

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

- SHAPING THE WAY PEOPLE LIVE

In highly-developed societies like the ones we see in the Gulf today, it's easy to overlook the fact that they were only achievable, and are only sustainable, on the back of some sophisticated infrastructure provision - utilities, transportation and property, for example.

Highly valued when people take the time to think about them, they are nevertheless taken for granted in the normal run of things. For most engineers, this is fine; their satisfaction being gained through the design and delivery of technically challenging projects - getting sustainable supplies of potable water to people, building roads across deserts to link isolated communities, and bringing ports and airports to life.

Which ever way you view it, though, facilities like this

underpin human development around the world. In the Middle East, there are a number of companies who have quietly dedicated themselves to this sort of work and making it their prime business driver. One in particular, Halcrow, has been doing just this for over 50 years. In 2002, the company celebrated its golden jubilee, having established a continuous presence in the region with a port project in Kuwait and water sourcing in Sharjah. Since then, it has contributed to many hundreds of port, highway, airport and water projects throughout the region.

With its origins in the UK, Halcrow is contributing to some of the world's most prestigious and technically innovative projects. Commenting on these, Halcrow's Dubai-based development director Jim Fyvie said: "We're delivering on

a wide range of small, medium sized and large projects from our global network of offices. For example in the UK we're helping to create the country's first high-speed rail link. Running from the Channel Tunnel to the centre of London, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link will cut travel times between London and other major European capitals. In London we are also helping to deliver the Docklands Light Railway. In Malaysia, we're responsible for Kuala Lumpur's light rail project whilst in Thailand the company is delivering Bangkok's Blue Line rail system, including 18 underground stations and 20km of tunnels.

"But its not all about transport," he emphasises, "In the built environment, we're part of the team to deliver the Canadian Opera House in Toronto, Doha's West Bay Complex and New York's World Financial Centre. In Sharjah, Halcrow is advising the government on the urban water network and treatment to embrace the whole city. In Honduras we're introducing ground breaking systems for sustainable water treatment.

"What's interesting about these and the many other projects we've been involved in," Jim continues, "is that despite their diversity, they all reflect the purpose that Halcrow has set itself - to sustain and improve the quality people's lives. Yes, we relish the engineering challenge of designing and



Halcrow, as part of the RLE joint venture is part of a team delivering the UK's Channel Tunnel Rail Link.