

Securing the Future.

It is indisputable that the total body of knowledge required to service all aspects of solids and bulk handling and processing is huge - and growing constantly. Every industry that uses granular or powdered material is working hard to improve quality and efficiency to keep one step ahead of the market and secure its own future. Of course, opportunities for manufacturers and suppliers in our industries arise in all sizes, great and small.

One large project just through the planning permission stage is for a potash mine for Sirius Minerals to be sited in North Yorkshire. Once established this will become a significant player in the production of fertilisers worldwide. Planned in two phases over time, the first phase will result in 6.5 mtpa production of polyhalite from a deep mine with material conveyed via a 23 mile service tunnel from the site near Whitby to Teesside. Spoil will be used to construct a 13 m high shielding bund to minimise environmental impact. Final production is said to be 13 mtpa with a predicted lifespan of 100 years. The polyhalide seam is believed to be the largest in the world. As a fertiliser constituent, polyhalide benefits from incorporating potassium, sulphur, calcium and magnesium in its structure.

About 1000 people will be employed on the project, with an estimated investment value of £1.7 bn. There will clearly be a need for many specially skilled and trained staff, both in mining and material handling disciplines, as the project will command cutting edge knowledge and techniques. It illustrates the importance of the requirement for knowledge transfer and training for the industries we serve. SHAPA have recognised this for many years and the need to seek out and provide cogent information relating to technical, commercial and marketing subjects is a key driver for the Association and its member companies.

The recent members' General Meeting featured two speakers from the Arkwright Scholarship Trust with a talk entitled "Developing your pipeline of future technical leaders from school age". A vital starting point indeed. SHAPA will present a further "Engineering the Future" workshop in October. This regular popular event is aimed squarely at our next technical and commercial leaders, to maintain good succession. These events inform and entertain, fostering cooperation as well as healthy competition. Additionally, the annual SHAPA Digital Marketing continues to update members in this increasingly important evolving aspect of marketing.

The need for solids handling and processing knowledge accelerates as technology advances - new materials, higher production rates, novel products all add up to a vibrant way of life for all. Discover how SHAPA can help your future success as a member or perhaps by making use of the wide range of expertise available from member companies by visiting www.shapa.co.uk or email info@shapa.co.uk.