

Spencer Group – Becoming a part of the communities in which we work

January 3, 2023



Multi-disciplinary engineering business **Spencer Group** has redoubled its efforts to support the communities in which it operates this year, whilst their staff have also raised over £6,500 through numerous challenges and activities for their Charity of the Year – Andy's Man Club.

Spencer Group employees invited Paul Longley, a representative of Andy's Man Club's Hull branch into their Humber Quays office, to kickstart the year-long fundraising campaign back in February.



Paul Longley presents to Spencer Group employees at their Humber Quays office in Hull

Alfie Stanford and Lee Chamberlain, both apprentices at the company, took part in a charity boxing match. Boxfest, took place in April and the young duo raised over £800. The company also held an Easter raffle during April, adding £250 to the ever-growing total.

Various fitness challenges also took place, culminating in Drew Smith running the Yorkshire Marathon whilst Ben Lorne, Dan Whittle, Dave Manifold & Matt Mallory completed the Yorkshire 10-mile race. As a collective they raised over £1,200 for their efforts.

The construction specialist has engaged with residents and local organisations during a range of recent projects - including work to repair and restore the historic Union Chain Bridge, which spans the River Tweed between Horncliffe, Northumberland and Fishwick, Berwickshire.

Spencer's engineers forged strong relationships with the communities connected by the 202-year-old suspension bridge, producing regular newsletters to keep them informed, and notifying residents when out-of-hours noise or disturbance was expected.

When issues did arise, the business (which serves the rail, bridges, transport, infrastructure, materials handling, energy, and industrial sectors) worked to address them, even installing new signage after a local resident complained about wagons turning in his driveway.

Its bridge restoration team also undertook a range of smaller projects for residents and local groups. These included installing a deck timber bar in Horncliffe village hall and building a wheelchair access ramp and path for a disabled resident on the Scottish side of the bridge.

In Northumberland, Spencer Group was asked to assist Berwick's local museum, where team members painted protective barriers 'chain-rod green' to match the world-famous Union Chain Bridge.

The engineering business also helped to restore historic plaques sited near the bridge, working closely with the Friends of UCB and ICE Scotland Museum.

Diane Rowe, Customer Relationship Manager at Spencer Group, commented: "We like to become a part of the community we are working in, which helps to build good strong relationships with stakeholders so that they feel they can approach us. We are always here to listen, and always happy to help."

Spencer Group engineers became familiar faces in these communities, where they strove to engage with and support residents. After installing Horncliffe village hall's new bar, several members of the team delivered the leftover timber to locals, who were able to use it as firewood. They also repaired storm damage to local homes, and even helped one keen gardener to move and spread two tonnes of mulch with a telehandler.

The company received countless messages of thanks from locals, and project manager Bob Graham was given the Considerate Constructors Performance Beyond Compliance Award following a site visit by the CCS (Construction Works and Associated Services). Three other members of the team were commended by Northumberland County Council after administering emergency first-aid to a disabled and elderly resident. The man, who had been choking on a piece of fruit, went on to make full recovery.

Spencer Group has taken a similar approach to community engagement during other recent projects. As part of a long-term maintenance painting programme on Scotland's Erskine Bridge, its team carried out postcard drops to inform residents about works, fundraised for a local children's hospice and a veteran's hospital, and connected with two schools in the area, offering work experience and holding 'ask an engineer' Q&A sessions.

While refurbishing the historic Menai Bridge between Anglesey and Mainland North Wales, it promoted the local heritage museum, and made a £500 donation to help it remain open.

Other notable initiatives include the refurbishment of a large concrete planter at Tyseley Depot, a charity Golfathon in aid of Treetops and MIND, and work to engage students from Elliot Hudson College, Leeds, where Spencer is involved in the construction of the new White Rose Railway Station.

Diane Rowe added: "We're incredibly proud of our team, and the positive difference they make to communities. We look forward to building on this work, and forging new links throughout 2023."



Photo credit: Spencer Group