



Ashley Nicholls, B.Eng (Hons)
Drilling Division Manager

Ashley graduated from the University of Exeter's Camborne School of Mines in 1999, having completed an honours degree in Mining Engineering and minerals processing. During the course of his studies he completed a three month placement with De Beers Consolidated mines working on 4d blast design and block cave undercutting, and a final year dissertation in the application of electromagnetic survey techniques in the location of abandoned mine workings. After leaving university Ashley worked as a quarryman and later as a junior process development engineer before heading overseas in late 2000, to teach English in Japan.

Returning to the UK in 2003, and determined to move into a career in environmental remediation, Ashley worked as a site investigation drilling engineer at GRL, operating and maintaining rotary drilling equipment as well as running most conventional sampling techniques and basic geotechnical field tests. Having established a solid base in fieldwork, he took a civil engineering contract as a junior section engineer on a 3.5km rail tunnel relining project in Kent, supervising and setting out works, and ensuring consistency with client requirements. At the end of his contract, Ashley took a position as remediation engineer with Arcadis, where he worked with a variety of remedial processes at all stages from SI and well installation through to system pilot testing and reporting.

He joined Ecologia in October 2005, as an environmental engineer, performing site supervision and report writing duties prior to the commissioning of the company's first rotary rig in February 2006. Initially working with the rig as driller and supervisor, he worked up to the role of Drilling Operations Manager in December 2007, maintaining a very hands on approach to the work until March 2008, when he left Ecologia to work closer to his beloved homeland of Cornwall, joining Structural Soils in Bristol as Drilling Manager.

After working for Structural Soils in this capacity for 2 years, primarily in geotechnical site investigation and hard rock drilling in a broad variety of environments, Ashley chose to start the new decade by returning to the fold as Ecologia's Drilling Division manager, where he is responsible for the running and development of all of Ecologia's drilling activities (and generally indulges his love of all things drilling).

Ashley is qualified as an NVQ Land Drilling Lead driller and is actively involved in the British Drilling Association.