

Heavy element handling - Masonry

The Problem/Challenge

To eliminate musculo-skeletal injuries in the construction industry as a result of repetitive handling of heavy masonry units requiring a fundamental change in attitudes throughout the industry.

The CDM Risks and Issues

Lifelong musculo-skeletal injuries to operatives causing time off work, early retirement, loss of skilled workforce and loss of income/earnings for individuals and families.

The Solution for Designers

NBS Specification Clause 13.2 Design. Apart from general construction hazards, such as working from scaffolding, the main risks associated with brick/ block walling are:

Manual handling

The Construction Industry Advisory Committee (CONIAC) has concluded that there is a high risk of injury in the singlehanded, repetitive manual lifting of building blocks heavier than 20 kg, and this should be taken into account before specifying heavy units.

For detailed CONIAC guidance see HSE Construction sheet number 37.

The Solution for Contractors

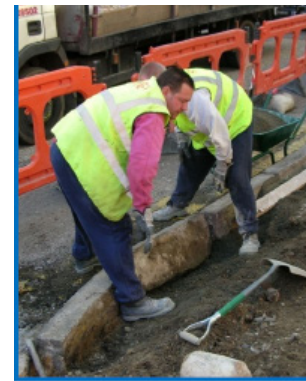
Change in traditional manhandling attitudes to provide or use mechanical aides or less heavy units whilst being competitive in the marketplace.

The Benefits

Retaining a skilled workforce long term by showing respect for their health and welfare.

Key Points

Increased plant-hire costs can be off-set by faster construction periods but can only be introduced by industry-wide change in attitude to create an even playing field for all.



Traditional Approach



Weight of Units Significant



Mechanised Approach