY, United Kingdom

T +44 (0)1962 892900  
F +44 (0)1962 841820  
W [hallmarkpr.com](http://hallmarkpr.com)  
E [info@hallmarkpr.com](mailto:info@hallmarkpr.com)