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Fifth-generation appointment at Withers

Foundation and piling specialist, the Withers Group, has appointed Jim Withers as a Contract Surveyor. Nephew of Managing Director, Rob Withers, Jim is the fifth generation to work in the family business.

Jim, 27, joins the Croydon-based firm from Redwing Construction, where he was a Quantity Surveyor and prior to this, was a Quantity Surveyor with Mowlem, now Carillion. He has a degree in Design and Business Management and comments: "I'm delighted to join Withers and am proud to be the first of the next generation to do so."

Withers started in 1810 by Rob's great-grandfather John who ran a general building repair business using a hand-cart. When John's youngest son, Douglas, took over, he extended the services into painting and decorating.

Next to pick up the mantle were three brothers, John, Douglas and Roland. They recognised the benefits of working on a contract basis and provided general repair and maintenance services for local councils, Housing Associations, churches and architects.

When building societies insisted on having subsidence as an insured peril in 1974, the Withers-brothers moved into underpinning, working alongside surveyors and engineers. At this time, Rob's older brother and sister, Richard and Anne joined the firm.

Rob joined as a Site Supervisor in 1980 and by 1985, the Company stopped general building work to concentrate on foundation and subsidence repair.

Succession-planning often languishes at the bottom of a firm's priority list – but not at Withers. With around 100 staff, the next generation is being groomed to take over.

Rob concludes: "It's important for a business to have a succession plan and Jim's appointment means we can set ours in motion over the next 10 years or so. There are five other children in this fifth generation who, if an opportunity arises and they have the experience and inclination, are most welcome to join."

Ends

Notes to Editors

Croydon-based Withers PLC is a fourth-generation family business and one of the UK's leading foundation, piling and subsidence specialists. Its subsidence repair network - Withersnet - appears on the DTI website as an example of best practice in supply chain management and was highly commended in the Technology category of the 2005 British Insurance Awards.

Enquiries

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