

Crafting COMMUNITIES

Creating better neighbourhoods for future generations. That's what Keepmoat strives to achieve as a residential regeneration and development solutions provider in the UK.

Images by Paul Michael Hughes

Keepmoat has a strong and extensive track record of more than 80 years in the UK housing industry. The business is a national market leader in sustainable community regeneration and housing, as well as planned and responsive repairs, and has already touched the lives of millions of people across the country. Keepmoat doesn't just construct buildings—it creates communities and great places to live, work, and play.

CEO Dave Sheridan has been leading Keepmoat on the path to success since October 2012. He has a background in social housing, working as regional managing director of Kier Group from 2002–08 and later as CEO of Apollo Property Service Group for almost three and a half years. Both roles honed his managerial and directorial skills, preparing him well for his current position. “Apollo Property Service Group predominantly worked in social housing refurbishment contracts in the south of England,” Dave explains. “My brief was to take that on a national platform and bring in big company experience, which we successfully did. In 2011, we started merger talks

with Keepmoat because Keepmoat did exactly what Apollo did but in the northern part of the country.” Keepmoat—which consists of a group of companies: Bramall Construction, Frank Haslam Milan, Milnerbuild and Keepmoat Homes—and Apollo subsequently merged in 2012 and Dave was appointed into the role of chief operating officer for the northern side of the newly combined business. Roughly six months later, he became CEO of the whole group and oversaw the integration of the two companies. Keepmoat was acquired by TDR Capital and Sun Capital in September 2014, which ensured it was in a satisfactory position to realise its long-term ambitions and great potential.

Keepmoat's origins date back to the early 1930s when Bramall and Ogden, now Bramall Construction, was founded to install ‘privy middens’, or outside toilets, for Wath Urban District Council. Milnerbuild was established six years later, followed by Apollo Property Services. In 1983, Frank Haslam Milan was bought and Keepmoat Plc was formed as the holding company. “Keepmoat is very much a legacy; it has a long

history and it is made up of family businesses,” Dave says.

“The biggest challenge as CEO of the combined group has been creating the right culture and driving the business forward in the way that is the best-fit vision for us. We come from a background of being, essentially, five individual businesses; we needed to bring it into one and create a real ‘can do’ mentality in the organisation. The merge between Keepmoat and Apollo had disrupted people; we've brought the group back together and rebuilt confidence in the business. Now we are taking it forward.”

Another significant challenge has been an internal one, which Dave says revolves around government funding changes. These have included issues such as equal-growth funds and investment communities. “We have had to be constantly tracking where the funding comes from to drive the business growth at Keepmoat.”

Keepmoat covers a wide range of services, operating in five key areas: new-build homes, community regeneration, property services, sustainability, and retirement solutions. It has more >



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than 3,000 dedicated staff working out of its 22 regional offices and is based in Doncaster, UK.

Dave says the business encourages a "collegiate-type mentality" so that everyone is aligned on their values and operates as "one identity". "We've introduced a variety of training initiatives to bring people together," he says. "It's very much about making sure that the values and ethos we show to our clients is what we show to our staff as well." Keepmoat wants its staff to enjoy coming to work each day, to feel respected and to be equipped with the tools they need to be able to reach their full potential.

The company has developed strong relationships and working partnerships with its clients over its lifespan. It prides itself on offering a whole solution with a mission to be the national, leading service provider and house builder in the UK. To achieve this, it ensures it is consistently delivering excellent products and services which add value to its customers, supply chain, and people.

Approximately 80 per cent of the work Keepmoat delivers is subcontracted on the ground so it is vital that these relationships are nurtured. "We very much invite them into the business," Dave explains. "We've got healthy bonds where we engage and stick with the supply chain. We've got some very key significant individual suppliers to the business where we do engage at a senior level—I meet up with their chief executives and other C-level executives and talk about what the key issues are. Having a trust around payment terms is key, but it's not just about payment and



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- Dave Sheridan

terms. It's also about the relationships we build and ensuring they are at the right levels all through the business. What we try to do is we share our business plans with our suppliers, and engage them in what work we have coming through in all the pipelines so we can keep moving forward and remain competitive in the market."

A core value of the brand is to ensure its practices are sustainable and socially responsible. Keepmoat has had a fully integrated environmental management system since 2007 and has set a target of achieving a 5 per cent year-on-year reduction of its carbon footprint. By 2020, it aims to meet its zero non-hazardous waste to landfill target and it is an active participant in the UKCG Environment Group. Furthermore, it is dedicated to ensuring it looks after the communities it works in, helping them to grow and thrive. It works closely with Business in the Community to have a positive impact on society.

"Housing is a key issue in the UK. Also decent-quality housing is a key issue. So it's okay to create these homes, but you've got to

maintain them, and people need a place to live. There's more people than homes in the UK at the moment and it's important to maintain that quality as well. Housing is the key part of infrastructure in any country and there needs to be places for people to live in order for good economic growth. It's very much part of the jigsaw which drives the growth in every economy. We've certainly seen that where we've worked in some of the most challenging parts of the UK; when we actually come in, invest and regenerate that area the quality of life increases for the people living in those geographies."

Looking to the future, Keepmoat has exciting growth plans already in the works. "We're looking to take our house-building business to a national level or platform," Dave states. "We're currently very strong in four or five regions so we might be strong in six or seven in the years to come. We will look at consolidating and growing the construction business to increase our EBITA profits in line with that internal growth. It's an exciting time for Keepmoat and the general housing market in the UK." •