

INTERFACE

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ON HIRE



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INTRODUCTION BY HAE EHA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PAUL GAZE

A view from on hire



WHEN I last penned my 'View From On Hire', we were all preparing to travel to Grosvenor House at Park Lane to celebrate this year's Hire Awards of Excellence.

What a night that was! As always, it was so wonderful to see the whole industry come together not only to celebrate achievements but to network and show how strong and united the hire industry really is.

There were some fantastic entries this year and it gave me great pleasure to see three outstanding achievement awards presented, along with the main category winners, some noteworthy Highly Commended and some exceptional entries overall. We know how much time and effort goes into pulling those entries together and it's so good to see them all highlighted to everyone gathered at the awards ceremony.

We've now published the Hire Awards of Excellence 2026 special supplement to Interface On Hire which can be read and downloaded from the 'Interface' section on the HAE EHA website's news tab. If you'd like to make a note in your diary, the next Hire Awards of Excellence will return to Grosvenor House, London on Saturday, April 17th in 2027.

It was a delight to attend the Hire Association Europe (HAE) and Event Hire Association (EHA) Members event at Amazon EMA4, in the Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield recently and see such a good turnout of members. The gathering featured presentations and discussions on current issues affecting the plant, tool, and equipment hire

sectors and we were all given an extensive tour of the highly-automated Amazon fulfilment centre. Those from the HAE EHA Risk Services team praised the facility tour and highlighted the opportunity it presented to show how risk management can aid hire businesses in achieving SafeHire certification, while others, like me were stunned into silence by some of the examples of health and safety malpractice demonstrated during Carl Bartlett's presentation. It just goes to show that there is still a lot of work to be done to ensure everyone within hire is fully aware of implications that can arise from taking short cuts.

Our SafeHire Certification Scheme is seeing continued growth and success, so much so that our HAE EHA Certification Services department is now recruiting for a new SafeHire Auditor. If you think you or anyone you know might be interested in helping to provide SafeHire audits of hire and rental organisations throughout the UK, and you have the relevant experience, please get in touch. It's sure to be a rewarding job and it's a great team to work with.

While we're on the subject of health and safety, I was pleased to hear the announcement from The Health in Construction Leadership Group Respiratory Risk Working Group, in collaboration with the Construction Dust Partnership, regarding the launch

of the Silica Hub. This dedicated digital resource is designed to simplify the management of Respirable Crystalline Silica and protect workers across the sector. Operating under the mantra "Together Everyone Achieves More" (TEAM), the group set out to tackle the industry's most significant respiratory threat, silica dust, and, as active members of the working group, HAE EHA played a vital role in ensuring that the hub provides practical, actionable guidance to reflect the realities of equipment hire and on-site tool usage.

Many of you will be aware that King Charles III recently gave a speech from the House of Lords, setting out the Government's agenda for the upcoming session of UK Parliament. The King's speech covered matters including stronger affiliation with the European Union, investment and pilot schemes for defence technology, and boosting the economy by nationalising British Steel. It also referenced the development of bills to limit trials by jury, the introduction of digital ID, NHS modernisation, revising special educational needs teaching, and a lot more.

As our Director of Public Affairs, Mark Bradshaw, has stated, this is welcome information for the hire sector, as it will enable and accelerate infrastructure projects, national rail, the Lower Thames Crossing and other highways schemes in particular. <<

"It was so wonderful to see the whole industry come together not only to celebrate achievements but to network and show how strong and united the hire industry really is."

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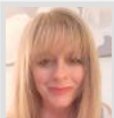
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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR ...

Over the past couple of months, I've had an opportunity to catch up with a lot of people in hire – first while they celebrated a host of industry achievements at the Hire Awards of Excellence in London, and more recently with those who gathered for an informative members' day at Sutton Coldfield.

The awards event lived up to all the expectations we've grown to expect from this glittering night of celebrations. It was good to have such an amusing entertainer as Adger Brown, a veteran UK stand-up comedian, presenting the awards and keeping us laughing during the event, and I particularly enjoyed hearing about the accomplishments of this year's three special recognition award winners. There was a sobering moment while we paid tribute to the hire stalwart Douglas Anderson, who recently passed away, but this in itself was also a cause for celebration as we looked back on some of his own achievements and the lasting memories he's left amongst many of his colleagues in hire.

HAE EHA Marketing Officer Stuart Tyrrell again did us proud in pulling everything together for this event, and it was good to see him and the rest of the hard-working HAE EHA staff finally able to relax and celebrate with members from all sectors of hire. We pulled together a special supplement on the awards, complete with winners' names and details, which you can find a link to on page 25.

The months since I attended the first members' day in Bolton last year have flown by and it was good to see how interest has grown in this event, with almost double the attendance at the recent Sutton Coldfield event. I needed a strong coffee after opting to avoid the queues of traffic and taking the toll route this year, but the event was well worth the journey for me. You can read all about this, the presentations from various HAE EHA personnel and partners, and the extensive insights we were given into how this immense distribution hub is kept operating on pages 17-23.

Commercial Director Neil Bravery made the trip to Sweden recently to gain first-hand experience of how a two-year digital transformation has turned things around for a transport company. There's a lot that UK hire companies can learn from this and it makes for good reading – you can find out all about this on page 12.

Last but not least, where would we be without our members and suppliers? We've got six pages full of updates about what many of these have been up to recently, and I'm always happy to hear from others. So be sure to catch up with our members' news and keep me up to speed with your own – you can contact me at editorial@hae.org.uk and if you have anything you'd like to promote, be sure to drop Theresa a line at advertising@hae.org.uk.

Stephanie Cornwall
Editor

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Training

Behind-the-scenes view for students

MORE than 60 students from five schools and colleges got a behind-the-scenes look at Sunbelt Rentals' operations recently, giving them an insight into the range of roles and career opportunities available across the business.

For the third year running, the company took part in Build UK's Open Doors initiative, welcoming 63 students to its depots in Chadderton, Smethwick and Basildon.

During their visits, students met with experts from across the business including depot managers, workshop managers, powered access apprentices, multi skilled apprentices, plant maintenance apprentices, yard operatives, and transport planners. They explored equipment and depot operations and gained a better understanding of the variety of career pathways available - from apprenticeships through to long-term development opportunities. For many, it was their first experience of a live working depot environment.

Chief Transformation Officer at Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland, Charlotte Bennett, said: "The success of our business is built on our people. Open Doors allows us to showcase the breadth of opportunity available and the clear development pathways that enable our teams to build rewarding, long-term careers with us."

Early Careers Coordinator Georgia Satchwell said the Open Doors initiative provides an opportunity to build meaningful, long term relationships with schools and partners, which she said inspired students and those exploring a future career.

"The connections we create during Open Doors don't end with the week itself - they allow us to continue working closely together long after it's over," she said.



Innovation Award win at NWCHSG Awards

HARRIS Brick Safety Systems has been awarded the Health and Safety Award for Innovation at the NWCHSG (North West Construction Health & Safety Group) Awards.

The annual NWCHSG Awards recognise outstanding achievements and innovations in health, safety, and wellbeing across the construction industry in the North West of England. The awards celebrate individuals and companies that go above and beyond to drive meaningful improvements in workplace safety and positive safety cultures.

Founder and Managing Director of Harris Brick Safety Systems, Carl Harris, said: "This recognition is a significant achievement for our business and a testament to the commitment, passion, and innovation that drives everything we do. From day one, our focus has been on improving safety within the construction industry by delivering practical solutions that genuinely make a difference on site."

The system has been developed to actively reduce accidents, near misses, and dangerous occurrences, while also supporting more efficient and sustainable working practices.

"Winning this award highlights the growing importance of innovation in health and safety and reinforces the value of our approach," said Carl. "We would like to thank the NWCHSG for recognising our work, as well as our partners and supporters who continue to believe in our vision. This award reflects the hard work of our entire team and strengthens our determination to continue raising standards across the industry."

He went on to say that the award win was 'just the beginning' and he hoped to build upon the company's success.

"As we move forward, we remain committed to driving change, improving site safety, and delivering solutions that protect lives while supporting a more sustainable construction sector."

"This award reflects the hard work of our entire team and strengthens our determination to continue raising standards across the industry."

Together at One: A glimpse of industry's future

HIRE customers, partners, suppliers and industry voices recently came together for an event in Liverpool which centred on the ideas, technologies and partnerships shaping the future of the industry.

Focused on innovation, technology, safety and sustainability, the event organised by Sunbelt Rentals created a space for practical conversations about the challenges and opportunities facing the sector. From AI and equipment intelligence to digital tools, operational insight and lower-carbon solutions, the event programme explored how change is being applied in real-world settings across the industry.

Across three theatres focused on covering, technology and innovation, customers, and people, attendees heard from speakers and experts on the topics driving transformation across multiple sectors and industries. Sessions explored how data, connected equipment, safety

solutions and new ways of working are helping businesses improve performance, strengthen customer experience and support teams on the ground to work as one team.

The event also featured live demonstrations, interactive displays and opportunities to connect directly with specialists from across Sunbelt Rentals and its supply chain partners, giving attendees practical insight into the solutions, services and helping shape the next chapter for the industry.

Title sponsor, JCB, showcased hydrogen solutions during the event, highlighting a shared commitment to practical innovation and technologies that support the transition to low and zero-carbon ways of working.

CEO of Sunbelt Rentals, Phil Parker, said: "As customer expectations continue to shift towards more integrated, accountable delivery, our focus is on making it easier to do business with us – through one connected experience, clearer ownership, and solutions delivered at scale. The event brought that to life."



Company president outlines his origins

REGIONAL President of Ramudden Global, Adam Caulfield, recently shared details of how he began his career journey in hospitality and what attracted him to hire and construction.

During an interview with Commercial Director of HAE EHA Neil Bravery, Adam discussed several key areas regarding his career and the traffic management sector:

He spoke about his professional background, starting out in hospitality and catering, including early foundational customer service work at Disney, before he moved into the coffee and tool hire sectors, including HSS and Sunbelt, while sharing what ultimately attracted him to the hire and construction industries.

He outlined the origins of Ramudden and Chevron Traffic Management, detailing how the business began in Sweden

roughly 20 years ago, its subsequent expansion into the UK market, and his personal role in managing that regional growth.

During the podcast, he shared the overarching operational scope of the business, discussing how traffic management changes across varying environments, ranging from high-speed motorways to complex urban infrastructure, as well as highlighting the company's product ranges. He heavily emphasised its ongoing core mission to enforce and elevate high standards of health and safety within the traffic and equipment hire industry.

The conversation concluded with a strategic forward-look, diving into new technological developments and the corporate objectives the company aims to achieve over the next 10 years. Visit: https://youtu.be/9y_ZYjODUbk

Companies team up to bring hydrogen power to equipment rental market

GEOPURA and Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland have announced a trade partner agreement to make clean hydrogen power widely available to Sunbelt Rentals customers through their national hire network.

Under the agreement, Sunbelt Rentals, will offer GeoPura Hydrogen Power Units (HPUs) and green hydrogen gas supply as part of its hire portfolio. GeoPura operates one of the UK's largest fleets of HPUs, already deployed across major construction projects, live broadcasts and national events. The GeoPura HPU functions as a self-charging battery powered by hydrogen, converting green hydrogen into electricity through a fuel cell process. The only outputs are water and heat, delivering silent, zero-emission power wherever it's needed whilst protecting local air quality.

The system provides continuous, reliable power and automatically recharges its integrated battery, maintaining efficiency across variable loads. They replace diesel generators for temporary and off-grid power or operate alongside existing renewable and grid infrastructure as supplementary power, strengthening resilience and supporting wider electrification goals.

GeoPura's hydrogen is produced at certified low-carbon production sites in the UK and delivered through a managed logistics network, with remote monitoring for real-time performance management and emissions reporting.

Sunbelt's Sales Director Andy Doherty said: "Partnering with GeoPura it helps us to deliver hydrogen power that's clean, proven, and fully supported through our national network in order to make it easier than ever for our customers to adopt zero-emission power."

CEO of GeoPura, Andrew Cunningham, said: "This partnership is a key milestone in scaling hydrogen power to the mass market. GeoPura's technology and hydrogen supply chain have already been proven across the UK's most demanding projects. Working with Sunbelt Rentals, a leader in equipment hire and temporary power delivery, enables us to bring hydrogen to more sites, more quickly, and support the UK's transition away from fossil fuels."



Compliance infrastructure re-aligned

A REBRAND by RiConnect highlights how it now aligns with the world's leading regulatory authorities.

The cloud-based software and compliance infrastructure company was founded in 2019, with its management platform built for high-risk and highly-regulated industries. Its latest rebrand features the tagline 'Compliance infrastructure for OSHA & HSE', highlighting conformity with the US's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the UK's Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The company's President, Steven Hong, said: "We have firmly anchored our solutions in recognised statutory frameworks. OSHA and HSE don't just stand out as recognised names in everyday parlance, they effectively define the operating baseline for industrial health and safety compliance in two of the world's most influential regulatory environments. Together, they shape how organisations manage risk, and demonstrate compliance in practice, providing a clear reference point for both operational standards and regulatory accountability.

"Expectations around environmental and health data have become more rigorous. When incidents occur, the scrutiny is intense. Facilities that cannot quickly produce organised, consistent compliance documentation face heightened penalties and extended investigations."

Organisations that adopt RiConnect's compliance infrastructure respond to regulatory changes efficiently because all their safety data is centralised and up to date, he added. They demonstrate clear, organised compliance during audits and inspections by pulling consistent records from a single source. They catch safety issues before they escalate into incidents through real-time monitoring and alerts. Their compliance efforts become integrated and systematic rather than reactive, with RiConnect serving as the central nervous system for all compliance activities.

Steven added: "With this rebrand, we are embedding our digital compliance infrastructure ever deeper within recognised statutory frameworks, actively supporting how organisations manage safety obligations and elevate compliance standards."

The linchpin of RiConnect's compliance infrastructure remains the Digital Product Passport (DPP), which enables critical product data, inspection records, and usage history to be fully traceable throughout the asset lifecycle. This level of visibility not only strengthens compliance but also streamlines maintenance, inspection, and ongoing asset management.

Teammates complete Cumbrian Challenge in support of veterans

WORKMATES from a hire company have raised around £19,000 for a veterans’ charity after completing the Cumbrian Challenge in the Lake District recently.

The 120 teammates from Sunbelt Rentals UK and Ireland raised the funds for Walking With The Wounded, joining organisations, businesses and individuals to take on the challenge in support of veterans and their families. It is the sixth year that Sunbelt has supported the event.

Colleagues from across the business took on one of three routes: Peak: 14km, 13 teams; Tough: 20km, nine teams; Tougher: 27km, five teams.

The Cumbrian Challenge brings participants together each year for a team-based event in the Lake District, raising funds to support veterans as they transition back into civilian life. Funds raised contribute to employment support, mental health services and care coordination. Across all routes, teams navigated challenging terrain and conditions, demonstrating strong collaboration and determination throughout.

Project Lead Cumbrian Challenge, Leanne Casey, said: “It’s been a privilege to lead such a committed and collaborative team at the Cumbrian Challenge. Working alongside Walking With The Wounded, colleagues have not only taken on a physical challenge but also made a meaningful contribution to a cause that truly matters – an achievement I’m incredibly proud of.”

Chief Operating Officer for Walking With The Wounded, Joel Oxberry, said described the teams effort and company’s support as ‘outstanding’.

“Their energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the Armed Forces community was visible throughout the weekend, and we are hugely grateful for the partnership, generosity and team spirit they continue to show Walking With The Wounded,” he said.



Machine-specific support

NIFTYLIFT has introduced a new machine-specific support hub, MyNifty, which is designed to provide operators, technicians, and rental companies with instant access to tailored information for their specific equipment.

Users access the platform by scanning the unique QR code found on the machine’s serial plate, or by manually typing the serial number into the system. Once a machine is identified, MyNifty retrieves resources tailored exactly to that specific model’s build.

It delivers quick-reference guides, instructional and recovery videos, fault/error code definitions, and technical documentation. Those wishing to use it on a job site can pull up the system directly on the Niftylift MyNifty Platform.

MyNifty works alongside Niftylink telematics, but serves a different purpose.

Award clinched for third year in a row

FOR the third consecutive year, Niftylift has been named Hire Industry Supplier of the Year at the 2026 Hire Awards of Excellence in London, hosted by Hire Association Europe (HAE).

The award recognises outstanding performance across the hire industry supply chain, including innovation, customer support, employee development, and sustainable business practices. Niftylift’s latest win brings its total to eight Supplier of the Year titles.

In addition to this success, Niftylift was also shortlisted for Hire Industry Product of the Year with its latest narrow electric boom lift, the HR12N, which was highly commended by the judges.

The HR12N represents the next generation of compact, all-electric boom lifts, combining improved operational flexibility, strong battery endurance, and advanced safety features such as SiOPS®.

Managing Director John Keely said: “To be recognised as Supplier of the Year for the third year running is a fantastic achievement for the whole team. It reflects the hard work, dedication, and commitment we put into supporting our customers and delivering products that meet the needs of the hire industry.

“We’re also delighted to see the HR12N Highly Commended. It’s a product we’re incredibly proud of, and this recognition reinforces the positive response we’ve already seen from the market.”



Datag shortlisted for British Security Awards 2026 for RAPID

A TECHNOLOGY platform created by Datag, a provider of forensic security marking, asset tracking, and registration systems, was in the shortlist for a prestigious British Security Award at the time of 'Interface On Hire' going to press.

Datag is a finalist in the Technology Project of the Year category at the British Security Awards 2026 for RAPID, its technology platform designed to help police officers identify stolen and suspect assets.

RAPID brings key information together in one place, helping officers quickly check plant, agricultural machinery, motorcycles, scooters, and trailers at the roadside, on site, or during wider enforcement activity.

The system draws data from the CESAR database, PNC/LEDS, and other Datag databases, providing police with vital information in a practical, easy-to-use format. Assets must be Datag- or CESAR-marked, helping officers confirm identity, check status, and take appropriate action when theft or suspicious activity is identified.

Datag says RAPID was developed by its technical team, led by Lead Developer Adam Plaskitt, with Police Liaison Officer Vince Lane bringing frontline policing experience to help make it a practical tool for officers.

The result is a platform that already supports faster recovery of stolen equipment, acts as a deterrent to organised crime, and helps reduce costly downtime for contractors, hire companies, and equipment owners.



Managing Director Kevin Howells said: "We are delighted that RAPID has been shortlisted at the British Security Awards 2026. Theft remains a serious issue across a wide range of sectors, from construction and agriculture to motorcycles, scooters and trailers, and RAPID was developed to give police officers the information they need in one place.

"By drawing together data from CESAR, PNC/LEDS and Datag's own databases, RAPID helps officers make

quicker, more informed checks on Datag and CESAR-marked assets. To be recognised in the Technology Project of the Year category is a real credit to the Datag team, including Adam Plaskitt, who led the technical development, and Vince Lane, whose policing experience helped shape RAPID into a practical tool for frontline use."

The British Security Awards recognise excellence across the professional security industry, celebrating the people, projects and organisations helping to raise standards and improve protection across the UK.

This year's awards will also include a highly commended award alongside the overall winner, giving shortlisted organisations further opportunity to be recognised for their work.

The winners were due to be announced at the British Security Awards ceremony, at the Royal Lancaster Hotel.



256 bags of litter collected

Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland recently supported the Great British Spring Clean 2026, with teammates coming together to collect litter and support their local communities.

The Great British Spring Clean, organised by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, is the UK's largest mass-action environmental campaign, bringing together individuals, communities and organisations to improve local environments.

As part of the campaign, Sunbelt Rentals teams pledged to collect 100 bags of litter, working in partnership with local community organisations and alongside external volunteers to take part in clean-up activities between 16–29 March. Activities took place across multiple locations from Warrington to Dundee including local community spaces, green areas and locations surrounding their depots.

In total, 79 teammates participated, collecting 256 bags of litter, exceeding its original pledge and helping to create

cleaner, safer spaces for the communities they serve.

Social Sustainability Manager Lisa Kennedy said: "It's been incredibly inspiring to see so many of our teammates roll up their sleeves and take on this challenge. Supporting our local communities and helping to keep shared spaces clean and safe for everyone to enjoy is something we're really proud of. We set ourselves an ambitious target of collecting 100 bags of litter, and while I wasn't certain we'd reach it, the team has absolutely surpassed expectations. The enthusiasm and commitment shown has been fantastic, and I'm excited to see how this initiative can grow even further next year."

One of the initiatives took place in Dundee, where Sunbelt Rentals supported a litter pick with St Fergus Primary School and donated 16 litter pickers, 24 pairs of gloves, 8 litter hoops and 25 high-visibility vests to help pupils continue caring for their local environment.

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Nici Sundén Cullberg, CEO and Founder, Atrik, and Neil Bravery, Commercial Director, HAE EHA, visited the Renta depot to get a first-hand look at how the company has revitalised its transport operations.



Tackling rising transport costs through smarter logistics

Nordic company Atrik, a recent addition to the HAE EHA members' team, and HAE EHA Commercial Director Neil Bravery, recently got a first-hand look at how a two-year digital transformation turned transport margins around in Sweden – and what UK hire companies can learn from this.

As equipment hire businesses across the UK and Europe face mounting pressure on margins, transport operations are rapidly becoming one of the industry's biggest operational challenges.

That was the key message that came across during a recent industry discussion between HAE EHA, construction technology software company Atrik, and Renta, a full-service Swedish equipment rental company that leases construction machinery, tools, and site facilities to the construction, industrial, and infrastructure sectors.

During a special fact-finding mission to Sweden in which HAE EHA Commercial Director Neil Bravery and Atrik's CEO and Founder Nici Sundén Cullberg visited Renta CEO Joacim Johansson, who described how rapid

growth exposed serious weaknesses in traditional hire logistics operations – including manual dispatching, disconnected depot coordination and escalating transport costs.

The discussion reflects a broader shift taking place across the European hire sector, where delivery operations are increasingly becoming central to profitability, utilisation and customer service performance.

Renta, Scandinavia's largest equipment hire company, operates around 80 depots in Sweden and manages significant daily transport volumes across the country. According to Johansson, the company's previous delivery operation became increasingly difficult to control as the business expanded.

CEO Joacim Johansson said: "We did it the old-fashioned way with

pen and paper. We sent truck drivers out manually, called all the orders in and out, and everything was handled through phone calls."

The operational strain became particularly visible in Stockholm, where the company was coordinating around 20 delivery vehicles daily alongside 30 subcontracted transport providers.

"We had equipment moving every second between depots without really knowing where the trucks were. Very often we saw our own trucks passing each other. One was picking up equipment while another was delivering to the same area. It was a mess," said Joacim.

He said the problem was not customer demand, but the growing operational cost of maintaining service levels as the business scaled.



“Hire companies have spent years focusing on fleet growth and depot expansion, but transport operations have often remained highly manual.”

Nici Sundén Cullberg, CEO and Founder, Alrik

“We kept adding more people just to maintain the same service level. Customer satisfaction was high, but transportation costs were going through the roof.”

The challenges outlined by Renta are increasingly familiar across the hire sector, particularly as businesses face labour shortages, fuel volatility, tighter margins and greater customer expectations around delivery reliability.

HAE EHA Commercial Director Neil Bravery said many hire companies still rely heavily on fragmented systems, depot-level coordination and manual planning processes.

“There are still businesses comfortable with pen and paper because that is how they have always worked. But operational complexity is increasing all the time,” said Neil.

The conversation highlighted how customer expectations around hire logistics are also changing rapidly, particularly on larger construction projects where delays and poor delivery coordination can have direct operational consequences on site.

Joachim said delivery performance has become a critical differentiator for hire companies competing in increasingly demanding markets.

“The machines are the same across the industry. Service is key. We decided early that transport and quick deliveries had to become one of the things we focused on.”

Renta now provides customers with delivery updates and estimated arrival

times via the Alrik platform, giving site teams clearer information around equipment movements and collections.

“Customers know when we are coming, when the machine has arrived and when it has been collected. That removes uncertainty,” said Joachim.

Wider issue for hire

For Nici, the wider issue facing the sector is that many hire businesses are still trying to manage increasingly complex delivery operations using disconnected processes and reactive planning.

“Hire companies have spent years focusing on fleet growth and depot expansion, but transport operations have often remained highly manual. The next operational gains in hire are likely to come from logistics, utilisation and transport efficiency,” he said. “As hire businesses scale, knowing where equipment is moving, how vehicles are being used and how depots coordinate deliveries, becomes operationally critical.”

The discussion also touched on increasing sustainability pressure across the sector, particularly around reducing unnecessary transport movements and improving carbon reporting capabilities. Renta is now the first hire operator in the Nordics able to provide customers with carbon emissions data for their deliveries directly through the Alrik platform.

Neil highlighted that transport-related emissions reporting is becoming increasingly important for UK hire companies involved in larger

infrastructure projects and framework agreements and Joachim agreed that demand is increasing.

Renta initially tested its transport planning approach across 12 depots in southern Sweden before rolling the system out across the wider business. According to Joachim, the biggest challenge was not technology implementation, but operational change management.

“People were sceptical in the beginning. They thought it would never work. But after two or three months, they saw the benefits. Now they do not want to go back to pen and paper.”

Today all 80 depots use the Alrik platform daily, with transport margins having moved from materially negative to positive within two years of deployment.

“We have improved the transportation margins quite significantly — from a really bad negative margin to a positive margin - in two years,” said Joachim.

The three men all stated that transport operations are increasingly becoming central to scalability and margin protection. As hire businesses continue to grow, the ability to coordinate deliveries efficiently, improve utilisation and reduce unnecessary transport movements is likely to become a far more significant competitive advantage.

The discussion was recorded as part of the HAE EHA podcast series, filmed on location at Renta’s depot in Stockholm and is available to watch on YouTube. <<

Lunch with the CEO

A chip off the old block - award-winner follows in mum's footsteps

Following the recent Hire Awards of Excellence, HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze meets Young Apprentice of the Year award winner, Lucy Jolley, her 'inspirational' mum Rachel Littler, and Group HSSEQ Director Andy Johnson, at Speedy Hire's HQ.



HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze chatted to Lucy Jolley about her win and her career aspirations.



I ask: Lucy, congratulations on being recognised as the HAE EHA Young Apprentice of the Year, at the Hire Awards of Excellence 2026. You were the unanimous choice of the judges. How do you feel about being recognised by your peers as the Young Apprentice of the Year?

Lucy says: Thank you. I was quite shocked, to be honest, because I didn't really expect it, but my manager put me through, and I was just glad that they recognised how much hard work I put into it through the apprenticeship. I was quite proud of myself for being nominated.

I ask: Your employer, Speedy Hire, demonstrates a real commitment to developing the workforce and investing in people, and people really are a key part of any business. Was this a factor in you choosing Speedy Hire as your employer to do your apprenticeship?

Lucy says: Yes. I've seen how much my mum has grown through the business, so I thought there are a lot of opportunities to grow and work your way up. Through my apprenticeship, they supported me, all my colleagues and my manager especially, and I wouldn't have passed my apprenticeship without any of their help.

I ask: I get the impression it's a real team effort working together to support each other within the business?

Lucy says: Yes, definitely.

I ask: How did you decide on a career in the hire-and-rental sector? What were your thoughts on doing that?

Lucy says: I'd left school, and I didn't want to go to college. I'd seen that there were apprentice programmes at Speedy. I had a look into the apprenticeship, and it seemed like the best option because you can work, learn at the same time and get the qualification whilst also earning money.

I ask: Do you work here in the Speedy head office?

Lucy says: Yes, I work in number 20 building.

I ask: What does a typical day look like for you here at Speedy?

Lucy says: There are a few customers on my hire desk, but I mainly deal

“I've seen how much my mum has grown through the business, so I thought there are a lot of opportunities to grow and work your way up.”

with one customer (Amco). I do all the hires and off-hires. They ring up quite regularly throughout the day. I speak to many customers on the phone and help them with what they need.

I ask: Is it a wide range of equipment that you provide to the client?

Lucy says: Yes, it can be from anything, really. We mainly supply the small tools provided from depots local to our customers as most of the time, they need them urgently. However, we can also supply equipment from our rehire team, which is usually more of the bigger equipment that we do not stock.

I ask: Which elements of your role / your job do you really enjoy?

Lucy says: I enjoy working with my team, and I like helping the customers and making sure that they get what they need.

I ask: It seems from what you're saying, it really is a team environment where you're learning together, you're supporting each other. Do you feel that's how it is?

Lucy says: Yes, if I ever need any help, I always know that I can go to them, even if it's just the person sitting next to me, or my manager. Everyone's always there to help.

I ask: What's been the most rewarding part of your career so far at Speedy Hire?

Lucy says: Definitely being nominated and winning the Young Apprentice of the Year Award, but also being recognised for the work I put into the apprenticeship.

I ask: How do you find combining on-the-job work experience with studying towards your apprenticeship?

Lucy says: It was difficult but, because I had the support around me, it made it a lot easier. I just made sure that I had everything done in advance, and I wasn't doing it at the last minute. I really enjoyed doing the apprenticeship, as I felt like it not only increased my knowledge of the job but also helped me understand the different roles throughout Speedy.

I ask: Would you recommend other young people considering an apprenticeship?

Lucy says: Yes definitely, because it gives you the qualification and, when you finish school, it gives you more of an option to get the confidence and understanding of working in a workplace environment along with your qualification.

I ask: The results for the end-point assessment element of your apprenticeship were exceptional and the judges really picked that up when they were considering who should win the award. You obviously put a huge amount of work into preparing and getting ready to go through that. But how did you prepare? How did you get ready for that big moment?

Lucy says: I made sure to do a lot of mock tests. I'd go over the questions days before if I knew I had any tests or calls coming up. I'd make sure I'd take the time out of my day to go and revise it and make sure I was prepared.

I ask: Well, it certainly paid off because you had exceptional marks in terms of EPA, so well done for that. Congratulations. What's your next goal or series of goals/milestones that you have here within Speedy?

Lucy says: Probably just to get more knowledge and understanding of a hire controller for now. Then, as I grow more into the job, maybe look into different careers and see what's available at Speedy.

I ask: So, who do you look up to most at work?

Lucy says: Probably my Mum, because I've seen how much she's grown, as she's been at Speedy for quite a while. She joined Speedy when she was my age, and I've seen how much she has progressed in the business. Also, my manager and my colleagues, because they help and support each other every day and show how hard they work each day.

“Go for the role - there are so many opportunities and you learn everyday skills, gain confidence and get to build relationships with customers.”

I ask: Well, you've got a great role model there in your mum in terms of her contribution to development here at Speedy, and working with the others. That family approach of learning together is obviously making a big impact on you and your career as you progress. What advice would you give someone concerning a career in hire and rental?

Lucy says: I'd say definitely go for the role as there are so many opportunities and you learn everyday skills, gain confidence and get to build relationships with customers.

I ask: One of my colleagues at the Hire Association Europe, Kelly Raven, is working with Sophie Newport from HSS to establish a young hires group. Would you be interested in getting involved in the group?

Lucy says: Yes definitely! <<



Lucy Jolley and her mum.



HAE EHA Young Apprentice of the Year Lucy Jolley with Speedy's Chief People Officer, Ellie Armour and Speedy Hire Group HSSEQ Director Andy Johnson.



Informed and connected

High attendance marks a successful members' day as people from all sectors within hire turn out to hear vital updates and get an inside look at how a major distribution centre works.

THE second HAE EHA Members Day took place at the EMA4 Amazon distribution hub in Sutton Coldfield recently, where around 40 members gathered to hear presentations and learn about the latest work being carried out by the association before getting an inside view of how the distribution centre is run.

Companies represented at the event came from a wide range of hire sectors and included: Stallard Kane, Everywhen, Arik Technologies AB, AMPS, Safety Shield Global, Euro Towers, RiConnect UK, Warners Group Publications, Alan Guthrie On Hire, Andrew Sykes, RM Group Services, Ermin Plant Hire Services Ltd, Hirelink UK (Midlands) Ltd, Hy-Ram Engineering Co Ltd, CJS Safety Systems, SmartEquip, Allens Catering Hire Services Ltd, Plato Catering, ENAR, Wacker Neuson, CLM Construction Supplies and Point of Rental Software.

HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze gave a welcoming speech before Commercial Director Neil Bravery outlined the current work being carried out on behalf of members by HAE EHA.

Director of Certification Services, Carl Bartlett, then spoke about SafeHire certification and some current health and safety challenges in hire while Development Director at HAE Insurance Services and EHA Insurance Services, Anders Mclocklan, briefly outlined how members can benefit from the HireSecure offering.

Nathan Jones, Managing Director at Stallard Kane, providers of HAE EHA Risk Services, spoke about the time-consuming administrative and legal pressures members face while running their business and what support is available to relieve them of this, while Arik's CEO and Founder, Nici Sundén Cullberg, showed slides detailing a recent visit he and Neil Bravery made

to a Swedish logistics company to see what UK companies could learn from its recent digital transformation.

Head of Office & Membership Services, Kelly Raven, briefly introduced the HAE EHA Young Hirers Committee and Interface On Hire Editor, Stephanie Cornwall, spoke about the HAE EHA magazine and what members can gain from it.

547,000 square feet building tour

All those present were then split into groups and were given a guided tour of the full distribution facility. All marvelled at the sheer scale of the 547,000 square feet facility and the intricate procedures that enable it to keep functioning at pace.

In one record-breaking day, 649 units were stowed at the facility, with 5,900 units being accepted in, members were told by their Amazon host. >>

"There are a lot of units, so people are working pretty quickly. That was an incredible result and demonstrates that, when the customer orders an item, how quickly, safely, and cost-effectively we can get it out."

Having multiple buildings also means that if an item is ordered that hasn't yet been stowed, it can be immediately located and distributed from another building, she stressed. However, because this increases the cost of sending, the goal is to stow as quickly as possible to prevent this happening.

"Our aim is always this: If we stow quickly, the pickers can pick quicker and we can get packed," she said.

There are usually 3,000 people working in the building – although this increases at peak times.

"During peak, we can have up to 3,500 people in the building. We have an inbound/outbound process. We have a night operations team, and we have seasonal and permanent staff in our building. During prime/peak times, we'll hire more people on temporary contracts. We have robotics support as well," she said.

She went on to outline some of the training opportunities available.

"We don't only offer career progression with Amazon – we offer apprenticeships as well. We offer something called career choice, which means that if anybody who wants to do, say, a programme on data analysis or Microsoft or something similar, we'll pay for that as well."

Building a future for staff and bringing about team growth is paramount, she added.

"We welcomed 981 new staff to EMA4 this year, and that's down to expansion. We increased our building

to make it more efficient, so we hired more people, which meant more new team leaders. L4s are our team area managers, L5s are senior area managers, and then we've had loads of tier 3 to L4 promotions," she said.

There is one operational manager per shift, managing around five area managers who manage a team of around 20. In addition to this, there are security operation managers.

The following HireSecure, SafeHire and Risk Services sections are special spotlights on the presentations given at Members' Day. <<



“No other facility like it”

DEVELOPMENT Director at HAE Insurance Services and EHA Insurance Services, Anders McLocklan, outlined how members can benefit from HireSecure, the short term hire insurance option that protects hire businesses from losses incurred from hiring out their equipment, during his recent presentation at Members Day.

Anders emphasised that HireSecure is a more effective and streamlined replacement for the former HireGuard scheme as it is easy to make an application, claims are quickly processed, and there is no need for members to rely on their customers' commercial policies.

Anders noted that onboarding takes five days, with some claims processed and settled in as few as two working days, while the scheme covers accidental loss or damage (up to £100,000 per claim), theft, vandalism

and fraudulent hire. This includes both owned and cross-hired equipment, with no single article limit.

He emphasised that the loss and damage waiver option allows front-line employees to easily process hires without needing FCA approval or undergoing lengthy mandatory training.

“It covers all risks anywhere within the UK and it can be extended to the EU if needed. It's calculated at 15% percentage of the hire rate. So in effect, a £100 hire will cost your customer £15 for the duration of the hire, plus VAT,” said Anders.

“Basically, with the claim settlement, we have two years' reinstatement, so anything up to two years old, will get replaced as new. After that, the plant hirers and the tool hirers will have in-depth discussions about values and where to take depreciation from the value. It's an exclusive facility for members and there is no other facility

like it on the market for a sole facility for a membership organisation like ours.”

Once a customer is brought on board, the hire company can effectively keep on trading with them with their hires covered under HireSecure, Anders said.

“It's a value-add for members and the majority of customers, whether they're PLCs, smaller contractors or large builders. There is no cost to use for the HAE EHA member - it's all payable by the customer.”

Any claims made will be ring-fenced by the HireSecure policy, so hire companies' own insurance policies will be unaffected, he added.

“You're only making a claim on the HireSecure, not any of your own general ones. We have 206 units on it, so we use that as a collective to make sure that if there are any claims, these get absorbed with the fees that are being paid against the claims of everybody. It's important work.” <<

HIRESECURE

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DANGER

Dangerous shortcuts

HAE EHA Director of Certification Services, Carl Bartlett, demonstrates some of the potentially-perilous practices he's recently seen in hire and reveals how simple it would be to rectify.

In the 37 years that HAE EHA Director of Certification Services, Carl Bartlett, has worked in hire, he's seen a lot of changes and improvements in practices, but he is still astounded by some of the dangerous shortcuts he encounters from time to time.

Some of these were highlighted in his recent presentation to HAE EHA members who gathered at the Members Day event in Sutton Coldfield.

Carl used videos and photos to demonstrate some of these and explain what the potential consequences could be.

In the first, he revealed a photo of a metal bench at a hire depot.

"It's conductive. There's a two-inch submissible water pump on there with a stainless-steel casing and there's no insulation matting," he said. "The test equipment is a Clarion 255. As anybody in the industry knows, that will produce 3,750 volts RMS."

Anybody using the equipment on that bench, who inadvertently touched the bench or pump with any part of

their body, would be electrocuted, he stressed, adding that it would be easy enough to rectify the situation.

"It's not unreasonable to say 'Let's put some rubber matting down' or 'Let's change the bench to a wooden bench'. They're easy fixes," Carl said.

The second scenario revealed filthy washroom and kitchen facilities, which he said no reasonable employer should expect his staff or customers to feel comfortable using.

Ratchet strap challenges

Another example was of an insecure load, where a mini excavator had been incorrectly attached on a trailer, with the ratchet strap positioned across the middle of the footwell, which is an insecure load securing point.

"The ratchet strap is over the mud guard of the trailer, which is not a load securing point so any inadvertent motion, change of direction, for example a pothole or a speed bump, will result in that excavator moving. It's not secure," he said.

"Ratchet straps are a big problem in our industry - not being used properly, not being used on load securing points and not being checked as part of vehicle checks and vehicle equipment checks."

Ratchet straps challenges occur almost daily within the hire industry, Carl said.

"We're consciously trying to improve our industry."

To highlight the importance of correctly using ratchet straps, he showed a 5-10mm straight ratchet strap being tested in a controlled environment, with 5.14 tons. The new strap had passed a safety test, but there were 'leaks' visible. "You see this very often. It breaks at almost 0.7 tons," said Carl.

One of the organisations HAE EHA is working with to improve load safety is CargoStop, which has partnered with stakeholders across transport and logistics to establish the cross-industry Load Safety Forum, which had 30 attendees at its first meeting and 150 attendees at its second.

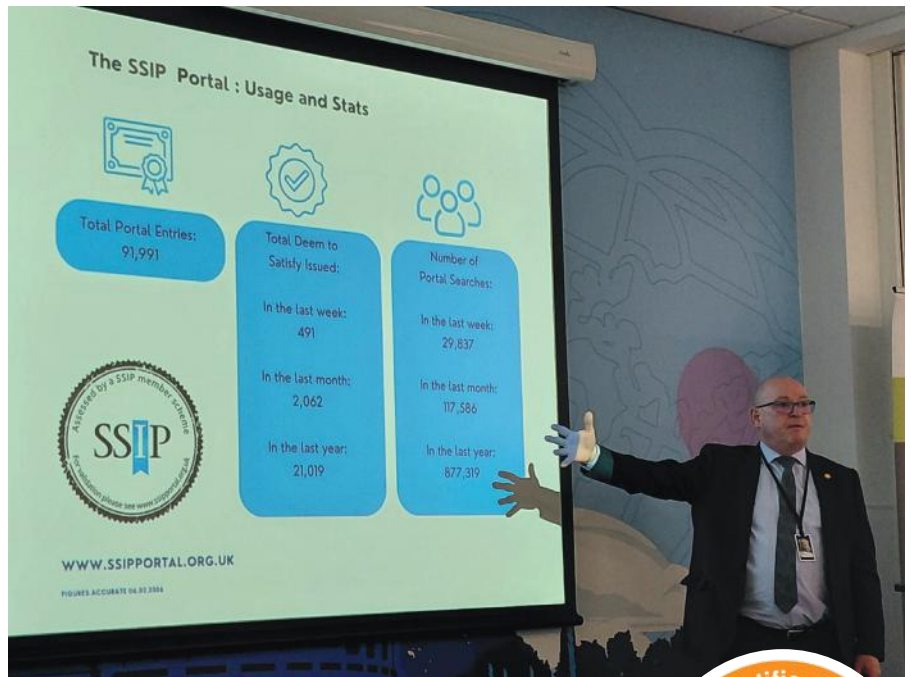
"This clearly tells you that it's a problem," said Carl.

Pump disconnection

The next example of a dangerous shortcut Carl revealed was a 'quick fix' on an excavator's air conditioning unit.

"This is an air conditioning pump in an excavator and, obviously, it wasn't working, so the fitter decided to just disconnect it," Carl said, going on to show how the belts had been removed and the pump secured with a cable tie, while other hoses and connectors had been disconnected.

"When that goes out on hire, the person who is operating that excavator is going to be extremely fatigued on a hot day, but also, when that engine gets up to temperature, those plastic cable ties are going to melt. That's going to fall into the engine compartment and probably cause more damage," he revealed. <<



The SafeHire Certification Scheme is a private standard created by and written for the hire industry with the help and guidance of British Standards Institute (BSi) with support from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). For further details about SafeHire, SSIP and how to get your organisation audited for certification, contact the team on **0121 380 4602**, or **safehire@hae.org.uk**.

HAE EHA Risk Services

FREE Expert Advice for
for HAE EHA Members

Running a hire business is demanding, and keeping up with health & safety or employment law isn't always top of the list. But getting it wrong can lead to unexpected fines, legal trouble, or worse.

Get advice on:

- Workplace Legislation
- Health & Safety Policies
- HR and Employment Law

Call **0121 380 4612** or email **risk-services@hae.org.uk**



Listen & Learn
Scan the QR code to hear our team discuss best practices on the HAE EHA Podcast

HEALTH & SAFETY | RISK MANAGEMENT | HR & EMPLOYMENT LAW | TRAINING

Releasing the pressure

For those running hire businesses, many internal and external factors can take them away from what they do best and eat into production. The HAE EHA Risk Services team can help to deflect this - an inclusive service more could benefit from according to **Nathan Jones**.



Nathan Jones,
Managing Director,
Stallard Kane

FACTORS like increasing legislation, pressures from regulators, higher customer expectations, supplier relations, and insurance scrutiny, are ever-present considerations for those running hire businesses and it can be frustrating when these eat into their working days.

But getting the right mix can be “really, really beneficial”, according to Stallard Kane’s Managing Director Nathan Jones, who recently gave a presentation at the HAE EHA Members’ Day at Sutton Coldfield.

“I think most businesses and members will probably look at things and think it’s not that you don’t want to do them, or are turning a blind eye. It’s just that you want to be able to concentrate on actually running your business and focus on what you do best,” said Nathan.

Nathan advocated that this is where the Risk Services support available to HAE EHA members can help to take the pressure off, and he urged more

to take advantage of the free benefits available to help them juggle all those additional tasks that eat into their business time.

“It does help you become better businesses and ensure you can focus on what really matters to you,” Nathan said. “Every single member has access to this free resource. On the online safety and HR portal, there is a plethora of templates, guidance documents, policy examples. Some of the resources on there are worth their weight in gold from an employer’s point of view.

“When you delve in a bit deeper, there are elements of training and what we call risk solutions.”

The Hire Association has partnered with Stallard Kane for more than 15 years. This partnership formerly provided the HAE EHA BusinessGuard, a dedicated risk management and compliance service specifically designed to give member companies expert support in navigating complex employment law, workplace legislation, and health and safety compliance.

In recent years, this has been replaced with HAE EHA Risk Services, a more extensive resource which reflects changes in regulations, legislation, and web technologies while still incorporating the advisory benefits previously offered by BusinessGuard, as well as offering a dedicated legal helpline for commercial and contract law matters.

“We predominantly started as an HR and health and safety business but we’ve evolved into more of a solutions-based business, and that is what HAE EHA

members can now benefit from. We don’t want to leave members with a list of headaches or problems - we want to actually be able to deliver solutions to these,” said Nathan.

“Hopefully we can take that burden away again, freeing you up to be the best business that you can be and free to focus on what you need to focus on.”

He encouraged members to use the telephone helpline whenever they need free HR and health and safety support.

“You’ll be put through to a consultant and you can pick their brains and direct your queries. For example, you might have been faced with a particularly tricky employment issue and need a bit of on-the-spot advice. The team can provide that,” said Nathan.

“If there’s a need to delve deeper, then there are enhanced services that then can be built into the support you receive. You will get a free one-hour consultation that will start to dig into the aspects of your risks, whether that be the employment or the health and safety of your staff, which will give you an idea of where the gaps may be. There will then be an opportunity to talk about how to fill those gaps, and the conversation can evolve from there.”

The overall aim of the support service is to enable HAE EHA members to grow, with strong standards, Nathan stressed.

“You don’t have to make it hard for yourselves. You can tap into that free resource. It’ll get you off the ground and give you the confidence to get going. From there, you can get the advice you need.”



Juggling roles

Speaking about SafeHire, Nathan said the most difficult part is the initial set-up, including building necessary systems, putting policies in place and ensuring correct training procedures exist.

"It gets even harder when you have to then maintain that, because these requirements often sit alongside somebody else's job. You're not only the CEO of the business, you're also the accountant, the cleaner, the wellbeing. You're all these different things trying to run a business, and this is where, hopefully, the member benefits from

HAE EHA can assist – we can ensure you are able to maintain them all."

'Better risk signals'

Effective risk management proactively protects hire organisations from incidents that can affect its reputation and will support its growth and sustainability, so it makes sense to make use of any resource that enables them to do this effectively, Nathan went on to add.

He went on to add: "The commercial reality is that good risk management itself will protect more interested people. It's going to give you better risk signals and we'll obviously know this from the insurance side of things. We work deliberately in that way, so that if an underwriter comes and leaves a list of risk improvements, yet again, we can activate the solutions

so that your insurer looks at you and thinks 'Wow, this is a good risk - I'm actually going to be happy to present terms on this business. I'm not going to have any threats'."

Ultimately, being a member of HAE EHA gives members an effective way to access specialist legal or HR advice, stay compliant with changing regulations, and influence sector-specific policies, so ensuring they utilise every resource provided by the association is a no-brainer, Nathan said.

"The biggest point I would drive home is that it doesn't have to be scary. It doesn't have to be complicated. It doesn't need to deflect and take you away from what you want to do in your businesses," he said, adding: "We've got a deep, deep desire to help people. We're a very people-focused association, and that's what we want to do." <<



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**.

HAE EHA HIRE CERTIFICATION SERVICES AUDITOR

Nationwide (based South of England)

Full-time, Permanent

JOB DESCRIPTION

HAE EHA's Hire Certification Services provides a framework for delivering best practice and high standards for companies who hire and sell plant, tools and equipment and provide equipment and services for events throughout the UK and Ireland. We are committed to ensuring hire businesses, suppliers and manufacturers have the appropriate certifications and accreditations in place for all projects undertaken within the construction and event industries in both the private and public sectors. SafeHire Certification is a BSI Private Standard created and written for the hire industry with the help and guidance of British Standards Institute and the support of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Due to the success and continued growth of SafeHire Certification, HAE EHA is looking to appoint an experienced hire industry auditor to join our team to provide SafeHire audits of hire and rental organisations throughout the UK.

The successful candidate will possess the ability to perform audits including technical assessments to evaluate the competence and conformity of members against the SafeHire Private Standard, SSIP Approved Core Criteria and other regulatory compliance.

You will have up-to-date experience, knowledge and understanding of the hire sector for plant, tools and equipment. A minimum of 5 years' relevant industrial experience is required, with a minimum of 2 years in the last 5 years working in the hire industry. A NEBOSH NGC3 Certificate qualification / Equivalent or Higher is required. Ideally you will hold an ISO Lead Auditor qualification. You will be required to successfully manage relationships with members in order to achieve delivery of objectives and deliver the value of SafeHire Certification as part of HAE EHA membership. A full UK driving licence essential.

Salary – Competitive + Car Allowance

For further information about the SafeHire Certification scheme visit www.safehire.org.uk.

If you have the skills and experience we are looking for please email: certificationservices@hae.org.uk to apply, sending your CV and a covering letter.

'Pressures will still be felt'

FURTHER support measures for energy-intensive industries are a step in the right direction but do little to alleviate immediate pressures for those hiring out construction equipment, according to the Construction Equipment Association (CEA).

Responding to the measures announced by UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade, Peter Kyle, The CEA's CEO Viki Bell, said: "The expansion of support to energy-intensive industries is a step in the right direction and reflects the pressures many manufacturers are facing. However, with the scheme not coming into operation until 2027, businesses are effectively being asked to carry high energy costs for another year before meaningful relief arrives. For many, that is a significant challenge at a time when margins are already under pressure."

Energy costs are not just an issue for a small number of qualifying firms. They are being felt right across the construction equipment supply chain, from manufacturers through to hire companies and SMEs, many of whom fall outside the scope of this support, she added.

"Without more immediate measures, there is a real risk that these pressures will continue to influence investment decisions, pricing and competitiveness in the near term," said Viki.



Help shape incident reporting practice

THE Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is inviting businesses, employers, health practitioners and industry stakeholders to help shape the future of workplace incident reporting in Great Britain.

It has launched a public consultation on The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). A RIDDOR report is a formal record submitted to the HSE or local authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. It legally requires employers, the self-employed, and those in control of premises to report specific workplace accidents, occupational diseases, and near-misses.

The consultation marks a significant opportunity to update regulations that underpin how work-related injuries, ill health and dangerous occurrences are reported to the regulator. The proposals are designed both to strengthen protections for workers and to cut unnecessary administrative burden on businesses.

HSE is also proposing to revise both the list of dangerous occurrences, to better reflect modern workplace risks, and the list of reportable occupational diseases, reintroducing some conditions previously removed from the list and adding new ones to ensure serious instances of work-related ill health are properly captured.

The consultation closes on June 30th. For full details visit <https://consultations.hse.gov.uk/hse/proposals-riddor-2013/>

21.6% rise envisaged in EV battery demand for construction sites

THE electrification of transport, on construction sites and on the road, has seen a huge revolution in recent years, with the number of electric vehicles increasing, alongside ramped up regulations for carbon emission reductions.

Research organisation IDTechEx predicts that the total battery demand for off-highway machines on construction sites will reach 44.7 GWh by 2036, with the total battery revenue is expected to grow to US\$6.54 billion at a compound annual growth rate of 21.6% during the same time period.

IDTechEx's report 'Batteries for Construction, Agriculture, & Mining Machines 2026-2036: Technologies, Players, Forecasts' reveals that large investments are being made by global machine manufacturers such as Caterpillar and John Deere into the production of electric machinery.

North East is planning hotspot

GOVERNMENT data reveals stark regional differences in planning approval rates across the UK, highlighting a growing divide where developments are most likely to succeed.

The North East has the highest success rate, with 92% of applications being approved. Contrastingly, London had the lowest success rate, with only 82% of applications receiving approval, meaning Londoners are more likely to be rejected than anywhere else in England.

Across all regions, planning activity follows a clear seasonal pattern. Applications increase during the spring and summer months (April to September), before dropping towards the end of the year.

52.6% of workers make mistakes because of stress

ACCORDING to new research, over half of Brits (52.6%) are making mistakes at work owing to stress, and one in four have rung in sick at least once as a result of stress.

The latest HSE figures revealed that there are more than 17m working days a year lost owing to work-related stress, anxiety and depression.

Commercial training and consultancy provider Astutis, which provides workplace health, safety, and environmental courses such as NEBOSH and IOSH, reports that over 28.5% of Brits have missed deadlines and 32.9% have also clashed with someone in the workplace because of stress, costing workplaces millions of pounds each year.

The Workplace Silent Stress Survey surveyed 553 participants. Only 4.7% said they would speak to their managers about any concerns and just 1.3% engage with people in leadership roles.

Managing Director at Astutis, Steve Terry, said: "These numbers portray a widespread, workplace culture where employees may feel unsafe to raise stress-related concerns, preferring to suffer in silence."

Relive the celebrations and check out this year's winners

THE 2026 Hire Awards of Excellence, which took place at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London included another new category, along with three special personal achievement awards.



You can read all about the awards, and find full details of winners in our special 2026 Hire Awards Of Excellence supplement.

Read or download it here for free: <https://bit.ly/4uC1X85> or visit the 'Interface On Hire' section on the HAE EHA website's news section here <https://bit.ly/4dz9oHn> <<



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.

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

▪ **SERVICE LOO LTD** is a portable sanitation and equipment hire company based in Otley, West Yorkshire. The company's core services include supplying standalone portable toilets for both commercial and private events, renting and servicing welfare units and related amenities for construction and outdoor work sites, providing one-off or scheduled cesspit emptying, tank emptying, and waste disposal and offering routine maintenance and servicing for both their own rented units and pre-existing customer-owned toilets. The company's directors are Jody and Sharon Hemsworth who formed the company in 2018.

▪ **HAMPSHIRE GENERATORS** (a trading division of Excel Power Ltd) supplies, installs, and maintains standby and portable power equipment across the UK. The company provides diesel, petrol, and solar generators, as well as Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS), for homes, construction sites, and commercial applications. Hampshire Generators (officially registered as Hampshire Generators Ltd) was incorporated with Companies House on April 15, 2019. However, the company has operated and provided power solutions under the Hampshire Generator & UPS Company brand since its founding in 2012. Andrew Williams is the Managing Director and owner.

▪ **DRAGON HIRE SERVICES LTD** is a family-run company providing trade tools, mini diggers, dumpers, and cement mixers. Based in Pontypool, Torfaen, the plant and tool hire company operates from a unit in Pontypool's Polo Grounds and is closely affiliated with the construction machinery provider Dragon Plant Sales Ltd. It was formed at the start of this year by Managing Director Jason Derraven. The firm is deeply involved in the Welsh construction and plant machinery sector, notably securing major partnerships like the full line distributorship for global construction manufacturer LiuGong in Wales.



SAFETY SHIELD
BE SAFE BE SHIELDED

▪ **SAFETY SHIELD GLOBAL** is an award-winning UK-based technology company that provides AI-powered collision avoidance and workforce safety systems for industrial environments. Its core mission is to protect pedestrians and workers from being struck by heavy plant machinery and moving vehicles. The company's core platform uses edge AI to detect human forms rather than objects or animals. This prevents nuisance alerts and acts as a "third eye" for machine operators. The company's systems are widely used in hazardous environments like construction, highways, warehousing, agriculture, and waste management.

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▪ **LOAD BANK RENTAL EUROPE (LBRE)** provides temporary power and temperature control equipment for testing, commissioning, and maintaining electrical power systems. Its services ensure backup generators and UPS systems function reliably during emergencies. LBRE supplies a range of resistive and inductive load banks from 100kW to 6000kW, plus specialised heating equipment. The company is operated as part of MacGen Power Generation Ltd, a major power solutions company based in Kilrea, Northern Ireland. Christoph Künzel serves as the the company's Sales and Operations Manager for Europe.

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Renewable excavator fuel option

JCB is set to become the first in the industry to deploy the use of B100 biodiesel in tracked excavators sold in Europe.

The fuel, known as Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (FAME), is derived entirely from renewable biological sources and can be used in newly-manufactured JCB 140X, 145XR, 150X, 220X and 245XR models from this month (June 2026). It contains no fossil diesel and is made from recycled vegetable oils, through a process called transesterification.

Group Product Innovation Director Richard Brooks said: "This milestone development is in direct response to major contractors asking for excavators capable of running on B100. They now have a practical fuel option that delivers genuine carbon savings and one that, in the future, could be extended to other products in JCB's range, depending on demand."

JCB has conducted an extensive test and validation programme in conjunction with Syntech Biofuel to allow X Series excavators to be operated with Syntech ASB B100 fuel. The fuel is compliant with BS EN 14214 and certified under the International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC) standard. JCB will provide full warranty cover for compliant B100 fuel when machines are specified with a B100 pack and supported by a JCB dealer B100 enhanced service contract. A conversion process also allows engines to be returned to conventional diesel operation.



First for finance option

A FAMILY-RUN North London contractor has become the first customer to buy a JCB mini excavator using the new JCB FlexiBuy finance solution.

365 Building Solutions Ltd has added a JCB 16C-1 mini excavator to support its latest residential project, using the new funding facility from JCB Finance.



First delivery of hydrogen generator

MILTON Keynes hirer Dawsongroup | energy solutions has taken delivery of the world's first hydrogen-powered JCB generator.

The new G60RS H genset – powered by JCB's hydrogen combustion engine – delivers the same power, performance and efficiency as its diesel equivalent, but without carbon emissions at the point of use.

It joins 155 JCB Stage III and Stage V generators in the Dawsongroup | energy solutions fleet, ranging from 20kVA to 500kVA. This includes an investment of more than £4 million in Stage V models in the last 12 months alone.



Fleet investment

LEICESTERSHIRE hirer Premier Plant & Tool Hire has invested in a range of JCB E-TECH machines including the JCB 19C-1E electric mini excavator, 8008E CTS electric excavator and HTD-5E electric tracked dumper.

The new machines have been introduced in response to growing customer demand for zero emission equipment and form part of a wider investment strategy focused on sustainability.

The new electric models join more than 100 JCB machines already in the plant hirer's fleet, including tracked excavators, Loadall telescopic handlers, site dumpers and compaction equipment.

Anniversary investment

A LEICESTERbased contractor has celebrated its 25-year anniversary by strengthening its JCB excavator fleet.

DAB Civil Engineering Contractors has operated JCB 140X models for the past three years, deploying them across housebuilding, commercial groundworks and large infrastructure projects.

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.

Fine for waste company that stockpiled skips

A WASTE and recycling company in South East London has been fined after Britain's workplace regulator found multiple failures, including skips being dangerously stockpiled.

Inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited the site of Recycling Material Supplies Limited on Ashleigh Commercial Estate, Westmoor Street in August 2022. When they arrived, the inspectors observed various vehicles, including tipper lorries and loading shovels being driven freely around the site. The pedestrian entrance was chained and padlocked, with pedestrians forced to use the vehicle entrance route used by lorries and other vehicles. There was no effective segregation by designated pedestrian routes or crossing points.

Although the company had a visual traffic plan, it was not visible to staff or visitors and was out of date because the site configuration had changed since it was produced, meaning it did not address key pedestrian movements such as access across the yard to toilets.

Inspectors also found skips unsafely stacked, with some of them deformed, adding to the instability. The height of the stack – which was three-high in places – also increased the likelihood of collapse or falling. The skips were also stacked in an area regularly accessed by workers, on foot or in vehicles, placing them at great risk of them falling.



The concerns led to a further visit 11 days later after a number of improvement notices were served requiring the company to take action within a specified timescale to remedy health and safety breaches of law. The subsequent HSE investigation found that the company had previously been the subject of enforcement action, with prohibition notices served in 2019 in relation to stockpiling and risks of collapse.

Recycled Material Supplies Limited was deemed to have put employees, agency workers and other persons on site at risk of death and/or serious personal injury and pleaded guilty of two offences. The company was fined £167,000 and ordered to pay £16,195 costs

HSE enforcement lawyer Rebecca Schwartz said: "This company put the lives of its workers in danger in a number of ways. Given the size and weight of skips, the potential consequences of any collapse were potentially catastrophic.

"The waste and recycling industry has a poor safety record and it is only due to sheer good fortune that nobody was seriously injured or killed."

“The waste and recycling industry has a poor safety record.”

Rebecca Schwartz, HSE enforcement lawyer

Roofer fell through unguarded loft hatch

A HAMPSHIRE-BASED company has been fined after a roofer suffered life-changing injuries when he fell through an unprotected loft hatch while carrying out work on a domestic property in Wimbledon.

Mark Smith had been working for Willow Services (Southern) Limited on 13 May 2024, where he was re-roofing the house. The 41-year-old had been stripping out internal insulation within the roof space, when he stepped onto an unguarded loft hatch which had not been identified or protected.

He fell approximately 11 feet to the floor below, landing on his back. He had fractured his L1 vertebra and his hip and has been unable to return to work since. His employment was later terminated by the company.

An investigation by HSE found that the company had failed to suitably plan the work at height. The company did not ensure adequate measures were in place to prevent falls and had failed to provide competent supervision of the work.

The investigation also identified that those overseeing the work did not have the necessary training or experience to safely manage construction related activities.

Willow Services (Southern) Ltd pleaded guilty to breaching the Work at Height Regulations, was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £5,607 in costs.

HSE Inspector Laurence Goodacre said: "Falls from height remain the leading cause of fatal incidents in the workplace, particularly within the construction industry. This incident was entirely avoidable and resulted from a failure to properly plan the work and provide competent supervision."



Man thought he was 'going to die' after electric shock

CCTV shows the dramatic moment a tree surgeon suffered a powerful electric shock from an overhead powerline while carrying out maintenance to hedges on a busy road near Royal Wootton Bassett.

Shortly after midnight in 2024, Joshua Pocknell was working as part of a team of three on the A3102 when the mobile lighting tower he was pushing made contact with an overhead powerline.

The 26-year-old described the moment the lighting tower hit the overhead powerlines and that he 'couldn't let go of it'.

"My whole body locked and I felt hot and cramping, he said. "I could hear the electricity in my head and thought I was going to die. I hit the floor and passed out, still cramping. I later discovered a hole had burnt through my arm and hip all the way to the bone."

He had sustained life-threatening injuries and was rushed to hospital, where he spent the next five weeks.

An HSE investigation into the incident found employer Upton Specialist Tree Services had requested a permit to carry out the work of a night time from Wiltshire Council. It had been decided to do the work after dark due to the needs of traffic flow as the A3102 acted as a diversion for M4.

However, the company had failed to adequately plan for or risk assess the dangers posed by overhead power lines. The company did not implement suitable control measures, such as barriers, instruction or training in operating the mobile lighting tower. Overhead powerlines had not been properly assessed or controlled, particularly following the change to night time working requiring the use of a mobile lighting tower.

Upton Specialised Tree Services Ltd, of Horton Heath, Wimborne, pleaded guilty to breaching the Electricity at Work Regulations. The company was fined £60,000 and ordered to pay £6,237.

"I could hear the electricity in my head and thought I was going to die."

Joshua Pocknell, tree surgeon



Tissue manufacturer fined after worker injured hand unblocking machine

A TISSUE manufacturing company has been fined after an employee was seriously injured while clearing a machine blockage at its factory in Blackburn.

The 24-year-old, a lead machine operator, was working for WEPA Professional UK Limited in March 2024. During the manufacturing process, a tissue blockage occurred in the rollers of the machine and the worker instructed his colleague to 'jog' the machine while he cleared the paper by hand.

However, as the man did this, his right hand became trapped in the roller. Although he managed pull his hand out of the machine, he had sustained crushing injuries to it.

An HSE investigation found that tissue blockages were a regular occurrence at the factory. No safe system of work was in place for unblocking the tissue and the risk assessment in place at the time of the incident, which had last been reviewed in 2021, identified that formal safe operating procedures were needed to reduce risk, but this was never actioned by the company.

WEPA Professional UK Limited pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £60,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,107.

University fined after employees develop occupational asthma

CARDIFF University has been fined £280,000 after two employees developed occupational asthma because of exposure to animal allergens in the workplace.

HSE found that between 2008 to 2025, the university failed in its duty to identify and implement suitable controls to prevent employees' exposure to animal allergens. Both employees affected have been left with lifelong conditions as a result, and one was unable to continue in their employment.

HSE's investigation found that Cardiff University had failed to put in place adequate measures to protect workers from exposure to animal allergens, despite relevant legislation being in place since 1989 under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH), and specific guidance relating to laboratory animal workers being available since 2011.

Occupational asthma is a recognised work-related disease that can have serious and permanent consequences. Employers working with animals or other biological agents must assess and control the risks of exposure to allergens and ensure appropriate protective measures are in place.

The university pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £280,000 and ordered to pay £11,745 in costs.

Worker crushed by excavator

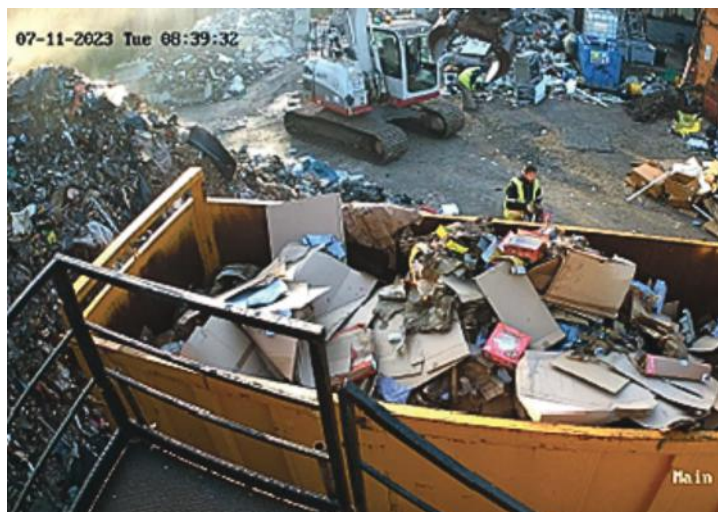
A WASTE management company in Hampshire has been prosecuted by HSE after a man had both legs amputated when he was crushed by a 15-tonne excavator.

The 24-year-old man was working for R W Waste Limited at its yard in Shedfield in November 2023. The excavator, operating in the same yard, reversed over him as he was sorting waste. Both of his lower legs were later amputated and he has been unable to return to work since.

An investigation found that R W Waste Limited failed to protect workers and other visitors to the site. The company had not put in place suitable arrangements to keep pedestrians safe while vehicles were moving around the yard.

Health and safety legislation requires workplaces to be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate safely. Where large vehicles must reverse, employers must consider additional precautions and implement them where appropriate to protect those working nearby.

R W Waste Limited, of Botley Road, Shedfield, pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The court heard that the appropriate fine, after trial, would have been £180,000, reduced to £120,000 to reflect the company's guilty plea. However, as the company had gone into liquidation and was unable to pay, it was ordered to pay a nominal fine of £1. No order for costs was made for the same reason.



Worker crushed by one-tonne block

A VEHICLE maintenance company in Worcestershire has been fined after one of its workers was crushed under a one-tonne concrete block.

The father-of-two, 35, had been working for Redditch-based BA Mobile Fleet Services Limited when the incident happened in December 2023.

His leg injuries were so severe his left foot and lower leg subsequently had to be amputated, while he sustained serious injuries to his right leg. The man was also dismissed from his job after the incident.

The then 33-year-old had been inside an HGV box trailer as it was being loaded with the one-tonne concrete blocks. The vehicle was being loaded in preparation for a Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) brake test. He had been inside the trailer with a colleague while a third worker loaded the blocks using a forklift truck. It was during this process that the forklift truck 'nudged' a stack of blocks inside the trailer, causing them to topple on to the man's legs – resulting in his devastating and life-changing injuries.

An HSE investigation found that BA Mobile Fleet Services Limited had failed to take appropriate precautions to segregate workers from moving vehicles on site. The investigation also identified that the company had not provided training to the forklift truck driver and they had not authorised him to operate such vehicles.

Preventing workplace transport incidents requires organisations to implement proven control measures consistently. This means conducting thorough risk assessments, maintaining equipment rigorously, and empowering workers to identify hazards before incidents occur.

BA Mobile Fleet Services Limited pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £30,000 and was ordered to pay £4,325 costs.

HSE inspector Emma Page said: "Too many people are injured or killed every year in workplace transport-related incidents. Companies should do all they can to ensure all workers go home safely to their families at the end of each day."

"Too many people are injured or killed every year in workplace transport-related incidents."

Emma Page, HSE inspector



Repeated site failures

A WEST Midlands based construction company has been fined after Britain's workplace regulator found repeated failures at four different construction sites across the region.

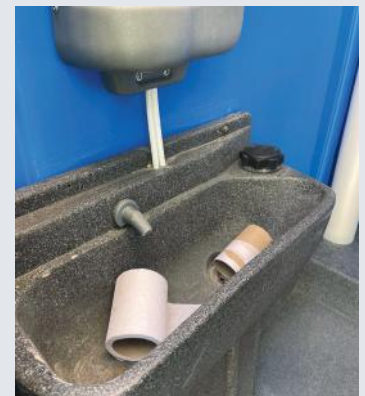
inspection at Ling Developments Limited's construction site at The Crest, Oldbury Park, Telford in April 2024 identified health and safety failings related to a lack of adequate welfare provision. This included the failure to provide hot or warm water in the toilets and a lack of suitable rest facilities for workers. The inspection resulted in two improvement notices being served, requiring the company to take action to comply with the law.

On three previous occasions, the company had been found to have breached the same legislation.

An investigation, initiated by HSE, identified repeated failings by the company which, despite enforcement action and advice from HSE inspectors, continued to provide sub-standard facilities that contravened their legal duties.

Under The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, principal contractors have a duty to provide specific welfare facilities for construction sites.

Ling Developments Limited of Maypole House, Maypole Street, Wombourne, Wolverhampton, pleaded guilty to breaches of The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations. The company was fined £15,858 and ordered to pay £3,858 in costs.





Employee's leg had to be amputated

A FLOWER supplier has been fined after an employee's leg was amputated following a serious incident at its processing facility in Huntingdon.

Andy Hazelden was working for MM Flowers Limited, at its site in Alconbury Weald, on 4 February 2023 when he was injured while helping to manually unload cargo from a delivery trailer ahead of Valentine's Day.

Cargo had become stuck on the trailer, and Mr Hazelden, along with two colleagues, attempted to free it. As part of this process, he stepped onto a roller deck where there was a gap.

Once the cargo was freed, a skid slid from the trailer onto the roller deck and struck his left leg, which had become trapped in the gap.

The 60-year-old sustained devastating injuries and later underwent a series of medical procedures, ultimately resulting in a through-knee amputation.

His injuries have been life-changing, leaving him reliant on a wheelchair



and the care of his wife. He has also been unable to continue his much-loved pastime of riding motorcycles.

An investigation found that MM Flowers Limited failed to ensure employees were safe when unloading aircraft skids from delivery vehicles in the intake area.

Workers were required to physically intervene when skids became stuck, exposing them to risk from moving loads. The investigation also identified a 10cm gap in the roller deck that had not been recognised or addressed, creating a risk of employees stepping into it. HSE guidance states that employers must put in place suitable arrangements to manage health and safety, including designing effective risk control systems and ensuring safe systems of work are followed in practice.

MM Flowers Limited pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £134,000 and ordered to pay £4,908 in costs.

Firm and director sentenced after worker seriously injured

A STAFFORDSHIRE-based construction company and its director have been sentenced after a worker sustained serious injuries when he fell through a stairwell opening during the construction of an apartment block in Staffordshire.

The injured worker, who was 26 at the time of the incident, had been appointed by BHG (Stone) Limited, the principal contractor, as a labourer. In December 2023, he was assisting with the installation of wall insulation on the first floor of the building.

To reach the top corner of the wall, the worker placed a ladder across the stairwell opening. While carrying out the task, he fell from the ladder through the opening to the ground below. The fall resulted in serious injuries, including fractures to his skull and back.

An investigation found that BHG (Stone) Limited failed to properly plan the work and did not put in place suitable measures to prevent or protect against a fall from height.

The investigation also found that company director Alistair Howells was working in close proximity to the injured worker and had allowed the work to be carried out in an unsafe manner.

BHG (Stone) Limited pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. The company was fined £16,000 and ordered to pay £4,000 in costs.



District Council fined £50,000 after worker seriously injured in lawnmower incident

A NOTTINGHAMSHIRE district council has been fined £50,000 following a serious incident in which a ride-on mower overturned at a churchyard, causing a male employee to fall more than two metres onto a public road and footpath below.

HSE investigated the incident at St Peter & St Paul’s Church in North Wheatley, Nottinghamshire, where an employee of Bassetlaw District Council was carrying out routine maintenance in the closed graveyard.

While operating a ride-on mower, the employee lost control of the machine as it slid down a steep bank towards a retaining wall. Both the machine and the operative rolled over the wall, falling approximately 2.3 metres to the pavement and road below. The employee sustained injuries including cracked ribs.

The HSE investigation identified a series of significant failings by the council.

Bassetlaw District Council had not carried out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed to employees by operating ride-on mowers on banks and slopes. The council had not provided adequate information, instruction or training to employees regarding the use of such machinery near slopes and banks. No measures were

in place at the retaining wall to prevent a fall from height liable to cause personal injury.

The council pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. It was fined £50,000, and ordered to pay £5,138.85 in costs plus a victim surcharge of £2,000.



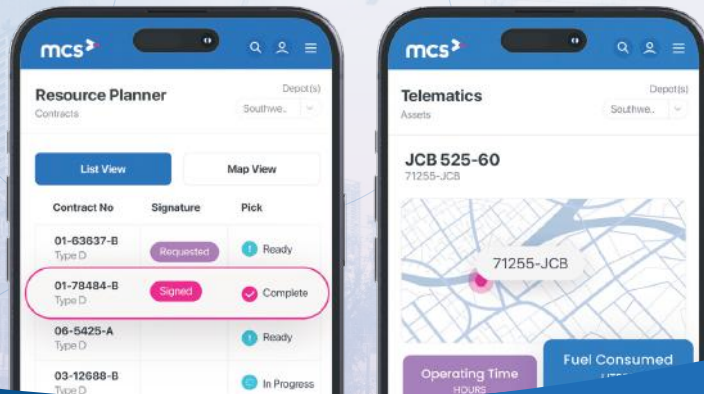
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While offering a professional, focused environment, the training centre is set in a rural location with lovely views of Shropshire's countryside.



Learning by doing

Learning and Development Officer Nikki Wyllie recently visited the Oswestry training centre and gained a first-hand experience of what it's like to be a delegate.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to visit the training centre in Oswestry for New Entrant training. I arrived midway through the training week, expecting to observe, take notes, and gain an understanding of the programme from the sidelines.

What actually happened was something completely different. From the moment I arrived, I was warmly welcomed by both the delegates and the training team, and it quickly became clear that this was not an environment where anyone simply stands and watches. Before long, I had joined the cohort as a delegate for the remainder of the week, fully immersed in the programme and learning alongside everyone else.

One of the first things that stood out to me was just how well prepared everything was. All PPE was fully provided on site, meaning the only thing I needed to bring with me was a pair of steel toe cap boots. From day one, every detail had been considered, allowing delegates to focus entirely on learning in a safe and supportive environment.

A home from home

The first thing that struck me about the centre itself was the environment Jim has created. The training centre manages to feel both professional and homely, practical yet welcoming. It is a place where delegates can feel safe, supported, and comfortable, while also having access to all the tools, equipment, and facilities needed for truly hands on learning.

I stayed on site during my visit, which gave me the opportunity to experience everything the centre has to offer. The accommodation was comfortable, well thought out, and as a lone female traveller, I genuinely felt safe and at ease throughout my stay. With home cooked evening meals, breakfast, and lunch all provided, everything delegates need is right there on site, allowing them to focus fully on learning.

Designed for real learning

The workshop itself was equally impressive. Every detail had been clearly considered. The training room moves away from the traditional classroom set up, with workshop benches instead of standard desks, creating an environment

that immediately feels practical and engaging. There is space to move around, collaborate, and learn in different ways, supporting all types of learners.

During my visit, the workshop was filled with engines that had recently been reassembled by delegates from ServiceTech Module 2 Mechanical training. Seeing the results of previous cohorts really brought home the level of skill, dedication, and practical experience being developed here. I was also fortunate enough to have a full tour of the facility, which gave me a real appreciation for the hard work, planning, and passion that has gone into creating such an impressive training centre.

Getting stuck in

The practical training during my visit took place on site, where we were working together on a charity project to erect a pergola. The project had been carefully planned to minimise risk, avoiding work at height and ensuring all activities could be completed safely at ground level.

Equipped with the correct PPE, drills, impact drivers, and other tools, this was not a case of standing back and watching. I was there to get stuck in alongside everyone else.

In fact, the very first tool I picked up was an impact driver. Before that moment, the only tool I had ever really used was a spirit level.

Like any new delegate, there was a learning curve. Working in pairs, we shared tasks equally, with one person drilling while the other used the impact driver, swapping over as we progressed. Everyone contributed, everyone supported one another, and every task felt like a genuine team effort.

Learning through experience

One of my biggest learning moments came when we were drilling through the perspex roofing. Initially, I struggled with the drill slipping, and it quickly became clear that technique alone was not the issue. Once we changed to a masonry bit, everything changed. The drill gripped properly, the work became easier, and I had one of those simple but memorable realisations about just how much difference using the correct tool, and just as importantly, the correct accessory, can make.

“As someone who had never been on the tools before, I expected to feel out of my depth. Instead, I felt supported from the very beginning.”

That is what stood out most about this training. Lessons were not taught purely in theory. They were learned in real time, through practical experience, problem solving, teamwork, and plenty of encouragement.

The power of peer support

As someone who had never been on the tools before, I expected to feel out of my depth. Instead, I felt supported from the very beginning. The delegates, who were already well established in their programme, had built enough confidence and competence not only to complete the tasks themselves, but to guide and encourage others too. Their patience, knowledge, and willingness to share what they had learned made it easy to step outside my comfort zone and fully embrace the experience.

Not just technical skills

Beyond the practical construction work, the training also covered logistics and transport safety, including the correct way to load and unload trailers, how to strap equipment securely, and the key safety considerations that must always be taken into account. This is knowledge that extends far beyond engineering roles and is equally valuable for hire desk operatives, particularly when planning deliveries and advising customers.

A ‘more than’ experience

What became clear throughout my visit is that this is far more than just a training course. It is a supportive environment where delegates are given the confidence to develop real world skills, make mistakes safely, learn through experience, and understand the correct way of doing things.

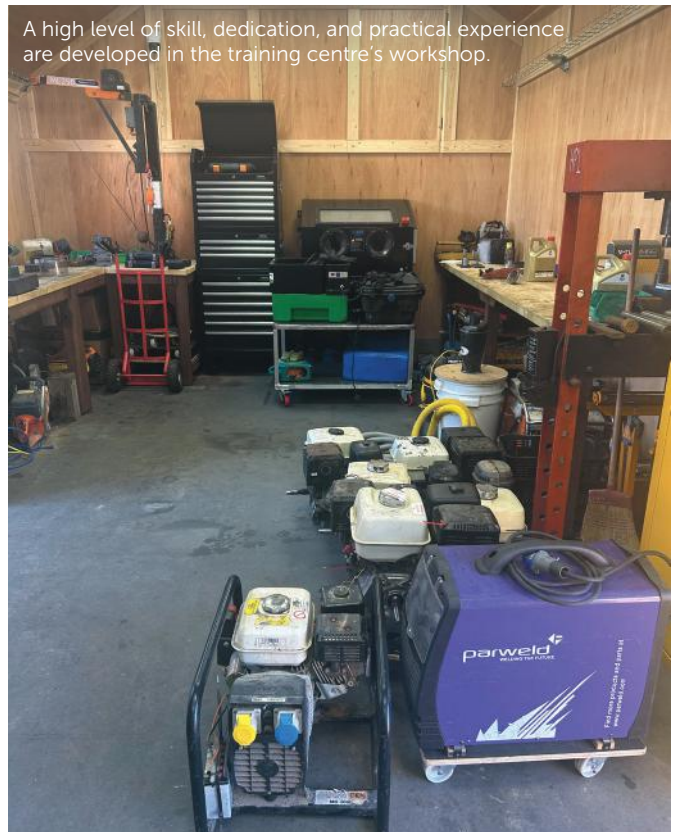
I arrived in Oswestry expecting to observe. I left having picked up an impact driver, learned first-hand why the right accessory matters, contributed to a charity project, and most importantly, experienced exactly what it feels like to be part of a training environment where people are genuinely supported to grow.

For me, it was not just a visit. It was the opportunity to become a delegate, get stuck in, and learn by doing. <<

One of Nikki’s biggest learning moments came when working on a perspex roofing project.



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