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...with more to come!!

INTRODUCTION BY HAE EHA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PAUL GAZE

A view from on high



IT'S hard to believe that last time I was penning my 'Interface' intro we were approaching the Christmas break and preparing to enter a new year. We're now two months into 2026 and looking forward to seeing what it offers those of us in the hire industry.

First up, I'm delighted to announce our new board, featuring four new members and a new structure. Each member will be given a specific focus to lead on, such as the industry supply chain and independent hirers.

The restructure gives the association a sharper direction and deeper member understanding, enabling faster progress on priorities that are most important to members. These new arrangements unite a wider spectrum of member expertise for the collective benefit of the hire sector.

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to: JCB Major Account Manager

Paul Mabey, Huws Gray Plant & Tool Hire's Regional Manager David Fox, Cleveland Group's Chief Executive Andrew Thompson, and GR8 Tool Hire Managing Director Josh Thompson. These four have joined existing board members and we're looking forward to sharing more details with our members in the coming months about how the board is working towards key goals for HAE EHA members.

I recently attended the Trade Association Forum Parliamentary Reception alongside Public Affairs Director Mark Bradshaw. It was great to see so many trade associations in the room and the convening power trade associations have to promote cooperation, cross-sector sharing and the overall contribution trade associations like HAE EHA make on behalf of our members.

These sentiments were echoed by Trade Minister, Sir Chris Bryant, who

paid tribute to the informed, collective voice trade associations such as ours provide to the government and we hope we'll get to see ministers actively engaging with us in 2026 to bring about better policy outcomes.

HAE EHA will be heading to Hull next month to attend an inaugural gala dinner hosted by Stallard Kane Associates (SKA), provider of HAE EHA Risk Services. SKA recently joined a Business Beats Cancer board with the aim of raising £50k for Cancer Research UK and the event is aimed at boosting those fund-raising efforts.

We're proud to be attending the event as a Digital Sponsor and I'd urge HAE EHA members to participate in this worthy event. It takes place at the Doubletree by Hilton in Hull on March 26th.

At the time of drafting this article, HAE EHA's staff were preparing to attend the Executive Hire Show in Coventry. We include a full summary of the show in this issue and look forward to sharing some of the conversations we had with members and colleagues, and the products/service offerings we saw first-hand, in the next issue of 'Interface On Hire'.

With EHS and the SKA gala dinner under our belts, the next key event we'll be gearing up for is, of course, the HAE EHA Hire Awards of Excellence, in April. With the deadline for award entries having just passed, the shortlist is due to be announced in March and we're looking forward to celebrating with all our members and suppliers when the ultimate winners are announced at the Gala Dinner on April 18th at Grosvenor House, London. <<



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February / March 2026

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR ...

ENTERING a new year is always a 'settling in' time where everyone has to remind themselves not to write '2025' on correspondence/documents, and train their brain to get back into full work mode after taking time out for holidays and family time.

With different people being 'out of office' at different times over the festive break, it's also that time for catching up with people and focusing on new collaborations for your hire businesses.

The new board that was recently announced for HAE EHA will be putting a key focus on these kind of collaborations, with each member taking on specific responsibilities for the benefit of all in hire. We bring full details of these in this issue, along with some interesting updates from a number of our members, and some general topical news updates that will be of interest to all those in the sector.

Training is a strong focal point in this issue. Learning and Development Officer Nikki Wyllie not only talks about sector-specific approach to skills attainment, but also shares her own learning journey and the support she received along the way.

We also highlight the training achievements of HAE EHA's own Marketing Officer, Stuart Tyrrell, showing how the association continuously helps its own staff hone their skills and ensure they're equipped to best serve the organisation's members.

The third training highlight in this issue is our focus feature on page 32 in which we detail a new partnership which means HAE EHA members can tap into specialised training that will keep loading and securing operations safely on track.

Finally, check out our Executive Hire Show round-up and discover why, where pipes in process temperature control are concerned, size really does matter, in our focus feature on page 22.

Stephanie Cornwall
Editor

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Rental firm's £40K grant supports prison tree scheme

SUNBELT Rentals UK and Ireland has awarded a £40,000 grant to Forests With Impact, an industry-led social enterprise.

This funding will increase capacity and support the creation of a new role for a prison leaver in the UK's only prison-based commercial tree nursery programme. The investment supports UK climate and biodiversity goals by increasing the supply of UK-grown trees.

Sunbelt Rentals has supported Forests With Impact since 2020, helping it grow from an early concept into a national model, now supported by more than 40 cross-sector partners.

The funding has enabled Forests With Impact to appoint a Tree Nursery Development Manager apprentice to support the national programme, increase the number of seed trays by 50% and cover associated salary costs. In addition, Sunbelt Rentals has donated £14,000 from its Apprenticeship Levy to fund formal horticultural training through Myerscough College, a national horticultural training provider and partner of Forests With Impact. This increased capacity supports long-term sustainability and enables surplus revenue to be reinvested into training and national expansion.

As part of the programme, the apprentice will:

- Help scale sapling production at HMP Haverigg from 250,000 to 500,000 trees per year
- Oversee the development of new commercial tree nurseries including the launch of HMP Fosse Way in Leicester and a third site in Norfolk.
- Mentor prison growing teams, supporting high standards of plant health, sustainability and biosecurity
- The role also supports prisoners and prison leavers to gain paid experience, qualifications and clear routes into future employment

Sarah MacGregor, Forests With Impact Programme Lead and Head of Social Sustainability at Sunbelt Rentals, said: "This is rehabilitation in action. By investing in people with live experience and providing clear pathways into meaningful careers, we are strengthening the programme and increasing its capacity to grow trees and expand into more prisons across the UK. As a founding partner, we have seen that sustained partnership is what enables the programme to scale and deliver lasting value for people, communities and the environment."

Director of Forests With Impact, Emma Johnson, said Sunbelt's early and ongoing support had been a catalyst for growth and pivotal in enabling the scheme to develop from laying its first commercial tree nursery at HMP Haverigg to national expansion. With further prison sites already expressing interest, the programme continues to scale as a sustainable national model, she added.

Improved RM Web for on-the-go operations

MCS Rental Software has launched an improved version of its web-based rental management system, RM Web, which provides rental companies access to its software on-the-go.

RM Web is designed for a mobile and remote workforce. It is compatible with all major modern browsers, and optimised for use on mobile devices. Users can log in quickly and securely without connecting to internal networks, making it easier to manage rentals, track equipment, and monitor performance in real-time.

Chief Sales Officer Nick Thomson said: "We've focused on making it as simple as possible for rental businesses to stay connected, secure, and informed - no matter where their teams are based."

The new enhanced RM Web features a clean design and simplified setup to reduce technical barriers, allowing teams to focus on running their business rather than managing technology.

All connections are encrypted to keep company and customer information safe and information updates instantly, ensuring everyone is always working with the most current data.

It can quickly generate detailed web-based reports, using the same flexible options as the desktop system, MCS rm.

"The improvements to RM Web reflect the steps we're taking to future-proof our software. We continue to listen to our users and invest heavily in web-based solutions that streamline rental operations while meeting the highest expectations for security and performance," said Nick.



Photoshoot at former church

FURNITURE hire company Yahire recently carried out a photoshoot at a Grade 1 listed building on Regents Park, creating three different looks to demonstrate how its furniture ranges can transform a space.

The venue, One Marylebone, is a former church built in 1826 by Sir John Soane and restored by global event management agency One Events, which has been offering the venue for corporate launches, weddings, exhibitions and gala dinners since 2008.

Yahire was added to its official supplier line-up in July last year and planners can book Yahire furniture with the venue’s stamp of approval.

New product guide

CHESTERFIELD-based Fusion Utilities has launched a new product guide.

The guide has been created to support utility projects with the latest products, technical insights, and solutions.

Founded in 1971 as a small tooling manufacturer, Fusion Utilities is now a nationwide multi-utility supply chain partner providing essential water, gas, power, fibre, hire and repair products and solutions.

Podium and scaffold delivery

EURO Towers recently delivered a new stock of its UK-manufactured podiums and scaffold towers to Vertikal, a Lincolnshire tool and equipment hire company, for its tool hire depot.

The delivery from the Northampton manufacturer includes Euro Towers’ podiums, which Vertikal is offering for hire in the Scunthorpe, Grimsby, Hull, and Doncaster areas.

Vertikal UK (Tool & Plant Hire) is based in Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, where it offers mobile elevating work platforms (MEWP), access platform, telehandler, forklift, digger, and dumper hire, alongside a training centre for PASMA courses.



Collaboration to modernise rental logistics

A CONSTRUCTION transport intelligence platform and business management software firm have joined forces to modernise rental industry logistics.

Alrik and Hyrma’s collaboration will enable all Hyrma users to integrate with Alrik’s AI-powered transport platform to streamline delivery operations, reduce empty runs, and receive automated cost and emissions data for every transport, reducing the number of trucks on the road.

The integration will enable rental companies to run delivery operations with greater precision and flexibility, cutting transport costs by up to 30%, according to the two companies. Automated emissions data will be available on every delivery and project.

Alrik Chief Product Officer Axel Enblad said: “This partnership connects the dots between rental operations and construction logistics. By connecting Hyrma with Alrik’s platform, users can improve efficiency, lower emissions, and future-proof their delivery operations without adding admin.”

Infobric Equipment & Assets CEO & Head of Business, Simon Fogbring, said: “By integrating Alrik’s transport intelligence with Hyrma, our customers gain immediate transparency and smarter logistics without changing how they work, which strengthens our customers profitability and sustainability efforts.”

Hyrma’s parent company, Infobric, has more than 20 years of experience providing digital tools for construction sites across the Nordics, while Alrik is a transport intelligence platform built for the construction industry. Founded in 2022, Alrik helps companies optimise deliveries, track emissions automatically, and operate more efficiently by connecting suppliers, couriers, drivers, and construction sites in one unified system.

YardLink launches Projects

LONDON-based technology company YardLink recently launched Projects, which gives construction teams the facility to control their procurement budget and spend for individual projects.

YardLink is a B2B marketplace and digital procurement platform for the construction industry, connecting construction businesses with local suppliers for equipment rental (plant, tools, machinery), materials (aggregates, concrete), and services (waste disposal, drivers) through a single online dashboard.

Described as ‘a major step forward in how construction teams plan, track and control their procurement spend’, the Projects platform gives customers a single workspace where they can control every site. They can see committed and upcoming costs, timelines, movements and category-level spend in one place.



Surface preparation group makes solution search easier

THE Preparation Group, an HAE EHA supplier member which specialises in surface preparation, removal and finishing solutions, has launched a new website that makes it easier for hire companies to manage their projects.

The Lincoln-based company, which has been operating for 30 years, says the new website is more user-friendly, making it easier to find the right solution for from its range of services which include equipment sales and hire, contracting services, servicing, repairs and maintenance, training and technical support.

Managing Director Tracey Glew said: "Our new website reflects both our heritage and our commitment to innovation, sustainable products and cost-saving solutions. It gives our customers access to an infinite range of services."

The Preparation Group specialises in surface preparation, removal and finishing to a wide range of business sectors, end-users, facilities managers, architects and contractors.

Fleet generators boost

SMART Plant and Tool Hire Limited has added more generators to the fleet in response to high demand.

Darker days and wetter sites have led to customers' power requirements climbing fast, according to the Liverpool company, with demand also increasing for heaters and floodlights.

The company opened in August 2024 and recently paid tribute to all those who had supported it in its first year.

40-year service celebrated

THE Hireman recently celebrated its 40th anniversary, having first formed in 1985 in Bermondsey in southeast London.

The independent family business has been providing tool hire and construction equipment services to professional contractors working in London, the Home Counties and beyond ever since, having grown and expanded its offering and coverage over the years.

After taking a hit during the recession years in the early 1990s, the family opened a new depot in 1997 at Park Royal and another at Silvertown in 2001, which closed three years later.

In 2007, the company moved to a new HQ at Old Kent Road, going on to operate out of Leytonstone, Dartford and Croydon by 2010, with its East London depot opening in 2012. It has gone on to open a PASMA-approved training centre, a bigger depot in Wembley in 2015, a South depot in 2018 and a city depot in 2020. The same year that the covid crisis hit Britain, it rose to the occasion, supplying and sourcing for the NHS.

Its Kent and West depots opened in 2024. Its MD Neil Graham first joined the company in 2000 as a part-time hire controller, subsequently serving as a buyer, depot manager, business development manager, and operations manager/director, before taking on the MD's role in 2011.

He paid tribute to the company's staff in a recent LinkedIn post, saying: "It's a real honour to lead this great family business. I'm incredibly proud of our 40-year story, from humble beginnings in 1985 to where we are today, and excited about everything the future holds. When you have a team of committed and talented people like we do at The Hireman anything is possible."



London tool hire and construction equipment service provider The Hireman recently celebrated its 40-year anniversary. Photo: Isuzu

Five excavators added to Eastleigh line-up

RENTOOL Ltd has added three new Kubota UK KX085-5 excavators to its line-up.

The latest additions means the Eastleigh company now has more than 150 excavators, 130 site dumpers, telescopic handlers, compaction equipment, and a range of power tools, with most of the fleet's mini and midi excavators being supplied by Reading-based Kubota dealer Lister Wilder Ltd.

Rentool is looking to expand further, according to Director Ben Collings.

Last year the family-run plant and tool hire company invested more than £1m across its entire fleet.

The KX085-5 is Kubota's largest compact excavator and is powered by a 46.5kW (63.2hp) Stage V diesel engine.



Stand Down support

A TEAM from Reactive Hire Ltd recently supported Anglian Water's @one Alliance Safety Stand Down Day.

The West Midlands company's Managing Director John McClure, Sales Director Richard Holmes and Edward Lindley from SolGen, showcased how sustainable welfare and off-grid power can support safer, cleaner and more efficient site setups across the Anglian Water network.

Anglian Water's @one Alliance delivers projects across the water and water recycling network. Its partners include Anglian Water Asset Delivery, Balfour Beatty, Barhale, Binnies, Mott MacDonald Bentley (MMB), SWECO, SKANSKA and MWH Treatment.

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300 lighting tower purchase

MORE than 300 Trime lighting towers have been purchased by independent hire company GAP Hire Solutions.

Family-owned GAP currently has more than 2,000 Trime lighting sets available to hire for a variety of applications throughout the UK, including large tier 1 contractors, HS2, and Sizewell, etc.

Each year, GAP reviews and benchmarks its tower light requirements, and has selected Trime as its principal supplier.

Commenting on the latest order, GAP's Head of Asset Management and Supply Chain, David Munro, said: "Our customers love Trime lighting towers, and combined with Trime's excellent service and account management, we look forward to continuing the relationship."

He said the Trime X-ECO HYBRID and the X-ECO LED lighting sets are particularly popular with GAP clients. The X-ECO HYBRID is an LED lighting tower powered by a combination of a lithium battery and a small diesel engine that can be fully recharged in less than 3.5 hours, while the Trime X-ECO LED features 6 no. 160W, 48V multi-directionally adjustable LED lights floodlights, with safe 48V power between the generator and the lights.

Established in 1969 by Gordon Anderson, GAP Hire Solutions has specialist divisions and almost 200 locations across the country, supplying a wide range of equipment from diggers and dumpers to portable toilets and tankers.

Trime UK recently moved into a purpose-built 40,000 sq ft facility based at the Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire.



Market trends report

ROUSE Services LLC has published its Market Trends Report with details on how construction equipment and transportation assets performed in the third quarter of 2025.

Blending real-time Ritchie Bros auction results with Rouse retail data, the report breaks down pricing shifts, volume movement, and what's influencing values across the industry's key categories.

Any HAE EHA members budgeting for next year, tracking fleet performance, or planning for 2026, can view the full report at <https://ow.ly/ZU3e50Xx3Q7>

Rouse specialises in providing construction equipment market intelligence, advice on used equipment sales support, and rental metrics benchmarking for customers throughout the UK, United States and Canada.

Supermarket build supplier

EQUIPMENT supplied by Lancashire member Readyplant Ltd is currently being used on construction of a new supermarket in Warrington. Work began in January.

Platforms company supports Antarctic research build

NATIONWIDE Platforms has supported BAM Nuttall in the construction of the new discovery building at Rothera Research Station on Adelaide Island in Antarctica, a project which is part of BAM Nuttall's long-term programme to modernise polar research infrastructure at the research station.

Delivering construction projects in Antarctica involves multiple intersecting challenges: Logistical, environmental, and operational. All equipment had to meet strict sustainability standards while functioning in one of the most remote and climatically hostile locations on Earth.

Externally, the site faces extreme cold, high winds, and rapid weather changes, with machinery exposed to snowfall, intense UV radiation, and sub-zero battery-draining temperatures. Internally, the discovery building posed a contrasting challenge: narrow corridors, confined working zones,

and sensitive early-stage infrastructure required machines with zero emissions, low noise, and compact dimensions.

Nationwide Platforms worked closely with BAM Nuttall to identify and deliver four Dingli JCPT0807PA all-electric, oil-free compact scissor lifts designed to operate safely within the site's extreme environmental conditions and sensitive ecological setting.

The JCPT0807PA was selected for its minimal environmental footprint and ability to navigate the tight spaces within the Discovery Building. Its compact frame allowed it to move freely along internal corridors, operate in pre-clad rooms, and support ceiling, partition, and mechanical/electrical installation works during mid-to-late construction phases.

The machines were delivered in standard ISO containers and commissioned with a spares package to enable on-site maintenance without

additional imports. Their oil-free systems eliminated risk of environmental spills, while their electrical configuration aligned with Rothera's low-emission operational targets.

To address cold-induced battery drop-off, teams kept machines on charge at all times when not in use. Despite shortened battery life in freezing conditions, this method allowed for continuous daily use. With limited on-site power capacity, the low energy draw of these units also reduced strain on diesel generators.



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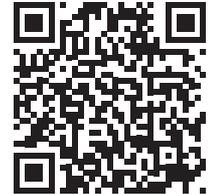


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'A broader range of expertise'

Four new board members will help to shape the future of HAE EHA, as they and existing members take on designated focus areas.



Andrew Thompson



David Fox



Josh Thompson



Paul Mabey

A BROADER range of expertise will be behind the leadership of HAE EHA following the appointment of its new board, members have been told.

The new board of directors was announced following its Extraordinary General Meeting last month (January) and each will have specific focus points to drive forward the organisation, according to HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze.

Announcing the formation of a new Independent Hirers Group, of which details are shortly expected to be released, Paul said the new governance arrangements will create additional strategic focus for the association and allow a wider range of working groups and committees to address some of the challenges faced by members within the sector.

"Each member will be given a specific focus to lead on, such as the industry supply chain and independent hirers. We look forward to sharing more details with our members in the coming months," he said.

The new board members include Paul Mabey (Major Account Manager for global accounts at JCB), David Fox (Regional Manager at Huws Gray Plant & Tool Hire), Andrew Thompson (CEO of Cleveland Group), and Josh Thompson (MD at GR8 Tool Hire).

The new members join previously-elected board members Phil Leahy (Chair of HAE EHA and Executive

Director of Sunbelt Rentals UK), Sally Wray (Association Vice-chair of HAE EHA and owner of GoHire Group), David Probert (Business Development Director at Seddons Plant & Engineers), and Stuart Slaughter (co-founder and MD of Plato Catering Hire).

HAE EHA Chair, Phil Leahy, said: "We are bringing together a broader range of expertise for the benefit of the entire hire sector."

Phil added: "The new board of directors provides the association with enhanced focus and member insight to accelerate delivery on those things that matter most to members. The new arrangements will bring together a broader range of member expertise to the benefit of the entire hire sector."

Josh Thompson said he is excited to be joining the board of directors, stating: "I'm very much looking forward to being more involved in this great association."

Andrew Thompson is also looking forward to his new role as a board director.

He said: "I'm delighted. It's exciting to be joining the board. Myself and the team at Cleveland are looking forward to helping to drive the industry forward in any way we can."

Paul Mabey said: he was "proud and humbled" to be appointed.

"I look forward to working with other members of the board and members of all sub boards in ensuring the UK Plant

Hire Industry remains safe, innovative and an attractive place to work," he said.

David Fox said he has four key ambitions he will be focussing on as a member of the board: Safety, standards, security and sustainability.

"My ambitions are to ensure the members are up to date with latest H&S advice regarding new technologies, for example battery technology, keeping members safe with ongoing SafeHire audits, making sure the actions are reasonable and actioned by the member in a timely manner," he said. "The hire industry is always targeted by thieves and fraudsters, so I want to help members protect their businesses, with advice and support with security. Finally, the world is changing - there are so many new green alternatives to fossil fuels. I want to promote eco-friendly products to make the hire industry more sustainable and environmentally friendly."

The new governance arrangements will create additional strategic focus and allow a wider range of working groups and committees to address some of the challenges faced by members, including security, safety, and sustainability.

All those elected under previous governance arrangements will become HAE EHA committee members working with other stakeholders and partners on behalf of members to raise standards and promote the professional nature of the hire and rental sector.



The CBS Arena in Coventry was the venue for the 19th Executive Hire Show.



The show's Publishing and Event Director, Chris Moore, said the level of innovation coming through is stronger than ever.

Expanded exhibits offering at Executive Hire Show

Members and suppliers of the hire industry come out in force to display and discover new products at annual event

A MAJOR talking point in the run-up to this year's Executive Hire Show was the arrival of 25 first-time exhibitors, in different sectors of the hire marketplace, demonstrating how the industry is expanding and evolving.

The 150 exhibitors included major manufacturers Hilti, JCB and Makita, who are all HAE members.

As 'Interface' was going to press, the doors of the event's 2026 edition were opening at the CBS Arena in Coventry on February 11th and 12th. This year marked the 19th edition of the show and organisers reported before Christmas that every space had been reserved.

In access and lifting, newcomers made their debuts, with fresh options for businesses focused on efficiency and materials handling.

Digital and software innovation exhibition was space expanded, with five newcomers joining the line-up, introducing technology designed to support smoother workflows, better connectivity, and smarter fleet and hire

management while lighting is an area in growing demand as contractors look for reliable, easy-to-deploy solutions, and there were some new exhibitors in this area.

Plant and construction machinery welcomed four newcomers adding new depth for hire businesses exploring fleet growth, specialist machinery, or diversification into new applications.

Power generation and management remain a critical focus across the sector, with three newcomers showcasing solutions geared towards dependable power on temporary and remote sites, while the power tools and accessories category introduced seven newcomers, bringing specialist tools, handling systems, consumables, and accessories that support day-to-day contractor needs.

Publishing and Event Director, Chris Moore, said: "Selling out the 2026 Show is a clear sign of how committed this industry is. Exhibitors are ready to do business, visitors are ready to invest, and the level of innovation coming through

is stronger than ever. The hire sector doesn't stand still, and the Executive Hire Show continues to be the place where those real conversations and commercial decisions happen."

Innovation Trail takes on added significance

While construction activity has continued to vary by sector and region through 2025, demand for hired equipment has increased in several parts of the market, particularly where infrastructure, energy and major earthmoving programmes are underway. In response, hire is increasingly being used as a strategic tool, helping contractors manage uncertainty, control capital exposure and remain flexible as programmes shift.

Against that backdrop, the show's Innovation Trail has taken on added significance. It brings together products that respond directly to the realities hire businesses and their customers are facing – from lower-emission working and safer sites, to cleaner processes and more efficient use of power, water and time.

Positioned front and centre on the show floor, the Trail gave visitors the chance to get hands-on with new kit, supported by live demonstrations designed specifically for plant and tool hire.

Organisers said the Innovation Trail was a key feature of the 2025 Executive Hire Show, highlighting practical developments in eco-friendly technologies and new product design across the plant, tool and equipment hire sectors. In 2026, it built on that success, reflecting a market that is moving quickly from intent to action.

Every item featured was selected by a panel of professional hirers.

This year's line-up included electric and low-emission equipment, smarter site systems and cleaner working solutions that make a difference day to day. All 10 products were independently verified before selection.

Products on the Innovation Trail included:

Avant Power: The OptiTemp Cube 50 is a compact portable energy storage system designed to support electric loaders and work machines on site. It provides two full charges for Avant's 27kWh battery and up to four charges for the 13kWh version, helping extend working time without relying on fixed power. Using immersion cooling and an intelligent thermal management system, it maintains optimum performance in both hot and cold conditions, automatically pre-heating in low temperatures and regulating heat during use. The result is a robust, high-density power solution built for real-world hire and site environments.

Altrad Belle: Altrad Belle's BMD 300E+ is a heavy-duty, battery-powered mini dumper designed for professional use across rugged terrain. Powered by an 82V lithium-ion system, it delivers emission-free performance with the strength to handle loads up to 300kg, climb 20-degree inclines and operate safely indoors or in poorly ventilated environments. Built for hire, it combines durability, versatility and zero-emission working without compromise.

Demon Pressure Washers: The Tornado Maxi Bowser E is the first fully electric, self-propelled industrial pressure washer with a genuinely long run time. Using a 24V LiFePO4 battery system, it delivers up to four hours of real-world working time

without cables or generators. With a 225-litre onboard tank and powered drive, it provides true go-anywhere cleaning for construction, facilities management and local authority work.

Rubi: Rubi's DC-250 Smart Advance introduces intelligent automation to tile cutting. Its automatic feed system adjusts motor speed and feed rate in real time, delivering consistent, precise cuts across different materials. By reducing blade stress and adapting continuously during operation, it improves finish quality, extends blade life and boosts productivity for professional users.

Himoinsa: Himoinsa's HCompact+ lighting tower rethinks traditional design through the use of a heavy-duty polyethylene canopy, reducing weight, lowering noise and enabling full recyclability at end of life. Delivering 210,000 lumens with ultra-quiet operation, it is engineered for construction, rental and events where low noise, efficiency and sustainability are essential.

Husqvarna: Husqvarna's A25, A45 and A100 air cleaners are designed to tackle dust and airborne contaminants on site in a safe, efficient way. Lightweight, stackable and easy to transport, they feature intelligent design, IPX4 protection and LED status indicators. With HEPA filtration as standard and optional carbon filtering, they provide practical dust control for modern construction environments.

Steve Vick International: RENSET is a portable, emission-free power system built for modern site demands. Its interchangeable LiFePO4 battery

modules can be swapped without interrupting the load, allowing continuous operation. With peak output of up to 10kW and a rugged, weatherproof design, RENSET offers a practical alternative to diesel generators for tools, cabins and light equipment.

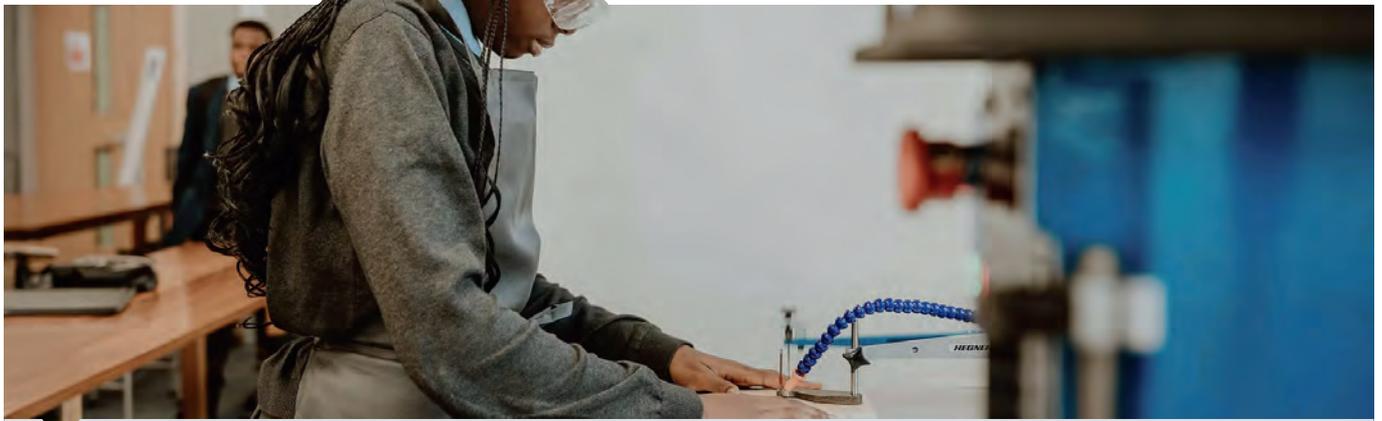
ABAX: ABAX Site Operations is a plug-and-play visibility system that gives businesses real-time oversight of tools, materials and equipment across indoor and outdoor sites. Using Locator and Hub technology, it creates live coverage zones and a unified digital map of assets, removing guesswork, reducing losses and improving utilisation without the cost or complexity of traditional tracking systems.

Shindaiwa: The Shindaiwa INMP82R Site Bright is a compact, mobile rechargeable floodlight delivering up to 11,000 lumens for 12 hours. With adjustable heads, multiple lighting modes and a maximum height of 2230mm, it is quick to deploy and easy to move. IP66 protection, warning lights and an ATEX option make it suitable for emergency and hazardous environments.

Kelly Tanks: Kelly Tanks' MINI is a portable concrete washout system designed for small tools and site use. A built-in water tank feeds the wash hose into an adsorption sack that captures solids, while pumps recycle the water for continuous use without discharge. With pH neutralisation and a fully self-contained design, it allows contractors to manage washout on site without contaminating ground or drainage, offering a practical, compliant solution for everyday hire and small-scale concrete work. <<



Last year's event successfully brought together key industry players, with 85% of attendees focused on purchasing new products.



Manufacturer's education partnership with grammar school

HILTI GB Ltd, one of HAE EHA's supplier members, recently become the first global industry partner to support the UK schools recently-launched Brenda Mills Institute of Innovation and Technology, establishing an integrated, forward-thinking model for corporate-education engagement.

The relationship is designed to create career pathways and enrich the educational experience for Hulme Grammar pupils, while providing direct opportunities and upskilling benefits for the wider Oldham community, and setting a new standard for industry involvement.

Hilti has donated a proportion of its Degree Apprenticeship Levy to the school. Sixth Form pupils will be invited to Hilti's mock assessment centre in Manchester city centre to experience and practise real-world recruitment processes.

Over the half-term holidays, Hilti is creating four unique work placement opportunities. These placements will offer pupils a complete 360-degree view of the business, tracing the customer journey from product sale to

delivery, alongside tailored insights into core functions such as engineering, marketing, HR, and finance.

A key feature of the partnership is the pilot of a new degree apprenticeship programme in fire safety engineering and senior Hilti leadership will participate in school careers fairs, offering mentorship to pupils.

Director of Development and Public Benefit at Hulme Grammar, Marc Hornby, said: "The support from Hilti is transformative. This partnership, which not only enhances our internal capacity but also allows us to create tangible opportunities for young learners in Oldham and Greater Manchester, perfectly aligns with our public benefit goals and the vision of the Brenda Mills Institute. We hope this will inspire other leading companies to follow suit."

Head of People Experience at Hilti, Kim Kerr, said: "We believe this partnership with Hulme Grammar School is a blueprint for the future. Together, we are actively helping to equip young people with the skills and confidence to succeed in the modern, technological world."

First aid provision warning

HIRE companies throughout England have been given a timely warning by first aid charity, St John Ambulance, that they are risking every second when they don't have enough trained first aiders or the right equipment on site.

The charity underscored how it's not just about having first aiders, but the right number of them, across different shifts, locations, and remote teams.

First aid is no longer solely about treating physical illness or injury, or maintaining emergency first aid kits, but integrating both physical and mental health first aid to holistically keep workers safe, the charity stressed.

Workplace illness is a rapidly growing economic cost for employers in England. On average each sickness absence day costs £120 in lost profit, with 150 million days lost annually.

Head of Education and Commercial Training at St John Ambulance, Lisa Sharman, emphasised the importance of having the right equipment in place.

"Having defibrillators, stocked first aid kits, and clear processes in place is just as vital as having people trained to use them," she said. "Cardiac arrests, seizures, choking... these events strike without warning, and without the right equipment in place and someone trained to act in those first critical minutes, the consequences can be devastating."

Members urged to report stolen equipment to NCATT

THE National Construction and Agriculture Theft Team (NCATT) has been made aware of a high number of equipment and machinery thefts since large company, Caldwell Construction, went into administration earlier this month.

Large quantities of Caldwell's own marked machinery has been taken, and more than 650 hired items cannot be accounted for. This incident has been posted on the secure HAE EHA Crime Portal.

Any Hire Association members whose equipment is missing are urged to contact NCATT providing as much information as possible, and to post a response on the Crime Portal for others to see.

Network Rail-approved portable power

PORTABLE power solutions provider Instagrid has announced the launch of GO RAIL, a Network Rail-approved adaptation of its popular 110V Instagrid GO product, now available in the UK.

The UK operates one of the most extensive rail networks in the world, spanning more than 30,000 miles of track and 20,000 bridges. Maintaining and upgrading this infrastructure often requires work in remote locations with limited access to grid power, as well as overnight operations near residential or environmentally sensitive areas.

Already a proven solution in UK construction, events, and film industries, Instagrid's portable power systems have seen thousands of units deployed across the country since they entered the UK market in 2023. The GO RAIL model brings these benefits to the rail sector, offering:

High Performance: Peak power of 18,000W and 2.1 kWh capacity, capable of running demanding equipment such as hand tools, pumps, lighting, and welding equipment.

Sustainable, Silent Power: No exhaust fumes, no emissions, zero noise, a distinct advantage for users requiring power in tunnels, environmentally sensitive areas, near residential areas and night work.

Rail-Ready Design: Compliant with UK rail requirements, GO RAIL features a distinctive yellow casing and all relevant certifications.

Smart Technology: A patented digital control system manages features including energy distribution and temperature across 144 lithium-ion battery cells for maximum efficiency and safety.

Connected & Trackable: Built-in IoT enables real-time tracking and usage analytics.

Portable & Practical: Weighing just 21kg, GO RAIL is hand portable, and operates in extreme temperatures from -20°C to +40°C.

Scalable Power: The optional GO RAIL LINK system allows up to three units to be connected for extended capacity and runtime – with hot swapping as standard – the LINK system can support longer operations or more power-demanding equipment

Receiving official approval by Network Rail in December 2025, GO RAIL underwent a rigorous review and testing process to meet the highest safety and performance standards – receiving all certifications for approved use on the UK's Rail Network.

Instagrid's GO RAIL has also been added to Network Rail's Controlled Catalogue (PADS catalogue).

GO RAIL will be available from this month.

Ryan promoted to Branch Director

RYAN Johnstone has been promoted to Branch Director at Scottish hire firm Your Equipment Solutions (YES), which has depots in Falkirk and Dundee.

Ryan joined the company in 2018, working on the hire desk before progressing into sales across the east of Scotland then running the company's Dundee depot from early 2025.

"Since then, he has led from the front – putting in the long hours, building a strong team, and transforming Dundee into a thriving, high-performing branch. In a short space of time, Ryan and his team have firmly established the YES Hire brand across the local area and laid the foundations for even bigger things ahead," a company spokesman said.

"This promotion recognises not only the results Ryan has delivered, but the passion, leadership and commitment he brings every day."

Established in 2012, YES is a one-stop shop for plant tool access and welfare requirements, from small drills and breakers to excavators and dumpers.



Newsome project manager for South of England

NEWSOME, which provides planned and emergency hire for full turnkey heating and cooling solutions, has welcomed Mikey O'Neill as its new Project Manager for sales and rental projects throughout the South of England.

Based at the company's Basingstoke office, Mikey will play a key role in managing projects across process cooling, industrial heating, ventilation and air conditioning. Newsome is looking to expand its presence across the South of England into 2026.

Mikey's expertise has spanned complex cooling systems and HVAC installations. He will support customers from initial planning through to installation, commissioning and ongoing support, ensuring projects are delivered safely, efficiently and to a high technical standard.

Group Managing Director of Newsome Limited and Penmann Climatic Systems, Richard Metcalfe, said: "We're very pleased to welcome Mikey to Newsome. He brings strong technical knowledge and project delivery experience that will be invaluable as we continue to grow our capital sales and rental operations across the South of England."



New HSE board appointment

GRAHAM Farrant has been appointed as a new non-executive director on the board of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Graham has 47 years' experience working in or for local government and the private sector, including 25 years as a Chief Executive at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council, until he retired in last August.

Prior to joining BCP Council, Graham served as Chief Executive at HM Chief Land Registrar and has been Chief Executive of Thurrock Council, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (twice), and Brentwood Council. He also worked for private equity-backed leisure operator Leisure Connection and national business and sports consultancy pmogenesis.

He first qualified as an Environmental Health Officer working at Westminster City Council.

Graham replaces Martin Esom who is due to step down from the Board next month (March), having first been appointed in 2017.



Statutory
Sick Pay

Ready yourself for reforms

With the start of the new financial year just weeks away, hire sector employers are reminded of some significant forthcoming legislation changes and what they should be prepared for.

FROM April, significant reforms are set to be introduced by the Government which will affect employers in the workplace

The first is two significant reforms to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), which are expected to take effect in the new financial year, and the second is new family-friendly employment rights which will come into effect.

For employers operating in the hire sector, it's important to understand what these changes mean in practice - not only for your employees, but also for your policies, budgets, and compliance

Sickness pay changes

Currently, employees are only eligible to receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from the fourth qualifying day of sickness absence, with the first three days being unpaid, unless the employee qualifies for enhanced sick pay.

Under the new legislation, the three-day waiting period will be removed, and Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will become a 'Day 1' entitlement. This means it will be paid from the first

qualifying day of sickness absence (provided eligibility criteria are met).

The lower earnings limit will also be removed. At present, an employee must earn at least the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL), currently £123 per week (2025/26 rate), to qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) but from April 2026 this threshold will be abolished.

This means that all employees, regardless of how much they earn, will be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if they meet the other qualifying conditions (such as being classed as an employee and being off work owing to illness for at least four consecutive calendar days).

These reforms represent a shift in both cost and administration for employers and the following considerations will need to be made:

- **Increased sick pay liability:** Hire sector employers will potentially pay more in Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), as it will begin from Day 1 of absence rather than Day 4
- **More employees will qualify:** With the LEL removed, even those working limited hours or on very low incomes

who were previously ineligible will now be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

- **Greater emphasis on absence management:** Employers will need to ensure that absence reporting procedures are robust, as accurate records will be crucial for compliance and payroll. Prompt and clear recording of the start date of absence is essential to ensure Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) is paid correctly from Day 1.
 - **Possible impact on Enhanced Sick Pay schemes:** If you offer contractual sick pay, the interaction between enhanced policies and the new Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) rules should be reviewed. Policies may need to be realigned to ensure they are not inadvertently overpaying or duplicating entitlement
- There are some practical steps employers should begin taking now, if they haven't already:
- Equip managers with the knowledge and tools to handle Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) queries, report absences correctly, and understand the updated entitlement criteria
 - Include absence management in your ongoing compliance training



Family-friendly employment rights

From April 2026, new family-friendly employment rights will also take effect from April, which are designed to give parents greater flexibility and support when balancing work and family life.

At present, employees must have at least 26 weeks' service with their employer before qualifying for

statutory paternity and one year's completed service to qualify for parental leave. From April 2026, these requirements will be removed, giving all employees the right to take paternity and parental leave from the first day of their employment.

Currently, once an employee has started a period of Shared Parental Leave, they are unable to take statutory paternity leave but from April this restriction will be lifted, allowing parents to use paternity leave alongside SPL more flexibly.

Employers will need to process paternity and parental leave requests for all employees, regardless of their length of service.

Policies, procedures, and payroll systems will need to be reviewed and updated between now and April if they haven't already been. With the increased flexibility, hire sector employers may see more varied requests for leave so line managers should be briefed and confident in handling them.

The following preparations are recommended for employers operating in the hire industry:

- **Update policies:** Family-friendly leave policies must reflect the new day one rights and the removal of the SPL restriction
- **Manager awareness:** Training and guidance should be provided to ensure requests are managed consistently and fairly
- **Planning ahead:** With more employees likely to take up their entitlements, workforce planning and resourcing will be important <<



Risk Services is the HAE EHA helpline for enquiries relating to workplace legislation or health and safety policies. The service is provided for HAE EHA members in collaboration with Stallard Kane. For more information, email risk-services@hae.org.uk or call **0121 380 4612**.

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NEW TO THE CREW ...

We introduce the latest recruits to HAE EHA membership and invite you to join us in giving them a warm welcome.

EIGHT new members have joined HAE EHA in recent weeks, from a range of different sectors and geographical areas, expanding its growing membership.

- **EVENTS CREW LTD** was founded in 2003 in Henstridge. It is an event infrastructure specialist providing end-to-end support, including planning, logistics, and equipment rental. It provides and installs temporary structures, fencing, barriers, lighting, and ground protection for various events, operating as a affordable one-stop shop for event management.

- **GAP GROUP LTD**, trading as GAP Hire Solutions, is an independent equipment rental company, established in 1969 that is based in Glasgow. It provides hire services across 10 specialised divisions, including plant, tools, surveying, lifting, and welfare, serving industries such as construction, utilities, and events with more than 200 locations nationwide.



www.gap-group.co.uk

- **CSS TRADING GROUP LTD**, founded in 2012, is based in Colnbrook, Berkshire, and specialises in the supply of construction materials, tools, and equipment for civil engineering, groundwork, and drainage projects. It provides comprehensive site solutions, including lifting gear, PPE, branded workwear, and on-site services like fence installation.

- **HSS PROSERVICE LTD**, part of the HSS Hire Group, operates a digital, capital-light marketplace that connects construction and building professionals with a network of vetted suppliers for the hire and purchase of tools, plant, and equipment across the UK. It offers a "one-stop-shop" for more than 50,000 products, streamlining procurement, invoicing, and logistics and is based in Manchester.

- **MCCARTHY HIRE LTD**, based in Northampton, specialises in industrial and commercial evaporative air cooler rentals, offering eco-friendly, portable cooling systems with no complex installation. Its equipment can be rented out for everything from small workspaces to large industrial units, and every environment. The mobile units are used in factories, warehouses, workshops, and more, with six different models suited to different needs.

- **PARAGON PROTECTION SYSTEMS LIMITED**, trading as Zappshelter, provides rapid-install, heavy-duty, relocatable fabric-covered structures designed to protect people, equipment, and materials from the elements. Engineered to be mounted on shipping containers or concrete blocks, these offer a flexible, cost-effective alternative to traditional buildings, featuring a five-year warranty. The company's headquarters are in Perth, Scotland.

- **PLANT PARTS LTD**, formed in 1991, is a major UK-based independent supplier of, and workshop for, heavy construction and earthmoving machinery components. Located in Hadleigh, Suffolk, it specialises in sourcing and supplying parts like final drives, swing drives, hydraulic pumps, and slewing rings for more than 150 brands, offering new, OEM, and reconditioned parts with global shipping.

- **FOXCOTTE FENCING LTD**, trading as, Foxcotte Cambridge, is a family-run timber, landscaping, and DIY centre based in Barton, Cambridgeshire, providing materials, fencing, and expert services. The company specialises in woven fencing, hedge laying, tree surgery, and serves as a major dealer for EGO cordless garden machinery. Owned by Tim Radford, the company works closely with WonderWood to deliver comprehensive outdoor, fencing, and landscaping projects.



Workforce strategies in 2026

Our HAE EHA Insurance Services team look at some of the likely changes to come about this year and how members can benefit from our help.

INSURANCE-backed employee benefits are expected to become an even more integral part of workforce strategy in 2026, as employers across the hire sector look for more structured ways to manage absence, wellbeing and demographic change.

Businesses are operating in an increasingly complex environment shaped by economic pressure, productivity challenges and multi-generational workforces and employers will need to carefully manage risk through tailored risk solutions.

Employers are facing multiple, overlapping challenges and insurance-backed benefits offer a way to transfer risk while also supporting workforce resilience and long-term productivity.

Traditional protections such as group income protection, group life assurance and group critical illness cover are expected to remain central to employee benefits strategies. However, demand is growing for more flexible and personalised solutions that better reflect the diverse needs of today's workforce.

Personalisation is emerging as one of the most significant trends in the benefits market. Employees increasingly expect benefits that align with their

individual circumstances, whether that means access to mental health support, family-friendly benefits or financial wellbeing services. In response, technology is being embedded into insurance platforms, including AI-driven tools that help employees select the most relevant benefits and allow for more precise underwriting based on individual risk profiles.

Demographic change is also influencing product development. With workforces ageing, some hire sector employers may be seeking enhanced retirement planning support, targeted health programmes for older employees and initiatives

that encourage effective knowledge transfer between generations.

Group risk products that include preventative and early-intervention services are gaining particular traction. Solutions such as proactive support for long-term sickness absence or embedded mental health services are increasingly viewed not just as wellbeing benefits, but as effective tools for mitigating absence-related costs and protecting operational continuity.

As the hire sector continues to navigate labour shortages and evolving workforce expectations, insurance-backed benefits are set to become a cornerstone of sustainable people strategies. <<



To find out more about cyber insurance, call the Insurance Services team on 0330 018 2299 or email insuranceservices@hae.org.uk. More information is also available by visiting HAE EHA partner Everywhen's dedicated cyber insurance page at <http://bit.ly/3K2UM6I>.

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It's not just a pipe dream

Where pipes in process temperature control are concerned, size really does matter. A team of specialists at ICS Cool Energy explain why.

THERE are several reasons why correct pipework selection is critical for the performance, efficiency, and reliability of temporary hire systems.

Pipework is more than just a connection between equipment and process. It plays a central role in system performance, efficiency, and reliability. For temporary hire equipment, selecting the right pipework is especially important, along with asking your supplier the right questions.

In permanent installations, pipework is designed to meet the plant's exact specifications. Temporary systems, however, often involve different fluids, operating pressures, and the need for quick installation and removal. In these cases, unsuitable pipe size, material, or layout can reduce efficiency, increase operating costs, and risk unplanned downtime.

In process temperature control, the choice of pipework has a direct impact

on system performance. The wrong specification can lead to a range of problems. Compatibility issues are common, especially when connecting to a hired system.

Process mediums such as oils, solvents, or other thermal fluids may have previously been cooled with alternative refrigerant systems. When these are linked to hire units, which typically use water or water-glycol mixtures and may feature different heat exchangers, material compatibility needs careful consideration. Different fluids can react with certain pipe materials and fittings, potentially leading to leaks, failures, or unsafe operation. Additionally, the heat transfer rates between varying fluids and heat exchangers should be taken into account, as incorrect pipe sizing, application, or valve arrangement can compromise the guaranteed cooling or heating output, putting both performance and uptime at risk.

Matching materials to fluids

When connecting hire chillers or heaters, it is important to think beyond whether the pipework will simply fit. The material must be matched to the working fluid. Steel, stainless steel, or certain plastics are typical choices for water/glycol systems. Pipe sizing is equally critical. Undersized pipes cause high pressure drops, while oversized pipes can lead to low velocity as well as sediment and air build up.

Layout also plays a role. Every additional bend or metre of pipe increases resistance, so runs should be kept as short and direct as possible. Connections, whether flanged, threaded, or quick connect, must be leak-tight and compatible with both the hire equipment and the site infrastructure. Insulation is essential in longer-term hires to minimise energy loss and reduce condensation, which can lead to slip hazards and potential water ingress into electrical systems.

As these are temporary installations, they should also be designed for rapid assembly and dismantling.

Flow velocity is a key parameter. High velocity can cause turbulent flow, leading to water hammer, noisy pipework, and cavitation, all of which accelerate internal corrosion and shorten equipment life. If it is too high, in water systems, it can cause noise, vibration, erosion, and pump strain. In fact, doubling the velocity above the recommended limit can triple erosion rates. If it is too low, there is a risk of poor heat transfer, sediment build up, and even freezing in cold climates. Low velocity can reduce chiller efficiency by 10–15%. Low velocity also makes it harder to purge air from the system, increasing the risk of airlocks. In ferrous systems, stagnant or slow-moving water can promote internal corrosion, even when chemical treatment and inhibitors are in place.

Flow rate also matters. Low flow reduces temperature control accuracy and increases energy use per unit of cooling, while high flow can exceed chiller design limits, triggering alarms. Excessive pressure drops mean more pump energy is required, and chiller capacity can be reduced. Temperature losses in the pipework are equally

costly, every degree lost is a degree not delivered to the process.

To offer a tangible comparison: At a flow velocity of roughly 2.0 m/s using water as the cooling medium, a single six-inch pipe can convey approximately 134 m³/h, whereas a pair of four-inch pipes manage closer to 118 m³/h. Assuming a temperature differential of around 5°C, this equates to an estimated heat transfer of 780 kW for the 6 inch pipe, versus about 690 kW for the twin four-inch configuration.

Even at 6°C, the larger pipe still delivers more capacity. While two smaller pipes may be easier to handle for temporary hire, they are not a substitute for a correctly sized single run in permanent installations. Getting the balance right is essential for both performance and system longevity.

The penalties

The penalties for poor pipework design can be significant. Inefficient layouts and incorrect sizing can waste between 5% and 25% of hire cooling capacity. In some cases, total plant energy use can rise by up to 40% during temporary operation. Industry data shows that improper temporary pipework can reduce system efficiency by up to 20% and increase energy bills by nearly 35%.

These figures do not include the additional cost of downtime if the system trips or fails — a risk that can be avoided with correct design.

Good pipework is invisible when it's done right, but when it's wrong, the problems are loud, costly, and very visible. In process temperature control, size really does matter. Get the material, diameter, and layout right, and your hire equipment will deliver the performance you're paying for. Get it wrong, and you'll be paying for more than just the hire fee. <<

Questions hire suppliers should be able to answer

1. What pipe materials are compatible with the fluid and operating conditions?
2. What velocity range will the system operate in, and how will it be maintained?
3. What's the estimated pressure drop, and how was it calculated?
4. Does the pipework need to be insulated?
5. Are the connections compatible with my plant?



Health and safety breaches

In this regular feature, we detail the latest court cases and sentences resulting from HSE investigations, highlighting the significant outcomes that result from lack of compliance and adequate care while carrying out work on construction sites, within factory or workplace environments, using plant machinery, working at height and other areas commonly associated with hire services.

NHS Trust fined after it failed to manage hand-arm vibration risks

AN NHS Trust has been fined £40,000 after several employees were diagnosed with Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), following prolonged exposure to vibration from work equipment.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) began an investigation into Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust after an employee was diagnosed with HAVS – a serious, lifelong condition characterised by persistent numbness and tingling in the fingers, reduced sensory perception and impaired manual dexterity.

The investigation found the Trust failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by the use of vibrating tools. There were no records to demonstrate the level of vibration exposure employees faced, and the Trust also failed to eliminate exposure or reduce it to as low as reasonably practicable.

Furthermore, it became clear that employees had not been provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction or training about the risks associated with vibration exposure.

HSE also identified that the Trust had failed to report that two other employees had been diagnosed with HAVS and that one employee had been diagnosed with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS).

One affected employee, Sally Elliott, who worked in the plaster-cast department for more than 25 years, described how she was never warned about the risks of vibration exposure.

"I never, for one minute, suspected that the issues I was experiencing were being caused by the tools I used in my



workplace," she said. "I was never given any information on the risks of HAVS and I knew nothing about the potential symptoms."

She went on to explain how her symptoms gradually worsened, affecting both her work and everyday life.

"Every aspect of daily life is impacted due to the numbness, weakness, pins-and-needles in my fingers and hands. From getting up to going to bed anything that I need to do with my hands is affected."

After being diagnosed with advanced stage 3 vascular and sensorineural HAVS, she was no longer able to continue in her role and has remained off work since October 2023.

"I gave my all to Chesterfield Royal Hospital and enjoyed my job," she added. "I took seriously my duty of care to patients, and I feel the Trust failed in their duty of care to me. I feel let down and I am suffering the consequences through no fault of my own."

The HSE investigation concluded that Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust failed to properly assess the risks associated with hand-arm vibration and failed to adequately control employees' exposure.

The trust pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work, was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay full prosecution costs of £4,911 at Chesterfield Magistrates' Court.

HSE Inspector Muir Finlay said: "The fine imposed on the Trust should underline to all employers that expose their workers to vibration that the courts and HSE take failures to follow the regulations extremely seriously."

"The fine imposed on the Trust should underline to all employers that expose their workers to vibration that the courts and HSE take failures to follow the regulations extremely seriously."

Packaging company fined after worker suffers life-changing head injuries



A MANUFACTURER of paper packaging has been fined after a worker suffered a severe skull fracture and permanent injuries when a 4.5-ton machine fell on him.

Matthew King was working for Multi Packaging Solutions UK Limited at its East Kilbride site in October 2023 when he was struck on the head whilst working underneath the machine.

The 39-year-old sustained a severe skull fracture, bruising to his head and nerve damage to the left side of his face. He has been left with permanent double vision, loss of peripheral vision, facial palsy and hearing loss. He is unable to drive and has required multiple surgeries and ongoing mental health support.

The worker was part of a team relocating the machine from a warehouse to a storage area approximately 160 metres away. The machine, which weighed approximately 4.5 tons and measured 1.56 by 4.15 metres, had no lifting or anchoring points.

Workers had improvised a system involving lifting the machine with a forklift, placing skates underneath, and pulling it forward. The machine had already slid off the forks on at least two occasions before the incident.

At the time of the accident, Mr King was positioned underneath the suspended machine to secure a wheel on its underside when it slid from the forks and struck him on the head.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the lifting operation had not been properly planned by a competent person. The characteristics of the load, including its weight, size, centre of gravity and lifting points, had not been adequately assessed, and no safe system of work had been put in place.

Moving a machine of this size and weight was not a regular task at the site and there was no established system of work for it.

Multi Packaging Solutions UK Limited of Nottingham, pleaded guilty to breaching the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations Act, was fined £433,333 and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £32,500.

HSE inspector, Ingrid Grueso, said: "This incident was entirely preventable. The company failed to properly plan the lifting operation or implement a safe system of work.

"Mr King has been left with life-changing injuries including permanent damage to his eyesight, hearing and facial movement. He has had to sell his car as he can no longer drive safely and now relies on his wife to transport him and their three children.

"Employers must ensure that lifting operations are properly planned by a competent person and carried out safely. This is especially important for non-routine tasks involving heavy or awkward loads."

Bristol landlord fined after member of the public falls from staircase

A BRISTOL landlord has been fined after a member of the public sustained significant injuries when he fell from the first-floor landing of an external wooden staircase at a converted property in Bishopston.

Roger Blessitt of Dyers Lane, Iron Acton, was fined £20,000 following an investigation by HSE.

The incident happened in the early hours of 2 October 2023, when a group attended Unit 4 Merton Road for a social event hosted by one of Mr Blessitt's tenants. A 28-year-old man stepped outside and fell when a section of the wooden handrail failed as he leant against it. He fell from a height of around 11 feet, landing on the concrete-paved surface at ground level, and sustained significant injuries, including to the head.

The HSE investigation found fundamental flaws in the design of the staircase, including that it was notably rotten, deteriorated and weakened. The investigation also found a distinct lack of inspection and maintenance, determining that the staircase was not fit for purpose.

Roger Blessitt of Dyers Lane, Iron Acton, pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. He was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay costs of £4,522.

HSE Inspector Emma Preston said: "While seeming lower risk, poorly-maintained staircases can turn everyday

use into a serious hazard. Routine inspections and maintenance are essential to prevent avoidable injuries.

"In this incident, defects to the staircase would have been readily identified and repaired if an effective inspection and maintenance regime had been in place."



"While seeming lower risk, poorly-maintained staircases can turn everyday use into a serious hazard. Routine inspections and maintenance are essential."



Director and company fined after failing to comply with enforcement notices

A CONSTRUCTION company director and his firm have been fined after failing to comply with multiple enforcement notices and for failing to suitably plan, manage and monitor construction work.

Vasilis Paraskeva and his London-based company, VNP Constructions Limited, were the appointed contractor for the conversion of a former public house and adjoining building into residential flats on White Lion Street, London.

During a proactive visit to the site in September 2022, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors identified several issues including work at height risks and concerns about the competence of site management. Prohibition and Improvement notices were served.

Further visits over the following 12 months identified additional breaches, demonstrating a continued failure to suitably plan, manage and monitor the work. Additional Prohibition and Improvement notices were served.

An HSE investigation found that Vasilis Paraskeva and VNP Constructions Limited failed to comply with the requirements of multiple enforcement notices and failed to ensure work was carried out safely.

The company, VNP Constructions Limited, of Winchmore Hill, London, pleaded guilty to breaching the



Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and two counts of failing to comply with a Prohibition Notice contrary to the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The company was fined £7,200 and ordered to pay £900 in costs at the same hearing. The Director, Vasilis Paraskeva, pleaded guilty, was fined £10,800 and ordered to pay £900 in costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Andrew Pipe said: "These fines should send a clear message to the construction industry that HSE and the courts take failure to comply with enforcement notices extremely seriously."

Construction company fined after worker falls through floor opening

A CONSTRUCTION company based in the Northwest of England, has been fined £60,000 after a wall collapsed, knocking an employee through an open stairwell onto a concrete floor below.

Ace Infra Ltd pleaded guilty after an incident led to employee, Mark Jones, to spend a month in hospital recovering from multiple fractures and a dislocated shoulder.

The court heard how Mr Jones, a general labourer, was sweeping up dust and debris on the first floor of the building at the end of the working day in April 2024. Earlier that day, boards had been delivered and laid across a large opening in the floor where a staircase was to be installed. The boards did not cover the entire opening, and no edge protection had been installed around the remaining gap. There was no signage warning of the danger, and Mr Jones had received no instructions regarding his safety around this area.

While sweeping along the boards, a newly-built wall to the left collapsed, knocking him over the unprotected edge onto the concrete floor 2.5 to 3 metres below.

The incident happened at an Ace Infra site at NW Auctions Milnthorpe, Cumbria.

An HSE investigation found that the risk of falling through the gap in the floor had not been addressed, as no preventative

measures had been taken. Mr Jones had not been made aware of the risks or the safety measures required. No site supervisor or manager was present when the incident occurred.

HSE guidance on working at height states that employers must take precautions to prevent falls from heights that could cause serious personal injury, including falls into floor openings. Employers have a duty to ensure workers are not exposed to risks to their health or safety.

Ace Infra Ltd, of Carnforth, Cumbria, pleaded guilty to breaching Work at Height Regulations by failing to ensure that suitable and sufficient measures were taken, so far as was reasonably practicable, to prevent any person working at height from falling a distance liable to cause personal injury.

The company was fined £60,000 and ordered to pay £4,799.44 in costs, with a £2,000 victim surcharge.

HSE Inspector, Derek McLauchlan, said: "Everyone working in construction has a responsibility to ensure that people are safe. Any work at height is potentially high-risk and requires proper planning and implementation.

"This incident could have been avoided had appropriate control measures and training been in place. Despite the serious injuries sustained, a fall of this height and nature could have resulted in far worse outcomes. Lessons must be learned from this case."

“Despite the serious injuries sustained, a fall of this height and nature could have resulted in far worse outcomes. Lessons must be learned from this case.”

Engineering firm fined £27,200 after endangering workers

AN engineering firm in Bedfordshire has been fined £27,200 after poor management of safety put employees at risk of ill-health including dermatitis, asthma and other respiratory conditions.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecution was the result of a routine inspection in July 2022. HSE inspectors identified a number of concerns which were brought to the company's attention, specifically on the use of metalworking fluids in CNC machines.

This led to HSE inspectors serving formal Improvement Notices, which required the company to prepare a suitable risk assessment for the activities, and to have appropriate testing and monitoring arrangements in place.

When HSE conducted a follow-up inspection it found that, despite the requirements of the Improvement Notices, the company had failed to undertake a suitable assessment. Documentation still failed to identify hazards and potential health effects, did not consider measures necessary to reduce the risk of inhalation of metalworking fluid mist, and did not consider or implement suitable arrangements to maintain metalworking fluid quality. Inspectors also found that testing of fluids remained less frequent than recommended in guidance. The company had not complied with the Improvement Notices, and a prosecution was commenced in January 2024.

HSE guidance states that employers must maintain fluid quality and control bacterial contamination of fluids, minimise skin exposure to fluids, prevent or control airborne mists and, where there is exposure to fluid or mist, carry out appropriate health surveillance. Further guidance on Metalworking fluids can be found on HSE's website.

Tracel Ltd, trading as The Engineering Quest, of Sandy, Bedfordshire, pleaded guilty to breaching the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations and to two charges of breaching the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act. District Judge Sally Fudge fined the company £27,200 and ordered it to pay £30,000 in costs.

Unregistered gas fitter sentenced after carrying out illegal work

AN unregistered gas fitter has been sentenced after carrying out illegal gas work at a house in Torquay that left the property in an immediately dangerous condition.

Benjamin Owen, known as Ben, trading as BPS and 'Ben the Plumber', attended a property on Barton Hill, Torquay in February 2023 where he removed an old boiler and installed a new one.

Following the installation, the boiler did not work properly. The homeowners arranged for another company to check the installation when Ben Owen was dismissive of their concerns. When this plumber attended, they had serious concerns and called the emergency gas provider, who found a gas leak on the gas supply pipe and classified the situation as 'immediately dangerous', capping the gas supply.

Gas Safe Register was called and attended the site, where further defects were found in the gas boiler installation. A third company was employed by the homeowners to rectify the faults. When work began, additional faults created by Mr Owen were discovered.

An HSE investigation found that Ben Owen was not registered with the Gas Safe Register, which is a legal requirement. He had previously been a member of Gas Safe Register, but his registration lapsed in October 2021 when he failed to renew his membership and he was not registered to undertake any form of gas work.

Carrying out gas work without registration is illegal and potentially dangerous, as unqualified work can lead to gas leaks, fires, explosions, and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Ben Owen, of St Hellier, Jersey pleaded not guilty to contravening the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. He was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, ordered to undertake 150 hours unpaid work and to pay costs of £1,000.

After the hearing HSE inspector, Simon Jones, said Mr Owen's actions had put the lives of the homeowners and their four young children at risk.

Father and son sentenced for carrying out illegal gas work

AN unregistered gas installer and his father have been sentenced after carrying out illegal gas work at two houses in Cheshire.

An HSE investigation found that Scott Lodge, 37, carried out new boiler installations at two addresses in Northwich in April 2022 and December 2022 while not registered with Gas Safe Register.

On one of those occasions, his father Brian, 67, a registered gas engineer, signed off the work and commissioned the boiler on his son's behalf. He did this without attending the property to check the boiler for safety. Defects included a lack of support for the chimney and flue system.

When one of the homeowners complained to the Gas Safe Register, an inspection was carried out by a qualified

engineer. That inspection identified defects, resulting in the boiler being classed as at risk and a danger. This included a lack of support for the chimney and flue system, which carried the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Scott Lodge, of Adlington Drive, Northwich, pleaded guilty to breaching the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. He was given a 12-month community order and ordered to complete 200 hours of unpaid work. He was also told to pay £2,500 in costs and must pay £1,460 to one of the affected homeowners.

Brian Lodge, of Knutsford, pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. He was given the same sentence as his son and ordered to pay the same in costs at the same hearing.



Council fined £80,000 after military veteran struck by collapsing lamppost

GLASGOW City Council has been fined £80,000 after a military veteran sustained life-changing injuries when he was struck by a falling lamppost in the city's west end in June 2023.

A 50-year-old man was standing at the roadside in conversation with a work colleague when the lamppost

collapsed, striking him from behind and pinning him to the ground. Overhead cables attached to the lamppost were then snagged by a passing motor vehicle, which dragged the collapsed lamppost over the man.

The incident occurred just after 4pm, on Bellshaugh Road at its junction with Kirklee Gardens and Cleveden Drive, close to Kelvinside Academy. The area was busy with both adult and child pedestrians, with it being a school day.

The man sustained severe, life-threatening and life-changing injuries, including multiple spinal, pelvic and rib fractures, an open leg fracture, and a fractured left ankle. He spent seven weeks in hospital and has since undergone multiple surgeries, and continues to receive medical treatment. He now has reduced mobility and significant ongoing pain.

Prior to the incident, he retained a high level of fitness and had a very active lifestyle, including regular hill walking and leading a section of army cadets.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) established that the lamppost had structurally failed owing to severe corrosion at its base. Loss of steel thickness of at least 60% owing to corrosion was measured, with many areas showing significantly greater loss. The lamppost,

manufactured in the 1950s or 1960s, was more than twice its expected service life of 20-25 years.

HSE Science Division utilised an arm scanner during their investigation to gain a detailed understanding of the level of corrosion in the lamppost.

During the last council inspection in March 2022, the column was identified as being in poor condition and it was scheduled for replacement in April 2024. However, HSE's investigation found that the council's inspection regime failed to identify the extent of corrosion and the immediate risk of collapse. The visual inspections undertaken were inadequate in correctly identifying the condition of the column, the risk of failure and the action required.

The council did not follow established industry guidance, issued by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, by not prioritising the removal of lighting columns assessed as being in poor condition relative to the consequence of their failure.

Following the incident, the council removed another similar lamppost with base embellishments from around Glasgow and has since updated its lighting maintenance procedures.

Glasgow City Council pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. It was fined £80,000 at Glasgow Sheriff Court.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Hazel Dobb said: "The lamppost that struck him had been identified as being in poor condition, yet inadequate inspections failed to recognise that it was severely corroded and at immediate risk of collapse.

"This case is a stark reminder that local authorities and other duty holders must have effective systems in place to properly assess and manage the risks posed by ageing street infrastructure."

Property developer fined £45K for multiple construction site failures

A CHESHIRE property developer has been fined £45,000 after the Health and Safety Executive found multiple failures at a construction site in Manchester.

Numerous health and safety failings were found during a site inspection at a home build project being undertaken by Stockport Development Limited on Kingsley Road, Manchester, in November 2023. The HSE inspection found missing edge protection on first floor landings, missing and damaged security fencing, a lack of fire alarms and extinguishers, heavily obstructed walkways, and inadequate welfare provision for workers.

This resulted in four Improvement Notices being served. When it was established that there had been four previous visits to the company's construction sites between February 2021 and March 2023, all of which resulted in enforcement action being taken in relation to poor health and safety standards, an HSE investigation was launched.

The investigation established that the company had repeatedly failed to fulfil its principal contractor duties and

had failed to take heed of previous warnings and advice given by HSE inspectors.

Principal contractors have a responsibility to plan, manage and monitor construction work to ensure that it is carried out without risks to health or safety.

Stockport Development Limited, of Stockport, Cheshire, pleaded guilty to a breach of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. The company was ordered to pay a fine of £45,000 plus surcharge of £18,000 and costs of £6,297 at Manchester Magistrates court.

HSE Inspector, Claire Whitehurst, said: "This company showed a total disregard for keeping its workers and members of the public safe by failing to meet the most basic health and safety standards.

"Principal contractors have a responsibility to ensure they identify and manage risks involved in construction work, and to put safe systems in place to protect all who may be affected by their undertaking."



Manufacturer sentenced after sawmill worker lost leg

A LARGE wood manufacturer in Shropshire has been fined £160,000 after an employee sustained life-changing injuries when working at its Ellesmere premises.

While clearing a jammed log on a machine in May 2021, Robert Stubbs, 37, climbed onto a stationary conveyor bed and used a metal pole to move a log. The conveyor started to move unexpectedly, dragging his legs across the moving chains and trapping them against a stop plate. Subsequently Mr Stubbs had his right leg amputated below the knee and sustained significant injuries to his left leg.

An HSE investigation found that E.T.C. Sawmills Limited failed to adequately assess the risks and devise and implement effective measures to prevent access to the dangerous moving parts of the Quad Saw machine or to stop the movement of the dangerous parts before people entered the danger zones. Additionally, the company failed to provide employees with safe systems of work or suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable safe operation of the machine.

Although standards of health and safety are much improved over recent years, sawmilling remains a high-risk industry with a major injury rate that is over two and a half times that of general manufacturing.

Although standards of health and safety are much improved over recent years, sawmilling remains a high-risk industry with a major injury rate that is over two and a half times that of general manufacturing.

Machinery accidents remain one of the major causes of injury, with lock-out procedures for interrupting mechanised production processes still being a problem area. There is also an average of one fatality every year.

E.T.C. Sawmills Limited, of Cardiff, pleaded guilty to

breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. It was fined £160,000 and ordered to pay costs of £7,395.51.

HSE Inspector Keeley Eves said: "E.T.C Sawmills is one of the largest manufacturers of softwoods for the fencing and pallet industries in England. The life-changing injuries sustained by Mr Stubbs could easily have been prevented if the company had acted to identify and manage the risks involved, put a safe system of work in place and ensured that employees were appropriately trained and supervised."

Tree specialists fined after worker falls from height

AN arboriculture company based in Derby has been fined £20,000 after an employee suffered life-altering back injuries when he fell over 30 feet from a MEWP basket.

An employee of AP Tree Specialists Ltd had been carrying out tree surgery from the basket of a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) at a mobile site in Derby in January 2024. When the machine stopped working while elevated, there was no one on site who could bring the basket safely to the ground. The employee attempted to abseil from the basket, resulting in a fall to the ground.

An HSE investigation found that AP Tree Specialists Ltd failed to plan, appropriately supervise and carry out work at height in a safe manner. The company had not completed a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for work at height activities, and employees were not appropriately trained in the use of lifting equipment.

The director, Matthew Scholes, was acting as site supervisor at the time and was directly involved in decisions and actions that led to the injuries sustained by the employee.

The Work at Height Regulations require employers to ensure that work at height is properly planned, appropriately supervised, and carried out safely. Where lifting equipment is used, HSE guidance states that operatives must receive appropriate training, and that rescue planning, equipment and personnel must be considered as part of site assessment. Further guidance is freely available in HSE's Safe Use of Lifting Equipment (LOLER) Approved Code of Practice.

AP Tree Specialists Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £6,956 in costs.



Director Matthew Scholes also pleaded guilty to breaching the Act and was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £400 in costs.

HSE investigating inspector, Kerry Scott, said: "They should have provided the employee with the correct information, instruction and training for working at height and for using the lifting equipment."



INTERFACE
HAE ON HIRE

After a year's sabbatical,

Interface magazine has relaunched with a sharp new look and more regular updates and features for all those operating in, and supplying to, the hire industry.

Now published on alternate months, it's the perfect vehicle to bring your products and services to the attention of those in the hire sector.

WANT TO GET YOUR BRAND IN FRONT OF THE HIRE INDUSTRY'S MEMBERSHIP?

Discuss promotional opportunities with Theresa Geeson

advertising@hae.org.uk

Bi-monthly updates in digital and printed format to keep all those in the industry abreast of the latest news, business developments, legislation changes, products and advice.

GOT SOME NEWS OR INSIGHTS TO SHARE?

Contact Editor Stephanie Cornwall
editorial@hae.org.uk

We value the support of those companies who advertise in the magazine, without whom its publication would not be possible. We would urge all of our members and suppliers to spread the word about its promotional opportunities so that we can offer an even greater gallery of products and services, and help to keep this fabulous magazine in circulation.

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Tailored for hire and rental needs

Uncertainty about how to create a skilled workforce while ensuring your company’s resources and knowledge are up to date is something that needs a sector-specific approach. This is where HAE EHA training rises to the challenge.

TRAINING within the hire and rental sector is not generic so it stands to reason that the training format and facilities that support it shouldn’t be either.

The environments, equipment, responsibilities, and risks faced by hire businesses are unique, demanding learning that is practical, relevant, and grounded firmly in industry reality. Industry demands are the primary driver of training needs and this is where HAE EHA training stands apart.

As a trade association, HAE EHA does not deliver training as a commercial exercise. Every course is designed with a single purpose: To support members and strengthen standards across the hire and rental industry. The focus is not only on compliance, but on competence, confidence, and consistency across the sector.

Courses are developed specifically for hire and rental operations, reflecting the equipment, workflows, and challenges faced on a daily basis. Training is delivered by experienced industry professionals rather than generic trainers, ensuring learners gain practical knowledge that they can apply immediately in real-world settings.

HAE EHA training also provides standardised, recognised, and transferable qualifications. This gives employers confidence that skills are understood and valued across the sector, supporting workforce mobility while maintaining high safety and operational standards.

It is very common to feel uncertain about training needs, especially as business goals, technology, and team dynamics evolve. For guidance on

selecting the most appropriate training for your team, HAE EHA’s Learning and Development team is always available to help you identify what your company, and specific teams, actually need then put you on track to receiving this.

Featured Course: ServiceTech – Module 1: Electrical Equipment (PAT)

Electrical safety is a critical responsibility for hire businesses. The ServiceTech – Module 1: Electrical Equipment course is designed specifically for those operating within the hire and rental environment, supporting the individuals responsible for inspecting, testing, and preparing electrical equipment before it goes out on hire.

Aimed at new or developing service technicians in Check & Test or Test & Run roles, the course covers essential electrical theory, combined inspection and testing (PAT), correct use of test equipment, and common repairs to cables, plugs, and switches. Practical, hands-on learning ensures skills can be applied immediately in real hire settings.

The course can be delivered on-site using HAE EHA members’ own PAT area and equipment, or at the HAE EHA training centre in Oswestry, offering flexibility to suit both businesses and learners.

Key benefits include safe and accurate PAT testing, improved fault identification and repair, and clear support for legal, insurance, and health and safety compliance. <<

Upcoming Open Training Courses:

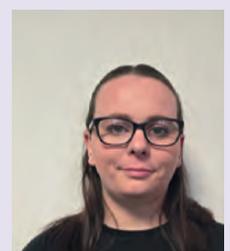
- IOSH Managing Safely (4 Days) - Starts February 17th, 2026 - Oswestry
- Mental Health Refresher (Half Day) - February 24th, 2026 - Online
- Mental Health Champion (1 Day) - February 25th, 2026 - Online
- Mental Health First Aid (2 Days) - Starts February 26th, 2026 - Online
- HireTech Maintenance Training Programme (18 months) - Starts April 2026 - Oswestry

Full course details and booking information are available at: <http://www.hae.org.uk/training>



Nikki Wyllie is responsible for learning and development within the association, supporting members to identify training needs and plan any development required for employees. Nikki also coordinates the association’s NVQ Assessment Centre and CITB Approved Training Organisation.

nikki.wyllie@hae.org.uk





A load off your mind ...

New partnership means HAE EHA members can tap into specialised training that will keep loading and securing operations safely on track.

EQUIPMENT is constantly on the move in the hire sector. Forklifts load customer orders onto flatbeds, small plant hire vehicles are manoeuvred onto trailers, and everything is secured for delivery and transported around the country, with customers expecting a fast turnaround.

Each part of the process carries risk, with workplace transport and loading operations all potentially dangerous activities if the relevant measures aren't in place.

Businesses must take action to reduce risk by ensuring those involved recognise the dangers and how to minimise them by working safely. They need the relevant skills and knowledge to carry out these tasks in the correct way, and regular reinforcement to ensure best practice is continually followed day to day.

Competent teams not only protect people and equipment but also

support efficiency and business reputation. When vehicles are loaded correctly, damage and delays are reduced. Likewise, when goods are safely secured, the risk of accidents (and resulting legal and financial repercussions) is minimised, and deliveries remain reliable. Training becomes more than a regulatory obligation, but instead a key driver of safe and compliant operations.

Working together

With training playing such a vital role in smooth running operations, in 2025 HAE EHA opted to partner with established provider Mentor Training to help member companies keep loading and securing safely on track.

Mentor is a provider of material handling training, with more than 35 years' experience supporting businesses to operate safely and efficiently. With many businesses

facing challenges around load security, specialist training to target the risks in line with the Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) code of practice and all relevant legislation is a real need.

Introduced to HAE EHA members to help address any safety issues in this area, Mentor has worked with businesses across the hire industry and the wider builders merchant sector, helping to improve operational safety and maintain compliance.

To continue to advocate the importance of training, it recently worked with HAE EHA to host a Technical Health & Safety Committee Meeting, and held demonstration sessions. Attendees were invited to engage in load security and plant moving exercises led by the Mentor team, allowing them to see the processes first-hand and gain insight into the risks involved when preparing hire equipment for delivery.

Training for the hire industry

Deliveries in the hire sector are rarely uniform, often involving large non palletised items or varied products for multi drop routes, all of which must be loaded, secured and transported safely.

To help hire businesses manage these unique risks, Mentor and HAE EHA have focussed on training which equips teams to confidently complete the various stages of the process.

Loading goods

Forklift trucks, commonly used to move goods onto delivery vehicles, can be very dangerous when used incorrectly, so operators must understand how to keep themselves and others safe at all times.

Mentor specialises in workplace transport training that delivers assured standards for safety and compliance. Its AITT-accredited training helps operators carry out essential pre use checks, manoeuvre in busy or confined spaces, handle and load goods safely, and understand stability, weight limits and attachments, among other essential skills. These crucial competencies help to prevent incidents such as overturned trucks, damaged loads, and pedestrian impacts.

To ensure that best practice taught in training is continually maintained, Mentor also provides supervisory training through its Managing Forklift Operations course, enabling leaders to identify and correct unsafe practice as it occurs, before it escalates.

Plant moving & loading

Beyond forklift operations, Mentor offers training for plant moving, specifically limited to basic operations and suitable for those needing to manoeuvre small mobile plant for loading onto hire vehicles or trailers. This ensures that those carrying this out are competent and confident, which is vital, particularly in shared yard environments where pedestrian safety is critical.

There are also specialist courses for loading and securing small plant onto trailers or vehicles with tail lifts or beavertails, to ensure this crucial part of the process can be carried out safely.

Securing loads for transportation

Indeed, whatever goods or equipment the customer has ordered, once

loaded they must be secured correctly to prevent damage, shifting, or loss during transit.

Mentor’s half-day load security training ensures that all those involved in the process understand best practice techniques for securing mixed loads, correct use of restraints, tie-downs and anchor points, methods to prevent movement in transit, as well as their legal responsibilities for safe transport. What’s more, for drivers, it offers 3.5 hours towards the Driver CPC periodic training quota required to retain a Certificate of Professional Competence.

Effective load security not only protects people, equipment and goods but also prevents legal and financial consequences, supporting a smooth, reliable delivery service from start to finish.

Benefits for hire businesses

By prioritising training for a seamless loading and securing process, hire businesses benefit from:

- Safe operations, reducing injury risk for both staff and customers
- Greater compliance confidence regards workplace and transport regulations
- Efficiency gains, with minimised damage and downtime
- Enhanced professionalism and customer faith in service quality
- Stronger operational resilience during peak periods

HAE EHA member companies can train on their own sites, using their own equipment and suitable loads, maximising relevance while making sure crucial training standards are met, every time. <<



To find out how Mentor can support the safety of your hire operations, call HAE EHA Training Services on 0121 380 4617, or email training@hae.org.uk.

Professional profile

Having joined HAE EHA 10 years ago, Nikki Wyllie held a number of support roles before taking on her current role as Learning and Development Officer. Here, we reflect on that journey and how Nikki's own career path is a role model for shaping workforce development.



IN 2016, Nikki Wyllie first stepped through the doors of the Hire Association's office as a nervous young learner on work experience placement.

Little could she have predicted the career path that lay ahead.

Arriving via a 12-week voluntary work experience placement through Jobcentre Plus, she brought with her determination, curiosity, and a willingness to learn. Those qualities quickly stood out and, by the end of her placement, Nikki was offered her first role within the organisation as Administration Assistant.

In that role, Nikki became a central point of support across the organisation. She was responsible for print services customer service, ensuring members' orders were carefully processed and delivered, and provided key administrative support to the commercial team. She also lent a steady hand to the Learning and Development function, assisting with training phonenumber overflow and keeping things running smoothly.

Nikki said the role not only gave her a deep understanding of the organisation's operational heartbeat, but also introduced her to the world of learning and development, a field she would soon help to transform.

Building an industry pathway (2018–2021)

In 2018, Nikki progressed into a new role as Centre Coordinator, taking on one of the most ambitious challenges the sector faced: A shortage in NVQ delivery.

She played a central role in opening a new NVQ assessment centre designed specifically to address this gap. Coordinating all training and NVQ programmes for over 600 members, Nikki streamlined processes and strengthened access to professional development across the industry.

She continued to oversee print services customer care during this time, maintaining her commitment to excellent member service.

Her work in this role was defined not just by operational success, but by strategic vision. Among her notable achievements were:

- Creating a complete, sector-wide career pathway, from a Level 1 Award all the way to a Level 7 university degree with MBA.
- Completing the CIPD Level 3 Foundation Certificate in Learning and Development.
- Earning the CITB Site Supervisors' Safety Training Scheme (SSSTS) qualification.
- Achieving the Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and

Practices of Assessment. These accomplishments positioned Nikki as a driving force behind professional development within the association and the wider industry.

Shaping the future of workforce development (2021–present)

In 2021, Nikki stepped into her current role as Learning and Development Officer; a role that capitalises on her expertise, industry insight, and passion for supporting others.

Her work focuses on helping members identify their training needs and build clear, forward-looking development plans. She designed a comprehensive training matrix to reflect the cyclical nature of industry requirements, enabling organisations to anticipate, plan, and invest proactively. Nikki also helps members access CITB grants and funding, further strengthening their ability to upskill their workforce.

Alongside her day-to-day responsibilities, she achieved a significant personal milestone: completing the Level 5 Learning and Development Consultant Business Partner Apprenticeship, solidifying her professional standing within the field.

Championing mental health and neurodiversity

Beyond formal training, Nikki has become a passionate advocate for mental health and neurodiversity within Hire Association and among its members. She has played a pivotal role in shaping organisational strategy, developing resources, and opening conversations that promote understanding, inclusion, and wellbeing.

A career built on growth, purpose, and impact

From starting as a volunteer to becoming the association's go-to expert in learning and development, Nikki's journey reflects commitment, resilience, and a deep belief in the power of opportunity.

Her story is not only a testament to personal growth but also a reminder of what can happen when an organisation recognises and nurtures potential. Today, Nikki continues to shape the learning landscape for hundreds of members, proving that with passion and purpose, a work-experience placement can become the foundation for an exceptional career. <<



Another cap for Stuart



WHILE HAE EHA prides itself on training and development for its members' employees, it believes it's also important to extend this to its own staff so they can continuously hone their skills and ensure they're equipped to best serve the organisation's members.

Stuart Tyrrell, HAE EHA's Marketing Officer, is a good example of how this is working and what can be achieved.

Over the years he's worked for the association he's developed a strong understanding of the hire industry and achieved several qualifications, most notably a Chartered Institute of Marketing Level 4 Certificate with Solihull College in 2016.

However in the Autumn of 2024 Stuart took on another challenge, to help develop a different set of skills by undertaking a Chartered Management Institute (CMI) Flexible Business Management Course with Dudley College of Technology.

CMI provides the tools, guidance and support to individuals in managerial roles and those on an upward path to management. It is the only organisation able to award the status of Chartered Manager, in recognition of exceptional leadership and a commitment to lifelong development.

Stuart completed his learning programme in June 2025, after 35 weeks of intense study, and qualified with a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management. In celebration of this achievement, a graduation ceremony was held at Dudley College campus in November.

"This was the most intense study I've ever undertaken, made more challenging because the course was delivered remotely and I gave up hours of my spare time each week," said Stuart. "However, I was able to call upon a good deal of my own experience to help me complete the modules. I was surprised at how much knowledge I, arguably, already held. It was highly rewarding but it'll be a few years before I take on any more learning at that level!"

HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze praised Stuart's commitment to his studies, saying: "This is another example of HAE EHA's commitment to lifelong learning and developing our colleagues to deliver for our members. Many congratulations, Stuart!" <<

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