



High-definition surveying is a non-intrusive means of rapidly collecting detailed and accurate "as-built" data.

Based on cutting-edge technology, the high-definition survey uses a narrow laser beam to "sweep" a target object, so that hundreds of thousands of closely spaced measurements can be taken in a matter of minutes.

When these scanned measurements are displayed on a computer, a dense representation of the target results can be viewed and navigated much like a 3D model.

The images are so detailed that they can illustrate the extent of grout and stone erosion on a building facade or be used to monitor the movement of structures over a period of time. Senior surveyor, Ewan Haswell told Executive: "We are one of a handful of companies in Scotland and the only one in the Highlands that uses this technology.

"It is cutting edge technology. It is much quicker than traditional methods, it provides far more accurate measurements, it can be used remotely and in the long-run, we believe it will produce cost savings.

"It can be difficult getting architects and engineers to move away from traditional 2-D drawings but this is the future and In 1989 the business invested in electronic data collection and a computer-based survey system.

Over 7,500 surveys of various sizes have been carried out during that time and a library of survey data has been maintained which is available to the original client, either for replacement or update.

The business provides a range of surveying and associated services including topographic surveys, boundary surveys, long and cross sections, volumetric calculations, building elevations and floor plans, a setting out service and structural monitoring. The team of five works for a wide range clients including private and public sector operators, utilities companies such as Scottish Water, local architects and solicitors for Land Registry related work.

Projects can range from surveys of single dwelling plots to large-scale housing developments and public works including new pipelines and water treatment works.

Although based in Dingwall the company has clients throughout the country as well as locally.

Recent projects have included the new Castle Stuart Golf Links. The company was involved with the course from conception to completion - from the initial site survey to setting out and calculating earthworks volumes through to "as-built" drainage and road surveys. The golf course opened earlier this year. Another project was the survey for the feasibility study of the Beechwood site for the proposed new campus for the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI).

Added Mr Haswell: "Our reputation for quality is built on

Masters of all they Survey

eventually everybody will be using it."

Examples of the images generated by laser survey can be found through the weblink www.youtube.com/palshds
The past year has been a busy period for the company.
As well as investing in new technology, the company has launched a new website where clients can find out more about the services available and examples of works carried out while earlier this year Mr Haswell secured a place on a visit to the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) organised by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

He spent a week at the renowned facility with a team involved in architecture research.

PALS has developed significantly since it was established in 1974 by retired partner, Gerald Thornton and Mr Haswell's father, Malcolm, who remains a company director today. Initially the firm was set up to meet the North Sea oil industry's growing demand for professional surveying, setting out and monitoring services.

New infrastructure for the building of oil platforms, access to these sites and housing for the influx of workers to the area provided initial work and the dimensional control of the structures for the North Sea followed

Since then, the client base has increased dramatically and taken the company into new survey fields.

providing a confidential service to our clients with a rapid response.

"We deliver accurate survey information in the format they require, on time and at a competitive price."



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