

Southall school children in the driving seat when it comes to road safety

Ahead of National Road Safety Week, over 300 local school children enjoyed a day of interactive workshops and classes to teach them about staying safe as cyclists and pedestrians. The team from Southall Waterside, including representatives from Berkeley and building materials supplier CEMEX, visited three primary schools in Southall in their third annual road safety campaign. The events also marked the beginning of Berkeley's annual road safety banner competition in which pupils design a series of posters to raise awareness about staying safe on the road.

Each day was geared towards all year groups, starting with a whole school assembly before switching to hands-on practical learning. The team provided key tips to stay safe, including how to cross a road, wearing high visibility clothing and always wearing a helmet when cycling. Pupils were thrilled to see a CEMEX HGV lorry on display which gave them a chance to run through real life scenarios like being aware of blind spots, indicating and reversing.

Encouraging sustainable journeys like walking and cycling is a priority for the council and Berkeley, and it is important that children know how to travel around safely. CEMEX, which operates a ready-mixed concrete batching plant on site at Southall Waterside to avoid 2,000 HGV movements every year, provided a selection of goodies to round off the day. The kids were encouraged to put their safety knowledge into action with reflective bracelets, reusable water bottles and an educational booklet to take home.

Michael Hall, Deputy Headteacher at North Primary School, said: *"Having the HGV for the day was a great way to engage our pupils and ensure that they understand the importance of staying safe on the roads. The assembly and workshops were engaging and personal to our school and community. By helping our students be responsible pedestrians and cyclists, we also hope to encourage them to lead active and healthy lives."*

Damian Leydon, Operations Director at Berkeley West Thames, said: *"Road safety is a crucial part of enabling children to get the most out of the local area. Building on their new knowledge, we hope that all the students feel inspired to try their hand at designing a road safety banner so that we can educate the whole community."*

Nigel Bateman, CEMEX's Senior Operations Manager for London, said: *"We welcome the opportunity to talk to local schoolchildren about staying safe when walking alongside the capital's busy roads. For many children, this is the first time they have been so close to an HGV, and it is an invaluable experience for them – being aware of the vehicle's blindspots and manoeuvres could prevent a serious accident in future."*

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For further editorial information please contact:

Francesca McCann / Catherine Grindley

Camargue

+44 (0) 20 7636 7366 / berkeley@camargue.uk

Notes to editors

Southall Waterside

Southall Waterside, Berkeley's exciting new development in West London is one of the capital's most ambitious regeneration projects. The 3,750-home scheme will bring a redundant gasworks site back into use for the whole community to benefit from. Southall Waterside is about more than just homes. It will be a thriving new neighbourhood on the Grand Union Canal – with a buzzing commercial district, two new parks and landscaped green spaces, and open up access to the adjacent 90-acre Minet Country Park for all to enjoy.

The first 304 homes to be delivered at Southall Waterside are all affordable and are being offered to existing Ealing residents under either affordable rent or shared ownership.

Every home at Southall Waterside will be within a five-minute cycle of a station, and the arrival of Crossrail will provide a direct service to Bond Street in 17 minutes and Canary Wharf in 30 minutes. A network of safe cycle paths and walkways will improve connections to the surrounding area and open up access to a 1km waterside trail along the Grand Union Canal.