Since Hargreaves Services floated on the London Stock Exchange in November 2005, we have made a number of significant advances, all designed to build on our core strengths and capabilities.

Internally, we have become better at the things we have always done well. We have entered into a number of imaginative joint venture operations. We have identified - and subsequently bought - companies that have skills complementary or additional to our own.

The cumulative result of all this activity is that, in mid 2007, the Hargreaves Group is able to offer our customers an even more impressive and comprehensive range of services and expertise than ever before.

Perhaps one of the most significant events in recent times is the establishment of our first mainland European operation, in the guise of Hargreaves Raw Material Services GmbH, based in Duisburg, Germany.

Moving Mountains spoke with Daniel Kuballa to learn more about this new operation, and to find out about development plans in the European market. He told us:

"Hargreaves Raw Material Services GmbH began operations last summer with a staff of three. From the beginning we focussed our efforts on the purchase and sale of solid fuels – mostly coke (in various forms) and anthracite. In October we bought a minerals trading company, Mineral Resources Europe, and this extended our activities into refractory minerals such as bauxite, magnesite and fluor spar.

"We source and import raw materials from all over the world – for example China, Russia, South America and Eastern Europe – and use the port of Rotterdam as our European gateway. We are doing ‘back-to-back’ business, where material is sourced and supplied directly to our customer, and we’re also conducting ‘stockyard’ business, producing tailor-made product to suit customers’ individual requirements.

"The combined European market now represents a growth area some twenty times greater than the UK, particularly in the demand for foundry coal. The development of power generation plants throughout the EC means that customers will increasingly be looking for partners who can supply, handle, treat and deliver the large volumes required to fuel their operations.

"The accumulated expertise within the Hargreaves Group in the UK puts us in a strong position to build on that particular business model and adapt it to suit trading conditions in Europe.

"We are encouraged by our progress so far, and we have expectations that the Hargreaves brand will become increasingly well known on the continent."
With so many changes happening throughout the Hargreaves group in the last eighteen months or more, the time has come to do a thorough update of the information we present to our clients and suppliers through our corporate web site, company brochure and DVD.

We have engaged a company called Network Production to do the DVD, and recently some of you will have encountered various photographers and film crews (complete with furry boom microphones and headphones) at a number of company locations throughout the country.

We operate in such a fast-moving and dynamic environment that it is vital for customers – and potential customers – to receive an accurate and up-to-date picture of what the Hargreaves ‘family’ can do for them.

First impressions do count – and a professionally-presented image of the Hargreaves Group can make the crucial difference between winning new business – or not. Our web site, brochure and DVD are, in effect, our ‘shop window’.

Cyril Taylor has been involved with the project and he told us: “We’ve made good progress on every part of the update process. It won’t be long before you see the final results – and we think the updates to the web site, the brochure and the DVD will reflect very well on the professionalism that runs through every part of the Group.”

“All of us want to say a big ‘thank you’ to everyone who has participated in this project. We realise that our presence can sometimes be temporarily disruptive, and we appreciate the patience, tolerance and good humour shown to our team throughout the whole process.”

In April, the Hargreaves Group acquired the business and assets of Simon Bulk Warehousing and Distribution from Humber Sea Terminal Ltd in a deal worth £4 million.

This latest addition to the Group gives us an operating base to complement our existing logistics activities at Immingham. The deal includes property and vehicles and introduces a further 28 new colleagues to the Hargreaves group – we extend a warm welcome to them all.

An important part of the Simon acquisition is a contract with ConocoPhillips for the transport and storage of its petroleum coke (petcoke) production in the UK. This will present a good opportunity for our subsidiary company Norec Industrial Services to further develop opportunities within the petrochemical sector.

Knight of the Road

Just before Moving Mountains went to press, we received the following note from a very appreciative member of the public......

Tuesday 7th August.

Shortly after 4pm today I had to stop in Rylstone near Skipton to change a wheel of my car after having a puncture. I had been working for only a few minutes when a Hargreaves wagon pulled up to offer assistance. Although I had done this exercise several times in the past, it was, at the age of eighty two, very reassuring to have the driver’s company and help.

It was a very kind gesture – and what a great advert for Hargreaves!

Sincerely,

Colin R Hawkes, Grassington.

We can tell you that this particular Hargreaves ‘Knight’ was Craig Horton, who is based at Skipton Rock. Great stuff, Craig. Your actions were obviously appreciated by the gentleman concerned – and we’re pleased to share that appreciation with all of our readers.
Hargreaves Community Fund launched in Maltby...

When Hargreaves announced earlier this year that we had bought Maltby Colliery from UK Coal, we made an undertaking that, as a major employer in the area, we would be looking to play an active role in the local community.

Honouring that pledge, we are pleased to announce the official launch of the Hargreaves Community Fund, which has been established for the benefit of local residents in Maltby and the surrounding district.

The fund is being administered for Hargreaves by a small group of local councillors and recently the first presentations were made from the fund.

Lilly Hall Junior School in Maltby received £410 to provide the schools’ football teams with brand new sets of kit and equipment.

The lads from Lilly Hall recently battled their way through to the finals of the English Schools FA National Tournament, held at Keele University over the weekend of June 16-17. They competed in the Under-11 7-a-side Schools Cup for Boys, and they performed brilliantly, narrowly beaten 1-0 in the semi-final by the eventual winners.

Undaunted by their semi-final defeat, the boys did themselves and their supporters proud by winning the 3rd/4th place play-off final in some style.

Bede Pre-School Nursery, which is based at the Edward Dunn Memorial Hall in Maltby village, received £400 from the fund to help them provide new outdoor play equipment for the children.

Councillor Chris McMahon, who is Secretary of the Hargreaves Community Fund, said: “I am delighted to have been asked to play a role in this new community venture, and I am sure that the money made available by Hargreaves will be of enormous help to local groups.

“These first two presentations are the beginning of what we trust will be a regular programme of donations and sponsorships, and I urge local groups to apply for help with projects which they feel will add to the richness of our community.”

Even before the fund was officially launched, we had already helped two local sports clubs.

In April, Hargreaves presented two cheques, each for £1,000, to Maltby Main Football Club and Maltby Miners’ Welfare Cricket Club juniors.

Rother Valley MP Kevin Barron attended the presentation at Maltby Miners’ Welfare sports ground and he said: “I am really pleased that we have a company such as Hargreaves moving into the constituency. They have a solid reputation for getting involved in the wider community and for making generous donations to worthy causes. “There will be more funding on offer over the next two years and I am looking forward to seeing other groups benefiting from their corporate policy.”

Local groups interested in applying for support can obtain a simple application form from Councillor Chris McMahon, 8 Palmerston Avenue, Maltby S66 8HS.

Didn’t we do well? The lads from Lilly Hall receive their new kit courtesy of the Hargreaves Community Fund. (Picture courtesy of the Maltby Mail - www.maltbymail.org.uk)

“(Picture reproduced courtesy of The Northern Echo).

The children paid close attention as they watched Peter Marshall shaping clay into small bricks, and then they had a go themselves, each making a personalised brick complete with their name etched into the surface.

“Peter told us: ‘I’ve been telling the children all about how we make bricks, and how they are fired to make them hard so they can be used to build houses. The kids seem to have enjoyed themselves, and I’ve taken their bricks away to be fired, so they will have something special to take home and keep.’”

Youngsters build on their classroom education

Children at Cockfield Nursery, County Durham, received a visit recently from Hargreaves’ Peter Marshall — and learned at first hand how bricks are made.

Nursery teacher Judith Cowley said: “One of our main topics this term has been houses and homes, so we thought it would be worthwhile for the children to actually see some of the materials that are used to make houses.”

Brick-making in full swing. Peter Marshall with, from left, Jessica Sams, Daniel Jackson, Poppy Widdas, Sophie Handside and Lucy Blackett. (Picture reproduced courtesy of The Northern Echo).
Flaming June? W

It’s often said that the British like nothing more than to talk about the weather. However, the extreme weather we have all experienced in recent weeks has been anything but a joke, claiming lives in different parts of the country, making thousands of people temporarily homeless, and costing what some experts say may be up to £1 billion in damage to homes and businesses.

The almost unprecedented torrential rainfall – in many areas the highest June totals since records began – has caused severe disruption and damage.

In this Moving Mountains special feature we focus on two very serious situations where Hargreaves personnel have been mobilised to offer emergency assistance, in Immingham and near Rotherham in Yorkshire.

Immingham

In the early hours of Wednesday June 27, the Hargreaves team were alerted to a local emergency. More than 24 hours of non-stop torrential rain had produced serious flooding in a nearby residential estate.

Recognising that the Humberside Fire Brigade would be stretched to the limit, and realising that we had equipment that could be put to good use to help alleviate the considerable distress being suffered by local residents, we went into action.

Losing no time, a team of 10 Hargreaves personnel were mobilised and they went quickly to the Manby Road area of Immingham, taking with them the Hargreaves site fire tender, a tractor unit, water bowser, vans and extra pumps.

Once on site, they worked initially on their own and then later in tandem with – and under the direction of – the Fire Service. While the fire crews concentrated on clearing the flooded streets, our colleagues went to work to pump water out of and away from residents’ homes, some of which were under several feet of water.

As work continued during Thursday June 27, the local authority was still bringing in thousand of sand bags to the areas most affected, mindful of weather forecasts that predicted even more rain in the area over the next few days.

We managed to catch up with Nick Vikentiou while he was still at the flood relief site at Manby Road. He told us: “When we saw the scale of the problem, I had no hesitation in getting our equipment together and heading straight over to Manby Road to see what we could do to help.

“Everyone has pulled together to help during this emergency and I’m proud that we have been able to help our neighbours in some small way.”

Rotherham

Amidst all the havoc wreaked by the recent rainstorms and flooding, possibly the most serious potential problem has been experienced at Ulley Reservoir, near Rotherham.

On Monday June 25, it was realised that, with the reservoir full to bursting, the retaining wall, or dam, was beginning to fail in a number of places.

The emergency services quickly realised the danger and organised the evacuation of villages that would be in danger of severe flooding if the dam were to give way.

The 36-acre 136-years old Ulley Reservoir is up to 46ft deep. If the dam broke, millions of gallons of water would sweep across the M1 motorway, uprooting electricity pylons and engulfing the villages of Treeton, Catcliffe, Whiston and Canklow.

During the Monday night, more than 700 people were taken to temporary shelters away from the imminent danger.

A major exercise was mounted to pump huge amounts of water away from the reservoir, in a bid to lessen the stress on the dam wall. In addition to the local fire brigade, fire crews from Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Norfolk, Morseyside, Warwickshire and Hereford & Worcester made their way to Ulley, each equipped
We don’t think so

with special high-volume pumps. More than 60 firefighters used a total of 13 pumps, removing more than 90,000 litres of water every minute throughout the night and into Tuesday.

At the same time as these efforts were underway, a Hargreaves customer, civil engineers J M Bentley of Skipton, North Yorkshire, called the Esh Winning traffic control office with a very urgent request.

Bentley’s were charged with shoring up and strengthening the Ulley dam wall – and they needed almost immediate delivery of 420 tonnes of gabion stone. Could Hargreaves step in and help in an emergency? The answer, of course, was ‘yes we could’.

Traffic controllers Matthew Smith and Paul Harland set to and pulled together no fewer than 21 8-wheelers to rendezvous at Darrington Quarries for immediate loading of the stone material.

Loaded in double-quick time the trucks set off to Junction 36 of the M1 where they were met by police vehicles who escorted the Hargreaves convoy at high speed down the closed-to-normal-traffic motorway.

Once arrived at Ulley reservoir, the trucks were unloaded and the gabion stone was taken by shovels to the weakened parts of the dam. Because of the dangerous conditions the Hargreaves trucks had to be kept well away from the dam itself.

Work continued through Tuesday night on the dam, and on Wednesday we received an urgent call for another 1000 tonnes of stone – the equivalent of another 50 truck loads – plus a request for another 500 tonnes to be delivered to Ulley on the Thursday.

We spoke with Matthew Smith in the Esh Winning traffic office after the operation was underway. He told us: “We’re used to working to tight deadlines, but this was a really exceptional case. Everybody involved – the team here at Esh, the drivers, the people at Bentley’s and at Darrington Quarries – pulled together quite brilliantly, and we all hope that our collective efforts will have proved to be of real use in helping to stave off a potentially very serious situation at Ulley.”

Since we initially compiled this report, we have learned that the hard work undertaken to shore up the Ulley reservoir dam wall was successful – although as we went to press, many hundreds of local people were still unable to return to their homes in the surrounding villages.

Editor’s note

Local residents praise for the Hargreaves team at Immingham

These comments were posted on the website of the Grimsby Telegraph newspaper during the recent flooding in Immingham:

The lads from Hargreaves was (sic) the first on the scene on Manby Road followed by the fire brigade. What a great job you did lads thanks to you all. My home was one of the ones that did not flood but a lot of my friends and neighbours did. My best wishes go to you all.

Lynn Powles

Can I echo the other comments about people from the docks helping out with the flooding in Manby Road? I saw people from Hargreaves working alongside the fire brigade to pump water away. Many thanks to all of them!

Steve, Immingham

And this is an extract from an email sent by a Manby Road resident to the local council….

….It took the operations director of Hargreaves to recognise our plight where-upon he brought in his expertise, labour and equipment and through his leadership on site the flooding was brought under control. Even the fire service commented on the excellent job he had done…..I consider that if Nick Vikentiou had not become personally involved, we, the residents of Manby Road would still be seeing water on our road.

Malcolm Jones

Pumping operations get underway in Manby Road.

Helping the residents in Manby Road.

Local residents praise for the Hargreaves team at Immingham
In the last issue of Moving Mountains, we invited people working throughout the Group to 'volunteer' themselves for a new feature designed to describe a typical day in their working life.

To launch this feature, we're pleased to introduce you to Bill Greenfield, aka 'Zebedee', who works as a driver based at Darrington Quarry in Yorkshire.

Being the good investigative journalists that we are, we got in touch with Zebedee and quizzed him. This is what he told us.

Q: Where do you call home?
A: Ferrybridge Village, which is just off the A1 in West Yorkshire. The village is by the River Aire and it's got a fair bit of history. The name Ferrybridge came about because a bridge was built across the river as far back as 1198 AD. It was a toll bridge for hundreds of years, right up to about 1810.

Q: Family?
A: These days it's just me and my partner. The kids have all grown up and flown the nest.

Q: When did you join Hargreaves – and what job do you do?
A: I joined Hargreaves in February 2001 and I work as an HGV driver. I've been a driver for the best part of 32 years, and before joining Hargreaves I worked for about 5 years for a firm in Barnsley, driving an artic.

Q: Away from work, what are your interests and hobbies?
A: I love my football and support the mighty reds of Liverpool FC. I'm a music fan, too. The 1960's was THE best musical decade ever. I like most sixties groups and singers, but the all-conquering Beatles rule the roost. There never was a better group – and there never will be! These days I don't have much spare time for hobbies, especially after a hard working day.

We asked Zebedee to compile a simple diary of a typical working day. Here it is:

04.50am The alarm goes and it's out of bed and into the bathroom.
05.00am Down to the kitchen and while the kettle boils it's time to make my sandwiches for the day.
05.10am First cup of tea of the day and mustn't forget to fill my flask, too.
05.30am Into the car and stop off at the local shop for a newspaper before driving to work.
05.45am The traffic is light at this time of the morning so it only takes me about 15 minutes to get to Darrington Quarry. Once I park up, it's all on with my safety gear and then it's time to clock on. The day begins!
05.50am Pick up the keys to my Scania 8-wheeler and do all of the important safety checks on the vehicle and set up my tachograph. Fill up with diesel and we're 'ready to roll'.
06.25am It's a short drive to Kellingley colliery to get loaded for the first trip of the day. My loads are made up of coal by-products - shale and MRF (multi-rolled fines) mostly - and I spend the rest of the day going back and forth between Kellingley and Womersley tip. I usually get through about 20 loads a day, with regular breaks and lunch at about 1pm.
5.00pm It's back to Darrington where I park up, secure my vehicle, do my tachograph and sort out the day's paperwork before clocking off at 5.15pm.
5.30pm Home again. Time for a quick shower before sitting down to my tea. With the washing up out of the way, it's time to chill out in front of the TV for the evening.
10.00pm With early starts during the week, there are no late nights in this house. It's 10 o'clock so it's time for bed and some well deserved rest, ready for tomorrow.......

Ready to roll….Bill Greenfield in his cab (Picture courtesy of Bill Henderson)

Many thanks, Bill, for taking part in this feature. I suppose we should close with: "Time for bed" said Zebedee. Sorry - couldn't resist the Magic Roundabout reference! If YOU would like us to profile your typical working day, please contact the editor as soon as possible.
If there is one philosophy that should underpin every activity we undertake within the Hargreaves group, then it is the philosophy of safety.

Each of us has a duty, a responsibility, not only to stay safe at work but also to do our utmost to ensure our colleagues stay safe too.

It is with great pleasure, therefore, that we acknowledge the efforts of our colleagues at Norec, who recently achieved a ‘safety hat-trick’ when they were presented with their third consecutive British Safety Council International Safety Award — in this case for 2006.

The International Safety Awards scheme is designed to recognise and reward companies that have achieved success in reducing accidents in the workplace. Only organisations who have achieved accident incidence rates that are better than the industry average are eligible to apply.

External adjudicators undertake a detailed review of applicant companies’ safety policies, safety plans and the qualifications of health & safety officers. To stand any chance of winning, applicants must also demonstrate board-level commitment to health & safety — and they must be able to prove that they have made significant health & safety advances in the qualifying year.

The International Safety Awards are organised and administered by the British Safety Council, and they are endorsed and supported by the Health & Safety Executive. Indeed, HSE Chief Executive Geoffrey Podger said, in 2006: “We are pleased to see companies who demonstrate a firm commitment to health and safety being rewarded. Over 200 people each year die at work, the majority as a result of safety failings; failures that can be prevented by companies putting employee health and safety at the top of their agenda.”

Norec Managing Director Greg Kelley accepted the award on behalf of his colleagues from Ron Cox, a member of the British Safety Council Board of Trustees – and with the formalities over, the fun part of the evening could begin!

The BSC awards evening has developed a reputation in recent years for providing some cracking entertainment, and this year was no exception. A gala cabaret with a James Bond theme (shaken, not stirred, presumably?) plus a comedian and a dance group rounded off the evening’s festivities.

Well, no one said health and safety should be boring, now did they?

… and is on course for more success in 2007

We spoke recently to Norec’s Will Wilkinson about progress in the 2007 5-star safety audits. He told us: “We’re nearing completion of the 2007 safety audits, and with just the Longannet one to be completed (by the end of July), it looks like being another very good year for our established sites.

“Ratcliffe, Rugeley, Kingsnorth, Liverpool bulk terminal and Eggborough & Gale Common have all achieved a 5-star rating, a truly outstanding — and consistent — achievement by all concerned.

“2007 is the first year that Ironbridge has been included in the safety audit scheme, and I’m pleased to say that the audit there has turned in a highly-respectable score of 88.8%. This means the Ironbridge team have achieved an incredible 4-star rating at the first time of asking.

“I’d like to thank Cori Butcher, Dave Smith, Simon Farrar, Phil Upcraft and all the staff who have done so much to uplift the whole safety culture at Ironbridge — I’m sure that, next time around, it will be 5 stars!”

Quick thinking by HTS driver John Gustard recently helped the company recover repair costs for damage to one of our vehicles.

On June 29th, John was negotiating a roundabout when another vehicle, overtaking his truck, made contact and drove off without stopping. John spotted a nearby police patrol car and the police were able, with John’s information, to trace the driver, resulting in us pursuing a successful insurance claim against the other party involved.
Forget the Bernabeu – you should have been at Belle Vue!

With the new football season just underway (even though we’re still in the midst of summer – allegedly!), we thought it appropriate to cast our minds back to the close season and a classic cup encounter that took place in May at Belle Vue, home of Consett AFC.

Saturday May 12th saw the staging of this year’s Bill Hornsby Memorial Cup, an annual fixture played to raise funds for children’s charity the NSPCC.

The match – held in memory of Bill Hornsby who worked at Esh Winning as a fleet administrator between 1999 and 2005 – saw reigning champions the Office Staff take on the Drivers in a needle match that makes local derbies between Newcastle and Sunderland pale into insignificance!

This year’s ‘clash of the titans’ saw the Drivers out to avenge a 7-0 drubbing from last year’s event – and the Office Staff determined to keep hold of the cup and reinforce their reputation as real champions.

A sizeable crowd witnessed an entertaining, action-packed goal-fest with the Office Staff emerging victorious on the right end of a 7-4 result.

Company Secretary Steve MacQuarrie (rumoured to be Hargreaves’ answer to John Terry!) collected the trophy on behalf of the winning team, and Drivers’ goalkeeper Peter Richardson picked up the Man of the Match award.

More than £200 was raised on the day for the NSPCC.

Bill Hornsby’s grand-daughter Joanna (left) presents Peter Richardson with his Man of the Match award. Looking on are Bill’s widow, Kath, and son-in-law Paul.

Hargreaves featured on BBC TV’s ‘Countryfile’

The BBC’s flagship weekend countryside and environmental TV programme, Countryfile, recently ran a story about some work being done by Hargreaves client E.ON at Ironbridge Power Station in Shropshire.

The story concerned a landfill site close to the power station, ‘The Devil’s Dingle’ and described how, as it comes to the end of its useful life it is being handed over to the Shropshire Wildlife Trust to create a nature reserve.

The BBC crew filmed a Hargreaves wagon being loaded with pulverised fuel ash (PFA) at the dust silo at Ironbridge, and then followed it to the landfill site to show how the ash is carefully and sensitively handled as part of the last infill prior to landscaping.

Our wordsearch competition in the March issue of Moving Mountains attracted a large number of entries yet again – the lucky winner was: Howard Sanderson from Crosspool, Sheffield. Congratulations Howard!

This time around, we have another set of gift vouchers to give away. The first correct entry out of the hat will receive vouchers for 4 people to take in a favourite big screen blockbuster at an Odeon/UCI cinema of your choice.

Our theme for this competition is the weather. There are ten words to find, each of which is used to describe extreme weather events.

This is what you do: Simply find the 10 words cunningly hidden in the grid, add your name and address and send to: The Editor, Moving Mountains, Hargreaves, Esh Winning Industrial Estate Durham DH7 9PT. (We’ll accept originals or photocopies – just in case you don’t want to cut up your magazine – but ONLY ONE ENTRY PER PERSON PLEASE!) Entries must be received by Friday September 14 2007 – and the Editor’s decision will be final!

We will contact the lucky winner directly – and the result will be published in the next issue of Moving Mountains. Good luck!