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The challenge of the eternal triangle

One of society's oldest challenges, the eternal triangle has, since the snake first whispered doubt in the ear of man, been one of the hardest problems to resolve to the satisfaction of all involved.

Usually referring to a relationship between three parties among whom there are conflicting and competing attachments, the inevitable emotion involved obfuscates reason, adding to the seeming impossibility of finding a mutually agreeable resolution.

Globally, we are facing the toughest eternal triangle yet as we tackle the challenge of the energy trilemma - the need to balance energy security, affordability and sustainability in a way that avoids a climate catastrophe.

The recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a sobering read, with many describing it as a 'final warning' that, to avoid the worst consequences of climate change, the need for urgent action is now greater than ever.

On the positive side (yes, there is one!), whilst climate change is bad, the signs are growing that worst-case will be averted because we have the understanding and tools needed and

change is happening. Progress is being made but we need to do more, and faster.

As with any conflict of interests, emotions run high and opinions can become entrenched. In a current energy council survey members are, unsurprisingly, currently ranking energy security as more important than both affordability and transition - although it is running very close.

In this issue we hear from many involved in the sector who are doing their utmost to balance all three - an unenviable, but critical, juggling act.

May will bring the opportunity to meet as an industry at the UKIFDA Show and Conference (book your place now!), and a look at the carefully curated programme on page 19 shows all three energy sector challenges addressed in equal measure.

This will be a vital opportunity to accelerate progress towards a just transition.

See you there!



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Fuel Oil News

The independent voice for the fuel distribution, storage and marketing industry in the UK and Ireland.

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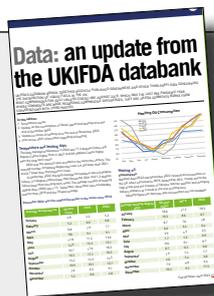
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On the cover

An iconic industry image is captured in this atmospheric photo, taken in February this year, of Klass Oil driver Bernard McGuinness delivering to Duleek Quarry in Co. Meath, Ireland. We catch up with Klass Oil on pages 14 & 15.



In this issue

Our quarterly Downstream section starts on page 17 with thoughts from Ken Cronin, a Show and Conference preview and latest data insights. In Transition Talk, on pages 12 & 13, Kevin McPartlan shares how TAZCH is changing sector policy in Ireland

Mabanaft's Clare Charlton to run London Marathon

Clare Charlton, the head of sales and marketing at Mabanaft, is taking part in The London Marathon on Sunday 23rd April. Claudia Weeks, content editor for Fuel Oil News, spoke with Clare about the upcoming marathon, to discover how her training is going and why she selected The Lily Foundation as her chosen charity.

Training for the marathon

"Training is going well; I have been able to fit my shorter training runs in and around my workdays in London – so I get to see some of the London sites and dodge the tourists along the Southbank!" Clare began.

"I find it a real stress release and, as a mental health first aider at Mabanaft, I know that is important.

My long run tends to be on Sunday and from this week the miles really start to clock up, but I really look forward (at the moment!) to these Sunday challenges.

"I am following the Improver Training Plan on the London Marathon website, which has been a useful aid, and the charity has also been supportive by connecting me with others running for The Lily Foundation."

The Lily Foundation

Clare has chosen to run and raise money for The Lily Foundation which is the UK's leading mitochondrial ('mito') disease charity and the largest charitable funder of mitochondrial research in Europe.

The Lily Foundation's mission is to improve the lives of people affected by mitochondrial diseases, while working towards a future where mitochondrial diseases can be effectively treated or cured.

Clare is passionate about supporting the foundation: "I wanted to run The London



Marathon, and this is my second attempt after first completing it in 2007. The Lily Foundation is a charity which is local to where I live, and I often see the name at local events.

"Mito can affect babies, and children can develop it later in their young lives. The charity supports the families affected by this disease in many ways and, as a parent of two young children aged 10 and 7, if I can do something to help others in what is an unimaginable time then I will. It's that simple really."

The Lily Foundation said: "We're enormously grateful to Clare for her incredible fundraising efforts. Every penny she contributes helps us to raise awareness of mitochondrial disease, and brings help, and hope, to affected families."

Race Day

Claudia asked Clare what her plans were for the race day itself. "Plans for the day will include a friend dropping me off at the start line and then my husband, my two daughters (in their Lily T-shirts and armed with clappers) – and lots of friends and family are coming along to spot me and shout support along the route.

"At the end, I'm hoping to have a glass of Champagne to celebrate. Or maybe a cold beer. Probably both!"

Fuel Oil News wishes Clare the best of luck for the big day and looks forward to hearing all about it. If you would like to sponsor Clare and support The Lily Foundation, then please visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/clare-charlton4>

If you or anyone in your team has run The London Marathon this April, then please do let us know how you got on – we'd love to hear from you!



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Crown Oil becomes the UK's first carbon neutral fuel supply company

Greater Manchester-based distributor, Crown Oil, is the first UK fuel supply company to achieve carbon neutral status under the PAS 2060 framework.

A company statement acknowledged the need for action: "The Crown Oil Group recognises the environmental impacts of fossil fuel use on a local and global scale and, due to our first-hand relationship with our customers, understands how deeply dependent society is on oil-based products.

"We are aware that this is not an excuse for inaction but, instead, a growing opportunity to make positive change now."

Action not words

"As society makes it difficult to transition to a net zero carbon world, we want to change and evolve to serve our customers with the lowest possible environmental impact. That's why we've put sustainability at the core of our business and are going above and beyond to find ways to reduce that impact.

"We understand that real lasting change requires action rather than just words, and we're changing the way we fuel our future.

"Becoming a carbon neutral business is a steppingstone towards our ultimate goal of becoming net zero. While we work towards this, our managing director, Matthew Greensmith wants to ensure we are doing everything we can to reduce our emissions, rather than sitting and waiting for it to come for us. This led to him setting the target for the Crown Group to be certified carbon neutral by April, using this as



a springboard to continue working towards our long-term goal of net zero direct emissions (Scope 1 and 2) by 2030, but ideally much sooner. We've reduced our Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 83% in the last 12 months which is a huge achievement for us.

Total transparency

"To support this ambition, we have taken steps to fully understand our present environmental impact with a detailed and transparent carbon footprint study across all aspects of our operations (Scope 1, 2 and 3). We are doing this by identifying and delivering carbon reduction projects and compensating for residual emissions through the use of offsets, while being aware of the challenges and improvements needed with this approach.

"We understand there is some scepticism surrounding carbon neutral status so, to ensure transparency and continual improvement, we have partnered with a third-party company to verify our emissions and obtain certification to the PAS 2060:2014 standard for carbon neutrality through a stringent 4-stage process.

"Aligning with this standard will hold our business to account and proves that we are following a robust carbon reduction and avoidance strategy to achieve our long-term goal."

Congratulations to Crown Oil on an important and significant step forward. We know that many businesses are on the path to net zero and inspiring others to take action. If you would like to share your plans for a low carbon future, please contact claudia@andpublishing.co.uk

Greenenergy study aims to develop green hydrogen supply chain

Greenenergy and Hydrogenious LOHC Technologies have agreed terms for a joint pre-feasibility study on the development of a commercial scale hydrogen supply chain with the aim of shipping low-cost green hydrogen from Canada to the UK.

The study aims to overcome the challenges presented by shipping hydrogen over long distances on an industrial scale in its pure form, either under high pressure or liquefied at extremely low temperatures, which is both costly and complex, by using an already proven technology.

Hydrogenious' Liquid Organic Hydrogen Carrier (LOHC) technology enables hydrogen to be chemically bound to a thermal oil for safe storage and bulk shipping, leveraging the existing infrastructure for liquid fuels. Temporarily absorbed to the LOHC, the hydrogen can be transported and handled safely and easily in ports and in urban areas. On arrival and discharge at the import location the hydrogen will then be released from the liquid

carrier for delivery as pure green hydrogen to end users.

Greenenergy's access to large terminals is ideal for the importation, release and distribution of hydrogen using the LOHC, with Navigator Thames already identified as a strategic location to meet expected demand for hydrogen in the South East of England. Greenenergy's distribution network and strong customer base will also enable delivery to a broad range of industrial and commercial customers across the UK.

Supporting the transition

Christian Flach, chief executive officer of Greenenergy, says: "Working with Hydrogenious is an important step in our strategy to offer cost effective hydrogen to our customers using existing storage and delivery infrastructure. Delivering hydrogen is an important goal in supporting the energy transition."

Dr Toralf Pohl, chief commercial officer at Hydrogenious LOHC Technologies, says: "North



America will soon be a key market for large-scale clean hydrogen exports to Europe. The UK is committed to hydrogen consumption, and together with Greenenergy, we will now be exploring the possibility of establishing a LOHC-based hydrogen supply chain, including constructing storage and release plant assets in Canada and the UK capable of handling more than 100 tonnes of hydrogen per day, while leveraging the existing infrastructure for liquid fuels in ports with our LOHC technology."

Canada is already one of the world's top ten hydrogen producers, with an annual production of three million tonnes of (grey) hydrogen. By the year 2050, Canada aims to be one of the world's top three producers and a major exporter of green hydrogen.

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Certa Ireland transitions entire fuel distribution fleet from diesel to HVO

One of Ireland's largest fuel distributors, Certa, has transitioned its fleet of delivery vehicles from running on diesel to running on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

The move will see Certa's entire fleet of over 100 trucks run on the biofuel, following a successful trial in 2022. Collectively, Certa's fleet travels over 3,000,000 km annually and the switch to HVO is the equivalent of reducing its fleet to 9 trucks, in terms of carbon emissions output.

Compared with regular diesel, HVO, which is produced from waste plant matter and emits no new carbon into the atmosphere, offers a reduction in carbon emissions by up to 90%.

Part of the DCC Energy Group, Certa distributes heating oil from its 22 depots across Ireland and began supplying HVO to a range of sectors in Ireland, from 2022, as a sustainable alternative fuel to regular diesel.

Mandated HVO use

Since the beginning of the initiative, Certa has helped some of Ireland's largest events to go fossil-free including Electric Picnic, The National Ploughing Championships and the Irish Open. In addition, the company has supplied their GD+ HVO product to companies in tech, transport, construction and a host of other sectors.

Notably, John Sisk & Sons, Ireland's largest construction company, has worked with Certa to mandate the use of HVO fuel across all of its



Irish sites.

Cormac Durnin, operations director for Certa Ireland said: "While we are working with numerous commercial customers to help drive down their carbon emissions through renewable fuels, we're particularly excited to be fuelling our own fleet of over 100 trucks with HVO. The transition was seamless, we had no retrofitting to do on our vehicles."

Reducing consumption

"All our delivery depots are carefully selected and situated within the hearts of their communities which enables us to reduce our kilometres travelled and, in turn, our emissions. We'll continue to invest in a dedicated HVO infrastructure for each depot while our 'Greener HGV' driver training program is also aimed at further reducing our carbon footprint.

"It is not only about changing our fuel type, but reducing kilometres travelled."

Speaking at the launch of Certa's HVO-fuelled fleet, Andrew Graham, managing director, said: "Our transition to HVO fuel for our fleet shows our commitment and belief in HVO

as a viable, commercial diesel alternative. We're very proud to be one of the first Irish companies to make the switch and hope to encourage wider adoption.

"We're only beginning to scratch the surface of HVO and, in addition to repurposing fleets, we're also delighted to be supplying HVO to help tech companies power their data centres which aids them in minimising their impact on the national energy grid."

Retail roll out planned

This is one step on Certa's journey to a net zero future that, as part of DCC Energy Group, is focused on building wider decarbonisation solutions for commercial, industrial and domestic customers in line with the governments climate action plan target of reducing carbon emissions by 50% by 2030.

Recently Certa installed solar PV across four of its sites with a view to a roll out across its wider network over the coming months. In addition, Certa is aiming to roll HVO out as a product on its forecourts as a diesel alternative with a trial set to begin imminently on two sites.

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WCF Fuels North West victorious at Red Rose Awards 2023

WCF Fuels North West has won the prestigious Customer Service Business of the Year Award 2023 at the Lancashire Business View's Red Rose Awards.

Held in Blackpool every year, the 2023 event saw the Red Rose Awards celebrated for the thirteenth time! Unlucky for some but not for the team from WCF who prevailed after a rigorous selection process.

Gemma Hogg, general manager, said: "A huge thank you to the event organisers – it was a fantastic event from start to finish. It's an honour to win such a prestigious award. The award is very important to us as we put our customers at the heart of everything we do. My team have worked incredibly hard to achieve this and I could not be more proud of them.

"To win a customer service award,

especially during the last year with the unprecedented movements in fuel prices, makes us even more proud! It was our first time at the ceremony and entering the awards. It was clear that it does provide the best possible platform to promote success and encourage inter-trading across the county. We will certainly be back!"

Overwhelming passion

The judges were overwhelmed with the passion and commitment shown in the interviews and are looking forward to seeing what the future holds for WCF Fuels North West commenting: "Raw passion underpins this business with an ingrained desire to service everyday customers with everyday needs, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable customers. The introduction of a cold weather scheme



and customer loyalty scheme are stand-out customer service initiatives."

The charity partner for the Red Rose Awards 2023 is the Community Foundation for Lancashire, and funds were raised at the awards event to support their work.

This award-winning team is hoping the success doesn't end there. Danny, an apprentice at WCF, has also been shortlisted for Lancashire's Apprentice of the Year (see page 11), and the team is also entered into this year's annual UKIFDA awards.

Popular Truckstop officially launched after significant Certas Energy investment

The Stop at The Hollies – formally known as the Road King Cannock Truckstop – has benefitted from significant investment in improving the site and facilities. Claudia Weeks, content editor for Fuel Oil News, recently attended the official launch.

The Stop at The Hollies is located just off junction 12 of the M6, on the A5 towards Cannock. It's one of the oldest (it's been a truckstop since the 1930s!) and best loved truckstops in the UK and is now owned by Certas Energy who has invested over half a million pounds in improving the site and facilities.

Dave Weaver, Roadside Services Truck Stop manager, said: "The Stop at The Hollies has benefitted from a huge investment from Certas Energy. There are a range of essential amenities, including secure parking, accommodation, recreational facilities, a truck wash, and quality food and fuels, which are all on the one site. We also have plans to install an HVO (renewable diesel) refuelling station soon. The 5-star reviews we get speak for themselves!"

The Stop at The Hollies can accommodate commercial vehicles with abnormal and heavy loads as well as all types of HGVs and refrigerated trailers. It offers impressive secure parking facilities with 24-hour CCTV, security patrol personnel and a security perimeter fence. Drivers can sleep soundly knowing their truck is in safe hands.



In another consideration of driver safety, The Stop at The Hollies also encourages use of SNAP – an end-to-end processing and payment system for HGV fleets which uses licence plate recognition software to offer fleet operators an automated payment solution, removing the need for drivers to carry cash or keep track of receipts, as well as offering consolidated invoicing for fleet managers.

Raising the bar

Alex Wolfe, commercial director for Roadside Services at Certas Energy UK, said: "Certas Energy is committed to helping to raise the bar in roadside services – and where better to start than the UK's most famous rest stop? This site

has served the transport industry for almost 100 years and our vision is for The Stop at The Hollies to become the number one truck stop in the UK, as well as the oldest.

"Our plan is for The Stop sign to become a familiar sight across the country and to help lead the way in the transformation of transportation. We're in it for the long haul, so watch this space."

Claudia was also lucky enough to experience one of the breakfasts at the café on site: "A delicious, cooked breakfast (opting for a small portion!), a hot cuppa, welcoming staff, and a friendly atmosphere is a great way to start the day. Next time I stop for breakfast, I'll have to attempt the famous Belly Buster!"

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THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY



Barton Petroleum – new official partner of Northamptonshire CCC

Northamptonshire-based fuel distributor, Barton Petroleum, is proud to announce that they are now an Official Club Partner at Northamptonshire County Cricket Club.

Taking their place alongside other local businesses in the 1878 Business Club, Barton Petroleum's branding will be visible around the ground.

"I'm really excited by this partnership," Barton Petroleum depot manager Charles Wootton commented. With two of our offices based in Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire, it's great to be able to support our local club."

A familiar local name

Northamptonshire Cricket Club head of commercial Daniel Vernon said: "It's great to have Barton Petroleum Ltd join the 1878 Business Club and I'm looking forward to working with them.

"Barton and their branding will be known to many of our other partners so it will sit nicely within our portfolio of partners, whilst I'm sure many supporters will have seen their vehicles travelling the county."



Crown Oil is the first carbon neutral fuel supply company in the UK

Crown Oil has proudly announced that they are the first UK fuel supply company to achieve carbon neutral status under the PAS 2060 framework.

A company statement read: "The Crown Oil Group recognises the environmental impacts of fossil fuel use on a local and global scale and due to our first-hand relationship with our customers, understand how deeply dependent society is on oil-based products.

"We are aware that this is not an excuse for inaction but, instead, a growing opportunity to make positive change now. Becoming a carbon neutral business is a steppingstone towards our ultimate goal of becoming net zero."

You can read the full story on page 5 of this issue



Rix Group acquisition continues move to sustainable energy provision

J.R. Rix & Sons is continuing to invest in sustainability with its latest acquisition of Driffield firm J Foley Electrical Ltd, which specialises in sustainable energy

technologies for consumers and businesses including solar panels, batteries, electric vehicle charging points, and low energy lighting, in a deal that will see the company renamed as Rix Energy Services Ltd.

Rory Clarke, managing director of J.R. Rix & Sons, said the acquisition was part of an ongoing strategy of investment into sustainable energy provision commenting: "The world is moving away from traditional hydrocarbon fuels and we, as a group, are committed to making that move as well, to help create a more sustainable, environmentally friendly world."

The full story can be read on page 40 of this issue.



WCF Fuels North West apprentice driver is award nominee

Lancashire-based distributor, WCF Fuels North West is excited to announce that one of the company's apprentices, Danny Matthews, has been shortlisted for a regional award.

Pippa Scott, sales and marketing executive at WCF Fuels, said: "Danny Matthews has been shortlisted for the Intermediate Apprentice of the Year 2023 in this year's Lancashire Apprenticeship Awards.

"Danny is our apprentice driver who has gone above and beyond for our customers and always with a positive attitude. We are extremely excited to be heading to Preston North End Football Club next month for the awards evening."

Congratulations to Danny on his nomination – we look forward to hearing the outcome.



WCF Fuels North West supporting the local foodbank

Impressed by the work done there by volunteers on a daily basis, WCF Fuels North West, the Lancashire based distributor, has decided to support the work of its local foodbank.

Morecambe Bay Foodbank is a project founded by local churches and community groups, working together towards stopping hunger in the local area.

With the charity local to WCF in Carnforth, the team feel passionately about offering their support: "We are delighted to be supporting such an amazing cause. The foodbank supports the Morecambe Bay area and relies solely on donations and volunteers, so we are pleased to be able to lend a hand where possible for they are truly an amazing bunch of people."



Craggs Energy announces 'Employee of the Quarter'

Craggs Energy, the West Yorkshire-based distributor, is delighted to announce Matthew Gledhill as the winner of its latest Employee of the Quarter award.

Matthew, a fuel consultant for the business, said: "I joined Craggs Energy straight from university and the past two years have provided me with invaluable experience within a sales environment and the fuel industry.

"I am proud to be a part of our employee-owned business and I'm excited to see what the future will bring!"

David Damary-Thompson, general manager at Craggs, said: "Matthew Gledhill continues to show his worth to the company, supporting members of the team, training new starters and ensuring he lives and breathes our company values. This is shown through the way he deals with his customers and the people around him.

"The energy, positivity and his charming, caring character has shown us what an important member of the team we have in Matt. He is showing that he has more than just a future in the business and that he is a pivotal piece in our future here at Craggs energy."

Read all these stories and more in full at www.fueloilnews.co.uk and send your latest news to claudia@fueloilnews.co.uk or margaret@fueloilnews.co.uk



TRANSITION TALK

TAZCH: industry alliance leads the way toward zero carbon heating for Ireland

OUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP ARTICLE SHARING INSIGHTS ON THE TRANSITION FROM VOICES BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF OUR SECTOR. HERE, **KEVIN MCPARTLAN** OF FUELS FOR IRELAND, EXPLAINS HOW AN INDUSTRY ALLIANCE IS INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE DECARBONISATION OF THE HOME HEATING SECTOR IN IRELAND.

While climate-related issues have been at the forefront of the political agenda in recent years, progress toward the Irish Government's goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 has been frustratingly slow. This is particularly the case for the heating sector, which has proved difficult to decarbonise due to a high reliance on gas and oil. It is in this context that the Alliance for Zero Carbon Heating (TAZCH) was formed, in January 2021, by its three founding members: OFTEC, Fuels for Ireland and UKIFDA. By uniting businesses from across the fuel and heating sectors, TAZCH offers much-needed expertise and pragmatic, industry-based solutions for decarbonising the home heating sector in Ireland.

Multi-solution approach

As a country, we remain heavily dependent on fossil fuels for our heating, with about 700,000 homes nationally relying on kerosene to stay warm. With only about 6% of our heat sector demand being met by renewable energy, we are lagging far behind our European counterparts, where renewables meet an average of 22% of demand. While the Government has recognised the need to lower emissions from the sector, it has focused almost exclusively on electrification as a solution, embarking on an ambitious strategy to install 600,000 heat pumps in existing homes by 2030. While electrification is important, it is not a panacea, as it requires the deep retrofitting of buildings en masse, which is an expensive and disruptive undertaking, costing €56,000 on average.

TAZCH believes that, if we are to be successful in our efforts to achieve carbon neutrality, alternative technologies must be deployed alongside electrification in the heat sector. A range of advanced, synthetic and bio fuels exist, which have been proven to quickly and efficiently reduce heating emissions by up to 87%. Armed with this knowledge – and the industry expertise that will allow us to realistically bring these low carbon solutions to market – we at TAZCH have met with over 40 parliamentarians, presented our findings to policymakers, and spoken to the media about how advanced, synthetic and bio fuels can play a key role in meeting our emissions-reduction targets. To date, we have had some great results and we plan to build on this progress throughout 2023, ensuring that low carbon liquid fuels are recognised as a legitimate alternative to decarbonising the heating industry.

Offering real solutions

The Irish Government is no stranger to using liquid biofuels to lower carbon emissions. In fact, such fuels are the largest contributor to emissions reductions in the transport sector, where the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) scheme is expected to save 1Mt of carbon emissions by 2030 – far outweighing the emissions savings made by the increased use of electric vehicles on Irish roads. Part of the reason the biofuels scheme has been so successful in transport is because low carbon liquid fuels have been incentivised through the provision of certificates, which

allow suppliers to meet their renewable fuel obligations by blending liquid biofuels, like ethanol, with petroleum-based fuels like petrol. There is no reason this logic cannot be applied to the heating sector, where liquid biofuels like hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) could be deployed for use in existing boilers, to quickly lower emissions on a massive scale. TAZCH has long called for the introduction of a Renewable Heat Obligation (RHO) and the Government has finally heeded this call, pledging to introduce such a scheme no later than 2024. The next step for TAZCH is to ensure that the use of renewable liquid fuels like HVO is incentivised under the scheme so as to provide commercially viable solutions to decarbonising heat. This biofuel certification scheme is one of a number of concrete proposals TAZCH is eagerly sharing with politicians and policymakers, who are showing an increasing level of interest in our position.

Supported by evidence

Part of the reason the Government has been reluctant to embrace these solutions is because the National Heat Study, published last November, recommended that electrification and district heating systems be prioritised over the use of alternative technologies. However, even if the Government meets its retrofitting goals, thousands of homes across the country will remain dependent on oil-fired heating systems, and this is particularly the case in rural areas where district heating is not an option.

There is a significant body of scientific evidence to show that liquid biofuels like HVO can be sustainably produced, distributed and deployed for use in the heat sector. A report, commissioned by TAZCH and conducted independently by the world-renowned consultancy firm





AECOM, showed how HVO can provide an affordable way of reducing heating emissions by 87%. A study by Portland Analytics, which comprehensively analysed the availability of sustainable feedstocks for biofuel production in Europe, demonstrated that we will have the capacity to produce enough renewable liquid fuel to meet biofuel consumption several times over. In fact, the projected renewable liquid fuels yield would exceed demand by between 243 – 560%. Similarly, a report for the Department of Transport noted that Ireland’s indigenous production capacity of HVO could triple by the start of the next decade. This fact-based, scientific evidence provides a compelling case for the use of sustainable biofuels in home heating, which is increasingly understood by the politicians with whom TAZCH engages on a regular basis.

Policymakers must move away from the idea that traditional boilers will perpetuate a reliance on fossil fuels and understand that, with the right technology, these systems can deliver zero emissions heating too. We must take a technologically neutral approach to decarbonisation and use all of the tools at our disposal, because when it comes to meeting our climate targets, there is no time to waste.

Champions of the cause

TAZCH’s message is gaining momentum, and has filtered through to the floor of the Oireachtas, where a number of TDs from across the political spectrum have used the information we have provided to them to make a compelling case for the use of advanced, synthetic and bio fuels in heating. Only last month, a number of Cork County Councillors called on Minister Eamon Ryan to remove all taxes and levies from HVO when used in heating, as a way of incentivising the use of liquid biofuels. This call for action came after Green Biofuels Limited (GBF) announced that it was evaluating the potential for a biofuel refinery in Ireland, following the launch of its terminal in Cork. It is great to see that our industry’s message

is being heard in the political sphere and we must ensure that this is followed up with tangible policy changes that will allow us to play our part in reducing heating emissions.

Save the date for the Ireland energy conference

If you are an industry professional or interested party and TAZCH’s message resonates with you, then you will not want to miss the upcoming conference hosted by TAZCH founding member Fuels for Ireland (FFI). This one-day event will be held in the Sheraton Athlone Hotel on Tuesday 23 May and its theme will be ‘Powering Today and Tomorrow.’

FFI will bring together a host of interesting speakers, industry leaders and policymakers in the energy space to discuss how we can continue to meet the energy needs of families, businesses, society and economy while also striving toward net carbon-neutrality by 2050. The day will begin with a general plenary session, after which attendees will break into two separate strands to focus on the heating and transport sectors. A host of influential panellists have been invited to speak and the conference promises to be a valuable and enjoyable experience for anyone interested in networking, idea sharing or simply educating themselves on this important topic.

Go to the Fuels for Ireland website at www.fuelsforireland.ie/ptt2023 to find out more and to book your ticket.



The Alliance for
Zero Carbon Heating

Klass Oil: a class act in energy distribution



IRISH DISTRIBUTOR KASS OIL IS AN INDEPENDENT BUSINESS WITH ITS HEADQUARTERS IN ASHBORNE, MEATH. IN A CONSOLIDATING SECTOR, KASS OIL HAS GROWN RAPIDLY OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS THROUGH A SERIES OF ACQUISITIONS, BRINGING A NUMBER OF WELL-ESTABLISHED LOCAL BRANDS TOGETHER UNDER ITS OWNERSHIP, EXPANDING BOTH THE GEOGRAPHICAL REACH AND SIZE OF THE BUSINESS. MARGARET MAJOR, FUEL OIL NEWS EDITOR, RECENTLY SPOKE WITH SALES AND MARKETING DIRECTOR, **GABRIEL BANNIGAN**, TO FIND OUT WHERE THE ACQUISITION TRAIL WILL TAKE KASS NEXT.

Klass Oil is owned by the Korrane family with chairman Tom Korrane in the oil industry for nearly 40 years. Originally setting up Emo Oil, Tom ran Texoil as a joint venture with Chevron until he sold his share in 2009.

In 2014 Tom got an opportunity to return to the sector when the family bought Burke Oil in Wicklow, a Texaco branded distributor whose owner Tom knew from his Texoil days. With Tom and his family having a distinguished record in fuel distribution, Tom’s experience and connections would prove invaluable in driving the rapid growth of the business over the coming years, although Tom largely took a back seat encouraging his youngest son, Vincent, to take up the reins.

Continual growth

That early growth continues now, as Gabriel explains: “We grew from circa 11m litres to nearly 100m litres in the last 12 months, from 1 depot in Rathnew supplying Wicklow & South Dublin to a current network of 8 depots and distributing across 18 counties. Evolving from a predominantly domestic heating business to a more diverse customer base, we now cater for everything from farmers to large construction companies, or even fishing haulers and cruise ships.”

Such rapid growth, achieved through both acquisition and organically, doesn’t come without hard work and Gabriel acknowledges the efforts of his ‘focussed and hard-working sales team’ which has grown rapidly along with the business.

“Our team has grown significantly since the early days in 2014. Adding more senior management, I joined Vincent and Tom on the board as executive director responsible for the entire sales and marketing function, and Killian Korrane (Vincent’s brother) joined as financial director.

“Some of the acquisitions also brought very experienced staff on board like Valerie Cusack, who worked with Flynn Fuels in Mullingar. We also acquired Tommy Dowd Oil in Meath, and Tommy, a former Allstar Meath footballer, plays a hugely important role in our business in Meath.”

The team is now over 70 with more than 30 rigid drivers but, in such a rapidly growing business, not all the additions came through acquisitions.

“We needed someone with experience of running a fleet in excess of 30 trucks,” Gabriel explains. “Our operations manager John Hughes brought with him many years of experience in the oil industry. And, on the sales side, I am lucky to have a superb commercial sales team in Sinead

Burke, Kieran Gavin and David Lott. Quality people are helping Klass to grow and thrive.”

Evolving energy needs

In addition to the team growth, the product range has also expanded to meet customers’ changing needs. With increasing urgency to find low carbon energy solutions, Gabriel acknowledges the role distributors have in meeting energy needs now while moving to future solutions.

“The distributors in Ireland are a credit to themselves and this is evident in number of people still employed in the industry to this day. The levels of service provided here are such that customers have never had reason to consider other forms of energy for heating until now.

“But the environmental issues can’t, and shouldn’t, be ignored.”

Despite the negative impact on traditional fuel sales of the drive to reduce carbon emissions in the sector, Gabriel is adamant the changes need to be made: “Better insulation and more efficient boilers are certainly playing their part in reducing volumes, but that is delivering value to customers, and we’d expect that to continue. But there are also options out there now like HVO (renewable diesel) which need to be included as part of the plan for the future. In our opinion, the liquid fuel boiler will be present for many years to come in Ireland.

“On the commercial side of the business we are seeing excellent growth as the Irish economy is performing incredibly well.”

Managing supply issues

Balancing the increasing demand at a time when there have unexpected events seriously impacting product supply must have been challenging?

“Nobody has been spared disruption in the last few years,” Gabriel acknowledges. “In particular, since the invasion of Ukraine. It put serious pressure on our ability to facilitate our customers and that was always something we prided ourselves on.

“There were occasions when we had to restrict customers to less oil than they wanted to order, but we managed to look after everyone and that is something we are particularly proud of. All our customers were very understanding, and we navigated our way through that period together.”

With such a deep commitment to their customers, it is no surprise that Klass Oil employed every possible approach to avoid disappointment.



“We do our best to manage customers’ expectations and to prioritise the customers who have run out,” Gabriel explains. “It’s a very hard thing to do, but we definitely feel it’s worth it. When there is a bit of a panic, either because of shortages or bad weather, people are very understanding if you contact them and reschedule. As long as you guarantee them that they will still get their fuel!

“By moving their order out a day or two, you can make space for someone who has run out and get their boiler going again.”

And, sometimes, this supply juggling comes at a cost to the business. “Sometimes we have to restrict how much fuel we can give a customer and, potentially, have to go back with the balance another day, which isn’t ideal logistically. But, again, if you can free up enough fuel to keep another customer working it’s worth it. Down time on construction sites or for farmers when the pressure is on will cause huge issues for them.”

Gabriel is clearly frustrated by one of the problems customers experience when it can be so easily avoided. “It’s the age-old chestnut of customers running out of fuel - it’s so unnecessary in this day and age.

“We have a great gauge system that we intend to really push over the coming months. We’ll manage your tank levels from our office and never let you run out again!”

Prioritising customer service

With rapid growth, and accompanying increase in customer numbers, it is clearly important that Klass maintains its excellent reputation, especially as many new customers come through word of mouth.

“We have a lot of regular customers, and this is growing every day,” says Gabriel. “We do some marketing but, without any doubt, most new customers come to us through word of mouth, if you look after your customers well, then they will usually recommend you to others they know, and new business will always come your way.

“Service is by far the most important thing to us and our customers. Our telesales team do a tremendous job and the majority of our customers continue to contact our offices, because they are guaranteed a friendly voice and a helpful attitude, and we have developed an excellent commercial sales team who have built exceptionally good customer relationships. Last, but certainly not least, I have to mention our drivers -

they do a brilliant job on the ground, they care about the customers they deliver to and that counts.”

With the growth in online marketplaces and huge focus on energy prices I wonder if customer service values are becoming less important, but Gabriel regards the relationships as more important than ever.

“There is still a lot of loyalty in the Irish home heating market. Yes, there are lots of options online now and that helps keep things competitive which is good for the customer. But relationships and people are still the corner stone of our business. We have a very user-friendly online platform, but the majority of customers still prefer speaking to a friendly person - people buy from people.”

Clearly a people person, Gabriel’s enjoyment of the sector, and its challenges, comes through when he speaks. “In oil distribution you get to deal with people from all walks of life which I find really interesting. You could be selling kerosene to anybody really. Or you could be supplying farmers and construction workers with green diesel, organising a fill to a fishing trawler or pricing some HVO for a multinational.

“I thrive in a people and customer environment. There is no better feeling than looking after people and helping them with whatever they require. It is important to remember we enable our customers in everything from heating their homes, to fuelling their tractors, trucks, plant & machinery or boats.

“If you’re going to service so many different sectors you really have to be on your toes as every sector has different needs, but that really keeps things interesting. Service levels are king - if a farmer is harvesting or a boat needs to make a tide time, they need us to enable them. Their business is our business. That is the Klass customer ethos.”

The differential

“At the end of the day we are nearly all buying our fuel from the same sources, so it’s service that differentiates us and we find that customers still put huge emphasis on that.

And returning to his point about the importance of the drivers to the business Gabriel continues: “The driver is still the only person they are going to meet from the industry, so there is a relationship there and we have customers who have been buying off the same driver for decades.”

Brexit is another big change in recent years, but Gabriel is happy to report that it has not caused any significant issues for the business. “There have been supply issues since Brexit,” he comments. “But they weren’t caused by it. We don’t do a lot of business with UK companies but even when we have it’s been pretty straight forward, thankfully.”

Future vision

Whilst Brexit may not have thrown up the problems in the industry that some anticipated, there are other challenges and opportunities facing the sector as Gabriel looks ahead. “There are lots of challenges, ranging from supply to rising costs and, of course, the likely transition of our sector towards renewable product.

“But therein lies an opportunity also. The businesses who successfully evolve and find solutions for their customers will sustain and grow.

“We plan to continue providing liquid fuels for a long time to come, whether it be kerosene and diesel, HVO or maybe, someday, hydrogen.

“We are always looking to do things better, either by growing or by finding new ways to manage and run our business. We are an energy company and distribution business and our vision is that Klass will continue to grow and be a leading brand in the energy sector for years to come.”

Klass Oil is clearly a future-thinking energy distributor, and we look forward to seeing how the business has evolved when we next catch up.

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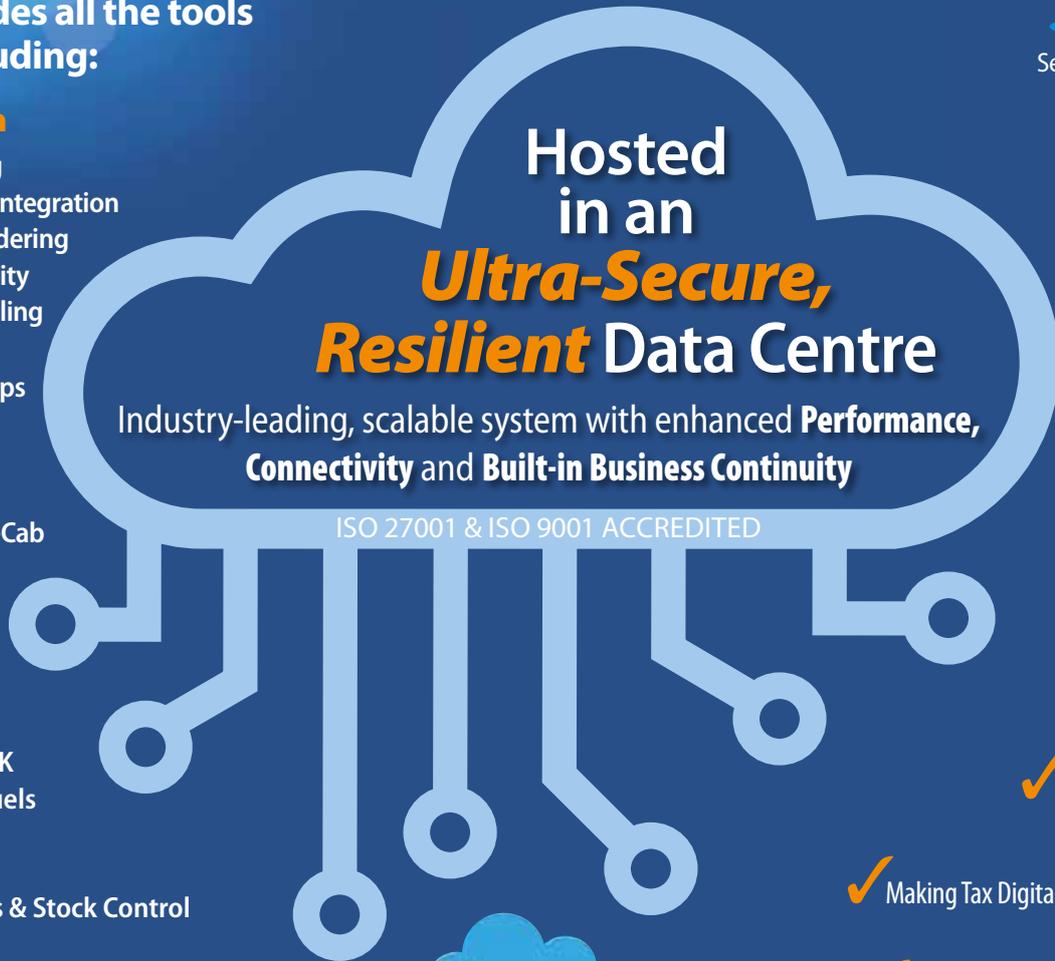
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Ken's Corner

Come to Coventry and feel the love

YOU MAY THINK THIS IS ONE OF THE ODDEST TITLES EVER TO GRACE THE OPINION PIECE OF A CEO OF A TRADE ORGANISATION IN THE UK. BUT IT IS SPURRED BY A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS I HAVE HAD RECENTLY AND THE PREVAILING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC GLOOM THAT HAS ENVELOPED US ALL.

The questions have been twofold – what is the benefit of UKIFDA membership, and why should I come to the UKIFDA show and conference in Coventry?

I am proud that our membership has grown by 10% in recent years. This is important because, firstly, it means we are addressing the real issues and finding solutions for our members and, by doing so, we are attracting new members. Moreover, by increasing our membership, in the eyes of other stakeholders, such as regulators and government, we become a greater voice and more significant channel for the industry.

Principally, the objectives of our organisation are to provide opportunities for people to be able to meet their peers or customers and discuss not only the issues of the day but develop new ideas, business relationships and discover solutions – be that through our annual event (more of this later), our regional meetings, the various working groups we initiate or through our cooperation with Fuel Oil News – collaboration is the key to success.

A good example of this most recently was our work on the Treasury's proposals to regulate 'buy now pay later' financial mechanisms. This could have had serious implications for the industry and the products we provide our customers. Thankfully, through the working group we set up, we were able to articulate the issues, find the solutions, and get recognition from Treasury that our industry did not need further regulation.

In my two years at UKIFDA, what has impressed me most is the technical knowledge we hold inside the organisation, built up over many years of working in, and for, the industry – from safe deliveries to delivering training programmes for drivers, through to ensuring premises and depots meet the strict health and safety requirements of the present day. When we don't know the answer, I am pretty sure we know someone who does. And no problem is too small.

When things don't work out, we are here to provide an outlet for customers to complain through the UKIFDA code of conduct and customer charter and actively promote services to the most vulnerable customers through our priority programme. These are all the things we are really proud of, and I am also proud that the feedback from outside agencies is always positive in this area.

One of UKIFDA's primary objectives is influencing the future, which we are doing mainly through the future fuels project and our work on taxation. These two significant projects have been an important part of UKIFDA's activity during the previous two years and continue to be so. They are critical for our industry and the future of our members.

The biggest day of our corporate calendar is our annual event and show, which this year will be held at the Coventry Arena on May 10th. The day provides an opportunity to meet peers, develop commercial relationships, sell products, learn more about what the industry has been doing in the last twelve months, and also be part of the conversation. Built around an exhibition, conference, awards ceremony and a dinner, the 12 hours is a must for everyone in the industry.

We are sold out in terms of exhibitors, and this year's conference consists of subjects that have come directly from the membership and includes presentations and discussions on future truck technology, the Future Ready Fuel campaign, and also here-and-now subjects like fuel theft, regulation, pricing and supply.

Fundamentally, it is about meeting people to feel a little bit of love amongst the gloom! Twelve days after our event, Harry Styles will grace exactly the same arena with his Love On Tour event. I can't promise the same standard of singing, dancing or even body, but at £12 the entrance fee is a bargain in comparison.

I look forward to seeing you all in Coventry.



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UKIFDA Conference Programme 2023

ADDRESSING SOME OF THE INDUSTRY'S MAIN CHALLENGES, AN INSIGHTFUL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME HAS BEEN CONFIRMED FOR THE 2023 UKIFDA SHOW & CONFERENCE.

Highlights include an industry-leading roundtable on the ongoing Future Ready Fuels Campaign and new for this year, a roundtable titled 'The Future for Trucks'. There will be speakers from HMRC and the new UK fuel theft taskforce, as well as some inspirational future thinking on recruitment.

Ken Cronin explains: "Our previous two conferences have concentrated on the future fuels' agenda. Of course, renewable liquid fuels remain the hot topic for discussion but, following feedback from members and exhibitors, this year's conference will also address several wider issues, including the learnings from key 2022 events, like the red diesel changes and the increase in fuel thefts, with discussion on what lies ahead.

"This year's conference is an opportunity to enrich your knowledge and hear from our industry thought leaders to help everyone drive their businesses forward."

What trucks should you buy and when?

Besides future fuels, 'The Future for Trucks' will be covered with advice on incoming truck technology from hydrogen and electric to bioenergy or hybrid and, most importantly, what distributors should choose and when.

Addressing the recruitment challenge

Two industry-known recruitment experts will also be talking about how the sector can overcome the recruitment challenges in a world where employment is at an almost all-time high.

With the full speaker programme for the conference programme set to be announced soon, it is already clear that there will be a very strong set of guests covering the most pressing industry topics.

To secure your place at the UKIFDA Show & Conference on 10th May 2023 at the CBS Arena in Coventry you must purchase tickets in advance. Scan the QR code on page 17 of this issue or email UKIFDA Membership and Events Manager Dawn Shakespeare at ds@UKIFDA.org

10.15	Introductions		Chair
10.20	Keynote Address		P66
10.30	Future Fuels	The UKIFDA/OFTEC Future Ready Fuels Campaign has been running for three years. This roundtable will explore the progress being made including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HVO demonstration project • The new British Standard for sustainability and how the industry can use audit techniques • The availability of feedstocks • The project's status with government and the general public • The commercial use of HVO 	UKIFDA Mitchell & Webber Zemo OFTEC Portland (supply and sustainability)
11:45	Present Fuels	We take a look back at two of the major fuel-related issues of 2022. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in fuels thefts • The changes to red diesel legislation 	HMRC Fuel theft task force
12:30	Lunch		
14.00	Pricing, Supply and Energy Security	A look at the previous year in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply and price • Exploring how we work together to avoid a future supply crisis 	Portland UKPIA UKIFDA
14:45	The Future for Trucks	What should distributors choose and when? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrogen, electric, bioenergy or hybrid? 	ULEMCo Ltd CNG Fuels Tevva
15:30	Recruitment	Recruiting in a high employment world	ABN Resource GI Group
16:00	Close		

The Industry Awards for 2023

THE ANNUAL UKIFDA EXPO IS FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO AS THE GO-TO INDUSTRY EVENT OF THE YEAR AND THE NEW FORMAT OF THIS YEAR'S SHOW AND CONFERENCE WILL BE NO EXCEPTION. THE EXHIBITION SPACE SOLD OUT IN NEXT-TO-NONE TIME AND THE EXCITING CONFERENCE PROGRAMME IS SURE TO SEE MAXIMUM DELEGATE NUMBERS ALSO QUICKLY REACHED.

As if the day itself wasn't enough, it will be rounded off in style with the Awards Dinner, sponsored by Mabanft, which is the perfect place to mingle and share your thoughts from the day while celebrating outstanding industry achievements with the presentation of the following keenly contested awards:



UKIFDA Green Award 2023

Sponsored by 

Green Award 2023 Sponsored by Oilshield

Closely watched, this award provides the opportunity for entrants to promote environmental initiatives and the work being undertaken to achieve decarbonisation. For the first time, the award is also open to non-members that have helped industry members to achieve their green targets.

Judges will be looking for initiatives that reduce waste or involve better recycling, new technology or a new fuel or additive that cuts carbon emissions at a depot or residential property. It might be risk management policies that reduce spills, or a company that demonstrates support for charities making a positive impact on the environment.



UKIFDA Driver of the Year 2023

Sponsored by 

Driver of the Year 2023 Sponsored by OAMPS

Recognises and rewards the very best of the industry's driving talent.

As well as maintaining exceptional driving skills, entrants will be committed to helping or assisting colleagues or customers where necessary, raising consumer awareness by promoting tank safety, high delivery standards

or promoting the Cold Weather Priority scheme.

Judges will be looking to identify someone who conducts their day-to-day business with a high level of professionalism and always demonstrates best practice.



UKIFDA Customer Service Award 2023

Sponsored by 

Customer Service Award 2023 Sponsored by Worldpay from FIS

This new award celebrates those employees who dedicate themselves to helping customers, providing outstanding service and excellence – especially when dealing with changing needs and difficult challenges.

Specifically, the judges will be looking for instances where people have shown particular initiative and resourcefulness when troubleshooting, taking ownership of problems and following through to completion.



UKIFDA Innovation Award 2023

Sponsored by 

Innovation Award 2023 Sponsored by Fuel Oil News

Intended to find and celebrate the most innovative products or services within the fuel distribution industry, this award might also highlight the adoption of a new business model or idea. It's about making a positive difference within the business or industry sector, introducing new technologies, or an individual commitment to decarbonisation, modernisation and improvement.

The award is open to all and, for the first time, members will be able to nominate non-members and, in doing so, shine a light

on the importance of the wider support of those people and companies who impact the sector's ability to continue to meet customers' evolving energy needs.



UKIFDA Depot of the Year 2023

Sponsored by 

Depot of the Year Award 2023 Sponsored by Pen Underwriting

The search is underway to find the best fuel distribution depot for 2023. All depots audited and passed by UKIFDA Technical Manager Tony Brown as part of the association's Depot Certification Scheme in the past 12 months are entered automatically into the depot contest.

The winning distributor needs to show they are an industry leader when it comes to standards or that they've made the biggest improvements with safety and operations.



UKIFDA Young Person Of The Year 2023

Sponsored by 

Young Person Award 2023 Sponsored by UKIFDA

The UKIFDA Young Person of the Year Award aims to highlight the contribution young people make to the fuel distribution industry. Looking for an individual who has made a positive impact in their organisation as well as always striving for excellence and to exceed expectations, nominees must be under the age of 26 on April 1st, 2023, and have been working within this sector for at least one year.

Don't miss out on this important networking opportunity – book your place at the dinner now by emailing UKIFDA Membership and Events Manager Dawn Shakespeare: ds@UKIFDA.org



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In Conversation: with our event supporters

OUR ANNUAL INDUSTRY EVENT COULDN'T HAPPEN WITHOUT OUR EVENT PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE SHOW. WE SPOKE WITH SOME OF THEM TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHY THEY ARE KEEN TO OFFER US THEIR VALUED SUPPORT.

Q1. Thank you for supporting this event! Can you tell us why you choose to do so and what you hope to achieve?

Philips 66, headline sponsor for the event for a number of years now, shares their thoughts: "UKIFDA has for many years provided a much-needed voice for the industry – and we are happy to, once again, be the headline sponsor for this year's show. UKIFDA has always played an important role – never more so than now, as we navigate future energy needs and a rapidly changing landscape.

"The Show and Conference provides a rare opportunity for the industry to all come together and to share ideas and discuss requirements. It's also a great time for us to connect with our customers and to build on the strong relationships we are fortunate to

have with them."

Pen Underwriting is the sponsor of the Depot of the Year award and, with its longstanding relationship with UKIFDA, is proud not to have missed a single event and agrees with its status in the industry: "UKIFDA's annual event is a key date in our diary and represents a great opportunity to meet with our existing customers and forge new relationships with potential customers.

"As one of the largest providers of insurance protection to the downstream oil industry in the UK **Pen Underwriting** also finds that the event provides fantastic insight into the current and future challenges facing operators."

Sponsor of the extremely popular Driver of the Year Award, **OAMPS**, is another

longstanding UKIFDA supporter: "Having supported UKIFDA events for more than 36 years we're keen to demonstrate that our commitment to the sector remains as strong as ever.

"We're really looking forward to seeing how the new format will be received by the industry."

FoxInsights is sure to find itself very popular after choosing to sponsor the pre-dinner drinks as the company's way of saying thank you: "The UKIFDA events are always insightful, providing the opportunity to get together, network and share knowledge with those in the liquid fuel distributor sector.

"UKIFDA has been instrumental in helping the industry and with our support we wanted to thank them and the community by creating



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an opportunity for attendees to reflect back and have a great start to the evening over drinks. Cheers!”

Having supported the event in a media partnership for many years, **Fuel Oil News** was delighted to seize the opportunity to sponsor the Innovation Award when it was launched in 2021 and is, as always, looking forward to seeing the fuel distribution community gather: “The industry always comes away from UKIFDA gatherings the better for having been there. It is a pivotal event in the industry’s year.

“We are particularly excited this year that there is the opportunity to shine a light on the importance of the wider support of those people and companies who impact on the sector’s ability to continue to meet customers’ evolving energy needs.”

Q2. What will the highlights of the event be?

For **Phillips 66** it is the mix: “It’s always a great atmosphere with thought-provoking

presentations, and we have no doubt that this year will be just as good – if not better! For us it really is a mix of meeting distributors and networking opportunities. A great time to hear first-hand what the industry is thinking and feeling.”

OAMPS is also looking forward to the networking: “Connecting and re-connecting with the people who make the industry what it is, as well as hearing more about how the sector is meeting the challenges of the decarbonisation agenda.”

And **Pen Underwriting** couldn’t agree more: “Past experience tells us that ‘connecting with people’ will be a real highlight, whether this is enhancing existing relationships or developing new ones.

“We are also really looking forward to the show dinner and awards ceremony. **Pen Underwriting** is delighted to be continuing our sponsorship of the Depot of the Year Award for 2023 in order to publicly recognise those teams that are leaders in their field – teams

that continually invest in improving safety and operations, and frequently go above and beyond the required standards.

“Good simply isn’t good enough for these impressive operators. This is a real highlight for us.”

The **Fuel Oil News** team is also looking forward to the chance to meet face to face: “It’s a golden opportunity to talk to so many involved throughout the industry in one place, and we are excited about covering the excellent Conference Programme.

“For the sake of full disclosure, we can’t deny that we’re also looking forward to a glass of wine (or two) at the awards dinner.”

Q3. Who will you be looking to talk to / connect with?

You can tell how enthusiastic the **OAMPS** team are for the networking opportunities when they reply: “Anyone connected with the sector – we’re a sociable bunch!”

It seems **Fuel Oil News** is also happy to meet all-comers: “We are happy to lend our ears and time to anyone looking to contribute to the sector. Whether it’s ideas, challenges, questions, insight or stories from your time in fuel distribution come and grab a chat with us!”

Phillips 66 is keen to have time with “our existing ‘family’ of fuel distributors” and **FoxInsights** is looking to widen its network and find opportunities for collaboration: “We want to introduce ourselves to more mineral oil suppliers in both the UK and Ireland, connect with stakeholders of the industry, understand their challenges, and exchange experiences as well as offer solutions.

“We’d also like to connect with companies that offer solutions to the same target group, to identify collaboration options for an extended value chain. Plus, we are really looking forward to meeting our existing partners to discuss the current state and the next steps of our partnerships.”

The team from **Pen Underwriting** are also keeping an open mind: “We wouldn’t want to single out any one company or individual, and, in truth, we are looking forward to talking to and connecting with all in attendance.

“UKIFDA’s event provides a unique opportunity for our community to come together to network, strengthen relationships and to learn about innovation in our industry.”

Q4. What are the key innovations from your sector that will interest the liquid fuel distributor audience?

The hot topics that **Phillips 66** is looking forward to talking about are renewable diesel



and the Humber Refinery “that has innovation at its core and continues to live up to its reputation as ‘the refinery of the future’.”

Pen Underwriting is “currently focused on fully digitising our insurance offering to complement, not replace, the more traditional ways of transacting insurance.

“Specifically, we are developing a digital portal that will provide **Pen Underwriting** customers and brokers with a one-stop shop for all of their insurance and risk management needs – from access to policy documentation, advice and support on risk mitigation and management, to the ability to submit and manage claims, plus many more features.

“Exciting times, and we look forward to sharing more once we are ready to launch – watch this space!”

FoxInsights also has some exciting developments to share: “Decision-making based on real-time data is gaining importance considering the extreme market situations in the energy industry.

“With our DispatchingAI service based on artificial intelligence, we’re answering the question: who really needs a delivery right now? This allows our partners to further optimise logistics and reduce operational costs by up to a third!

“We have further developed our SalesAI service, which calculates the order probabilities and predicted order quantities of end customers daily and per tank. This enables our partners to achieve a higher success rate in outbound sales, and significantly reduces the workload of sales teams.

“On the hardware side, we gave our FoxPressure fill level sensor a complete overhaul. It now offers more connectivity options, like our FoxRadar already does.

“It also comes with GPS tracking and an improved cable routing for more flexible installation, especially for underground tanks.”

There are some key sector developments for **OAMPS** to talk more about too but, in a nutshell, “Usage-based fleet insurance, liability insurance rated on literage rather than product value and online risk management tools.”

We all look forward to hearing more about the above in Coventry.

Q5. What advice do you have for UK fuel distributors for the next 12-18 months? What opportunities are there for them?

“Take time to really listen to the end consumer about their requirements and feed those insights back to us,” **Phillips 66** answers. “It is, unquestionably, a time of change – and we need to be ready for that change and bold and



brave enough to embrace it.”

OAMPS also offers encouragement: “Such questions are never easy to answer, as there’s always a range of external, individual and often competing factors in play. But the outlook from businesses we speak with is generally positive so, hopefully, this will be borne out over the next 12-18 months.

“In terms of opportunities, the adoption of future fuels such as HVO is a great way for the UK off-grid community to demonstrate that it can support the decarbonisation agenda in a tangible and sustainable way.”

“Use and trust the data!” **FoxInsights** urges. “We feel there is much room for using data when it comes to optimisation of sales, logistics and marketing which can help alleviate the pressure on businesses.

“Cold calling should be a thing of the past in 2023. And the longer one dispatches to a high frequency customer segment without using data, the more money will be wasted. The data is already out there. The industry just needs to increase its confidence in the ability to use it.



“Further, invest into systems which can talk to each other simply via APIs. You can have the best data, but if you cannot transfer it into the right tools, it loses its value.

“So, therefore, all their existing partners for CRM tools, logistics tools etc. should get ready now to be connected easily and fast.”

Referring to one of the industry’s current hot topics **Pen Underwriting** urges: “We would reinforce the advice provided by UKIFDA on minimising fuel theft.

“In the past 12-18 months, we have seen an increase in the frequency of fuel theft claims, creating unwelcome disruption to your business. The costs attached to these claims are rarely limited to the cost of the replacement fuel, but regularly involve significant damage to the tanks, damage to your and your neighbour’s premises and, worst of all, lasting damage to the environment, which could have negative repercussions for your reputation.

“We encourage everyone to be proactive in this area to minimise risk in your business.

Pen Underwriting can also provide lots of useful guidance in this area – please speak to your insurance broker in the first instance.

“In terms of opportunities and in line with the conference agenda, the transition to future fuels and clean energy such as HVO represents a real opportunity for the industry over the next 12-18 months.”

You can read more about our event supporters in the May issue of Fuel Oil News. We are hugely grateful to them all for enabling us to deliver exceptional annual events.



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Data: an update from the UKIFDA databank

UKIFDA'S DATABANK BRINGS TOGETHER RECENTLY PUBLISHED GOVERNMENT AND OTHER THIRD-PARTY DATA CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF LIQUID FUELS IN THE UK. MOST COMPARISONS FOR 2022 (UNLESS STATED) ARE AGAINST 2019, WHICH WAS THE LAST PRE-PANDEMIC YEAR. WHERE COMMENTS ARE MADE REGARDING COMPARATIVE DIFFERENCES, THEY ARE UKIFDA COMMENTS BORNE FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH THIRD PARTIES.

In this edition:

1. Temperature review
2. Update on the consumption of diesel, gasoil and heating oil to the end of December 2022.
3. Update on prices of heating oil to the end of December 2022.
4. First census 2021 information regarding oil heating

Temperature and heating days

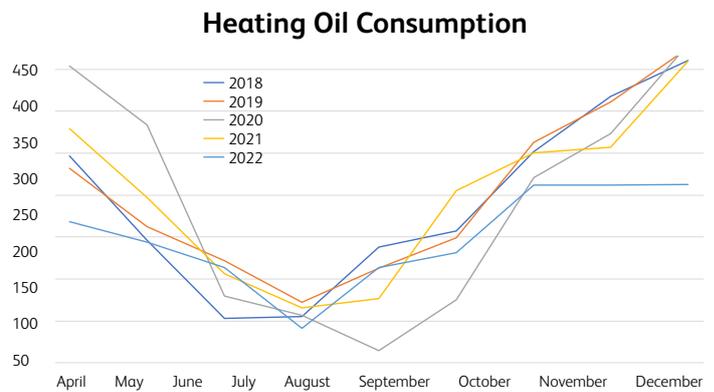
The daily average temperature in 2022 was 11.2 degrees Celsius, 0.8 degrees Celsius higher than in 2021 and 0.9 degrees Celsius higher than the long-term mean.

2022 was the warmest year recorded in the series this century. The average number of heating degree days was 4.9, 0.6 lower than 2021 and 0.7 lower than the long-term mean.

In December 2022, the daily average temperature was 4.0 degrees Celsius, 2.4 degrees Celsius lower than December 2021 and 1.2 degrees Celsius lower than the long-term mean. The average number of heating degree days (HDD) was 11.5. September- November was considerably warmer than 2019 and the 30-year average.

December 2022 was the coldest December in the series since 2010

Average temperatures	30-year mean	2019	2022
January	4.9	4.2	5.2
February	5.2	6.9	6.8
March	6.8	7.9	7.7
April	9.0	9.1	9.1
May	11.8	11.2	13.0
June	14.6	14.3	15.1
July	16.7	17.6	18.2
August	16.5	17.1	18.3
September	14.2	14.3	14.5
October	10.9	10.1	12.7
November	7.6	6.5	9.1
December	5.2	6.0	4.0



Heating oil Consumption

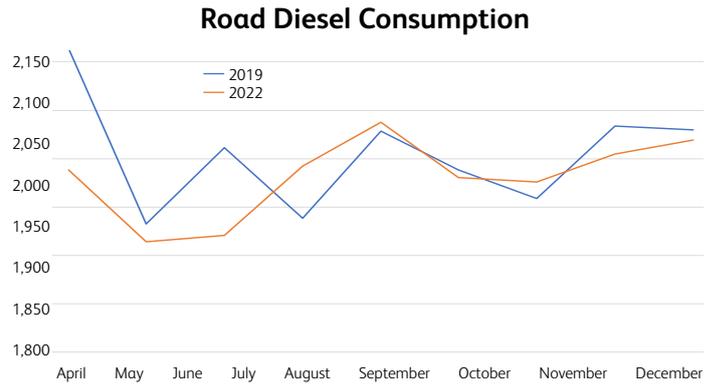
Between April 2022 and December 2022, heating oil consumption in the UK, when compared to 2019, declined by 20%, mainly due to the high prices post the invasion of Ukraine, warmer weather and changing delivery patterns as a result of the cost-of-living crisis.

Monthly figures for domestic gas consumption are not available.

Average heating degree days	30-year mean	2019	2022
January	10.6	11.3	10.3
February	10.3	8.6	8.7
March	8.7	7.6	7.8
April	6.6	6.4	6.4
May	3.9	4.3	2.5
June	1.7	1.6	0.9
July	0.6	0.1	0.1
August	0.7	0.2	0.0
September	1.9	1.4	1.7
October	4.6	5.4	2.8
November	7.9	9.0	6.4
December	10.3	9.5	11.5

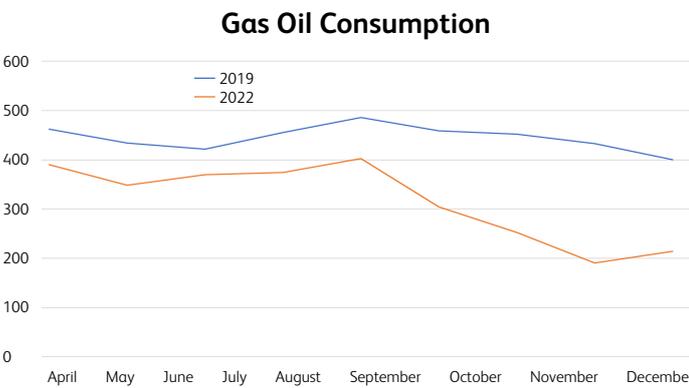


Road Diesel Consumption			
KTOE	2019	2022	
April	2,114	1,989	-6%
May	1,933	1,914	-1%
June	2,011	1,921	-5%
July	1,938	1,992	3%
August	2,028	2,038	0%
September	1,989	1,980	0%
October	1,959	1,976	1%
November	2,034	2,005	-1%
December	2,030	2,019	-1%



2019, gas oil consumption reduced by 29%. However, in the later months of the period, there has been a significant reduction:

Sectoral splits only exist on a quarterly basis – between April and September, the biggest drop in gas oil usage was in the transport sector (-64%).



Derv Consumption

In the 9 months to the end of December 2022, diesel and petrol demand remained relatively stable on last year and close to pre-pandemic levels.

Early Census England and Wales Census Data Introduction

As part of the work being done to identify oil heating oil users and electricity heating users with respect to the alternative fuel payment

Fuel Logistics Digitisation

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2011 list	2021 list
No central heating	No central heating
Gas	Mains gas
Electric (including storage heaters)	Tank or bottled gas
Oil	Electric
Solid fuel (for example, wood, coal)	Including storage heaters
Other central heating	Oil
	Wood
	For example, logs, waste wood or pellets
	Solid fuel
	For example, coal
	Renewable energy
	For example, solar thermal or heat pumps
	District or communal heat network
	Other

of £200, BEIS has been working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) who have accelerated their data analysis of the census to provide an update on the Census 2011 data. This data has now become publicly available.

2011 versus 2021

Both censuses asked the same question, with participants able to choose more than one heating option. The major difference between the two is that the 2021 census provided additional options breaking out LPG from gas, wood from solid fuels and new categories around renewable energy.

If homeowners chose more than one heating option, it would be shown in the stats as “two or more”.

Comparison of 2011 and 2021

Oil

The table below compares the numbers between 2011 and 2021 for those homeowners that chose “oil only”:

What this table appears to show is a 10% reduction in oil heated homes over the last decade.

However, on analysis, the data shows a significant anomaly in the way the question was answered between the two censuses.

Over 2 million respondents answered that they had two or more central heating options in their homes, excluding the renewable energy options. This is a big shift from the 2011 census figure (which included renewable energy options).

	2011	2021	Difference	
England and Wales	962,129	865,940	-96,189	-10%
England	848,145	760,470	-87,675	-10%
North East	20,766	19,025	-1,741	-8%
North West	50,019	43,810	-6,209	-12%
Yorkshire and the Humber	58,501	52,425	-6,076	-10%
East Midlands	86,749	80,065	-6,684	-8%
West Midlands	81,243	73,490	-7,753	-10%
East	205,696	190,465	-15,231	-7%
London	12,115	4,265	-7,850	-65%
South East	141,772	123,435	-18,337	-13%
South West	191,284	173,495	-17,789	-9%
Wales	113,984	105,470	-8,514	-7%



UKIFDA believes this big shift could be explained by a significant number of respondents answering the question differently from 2021, rationalising that their main heat source is from gas or oil, but they have, for example, a coal or wood fire or a standalone electric radiator. The numbers in the second table, below, exclude the renewable options such as solar.

UKIFDA is in discussions with the government and ONS to see if it is possible to extract the oil numbers from the two or more categories as this will go some way, we believe, to explain the differences in oil between the two censuses.

Two or more, excluding renewable energy			
	2011	2021	2022
England And Wales	954,470	2,113,325	1,158,855
England	897,650	1,989,260	1,091,610
North East	48,984	113,860	64,876
North West	108,672	261,480	152,808
Yorkshire and the Humber	85,326	200,900	115,574
East Midlands	78,616	172,880	94,264
West Midlands	98,159	212,335	114,176
East	98,371	214,305	115,934
London	143,248	278,875	135,627
South East	132,706	310,315	177,609
South West	103,568	224,310	120,742
Wales	56,820	124,065	67,245



UKIFDA: reasons to join the growing membership

In his introduction to this issue's Downstream section (on page 17) Ken highlighted some of the valuable reasons a growing number are joining UKIFDA, the trade association for the liquid fuels distribution industry and ancillary interests in both the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Providing members with a collective voice at national level, this leading industry organisation also offers services to optimise business efficiencies, promote best practice and support members to run their businesses safely, sustainably and successfully.

With a name synonymous with integrity, quality and reliability, we highlight here some of the benefits businesses can enjoy as UKIFDA members:



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Publications

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Delivery Risk Report Booklets



Business support

Consumer – Find a UKIFDA Distributor
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Members Area of the Website
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A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Dawn Shakespeare

WELCOME TO OUR FEATURE WHERE PEOPLE FROM MANY DIFFERENT ROLES IN THIS INDUSTRY WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH A TYPICAL DAY IN THEIR WORKING LIFE. THIS MONTH, FUEL OIL NEWS SPEAKS WITH **DAWN SHAKESPEARE**, MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS MANAGER FOR UKIFDA, TO DISCOVER HOW DAWN SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...7:15am.

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...walk down the stairs to my home office, switch on the PC and check my emails. Sadly, working from home means I pass the home office before I get to my kitchen to do breakfast, but on the plus side no one can see what state I am in when I start work!

I PREPARE FOR THE DAY AHEAD BY...eating breakfast and drinking tea (it has to be Earl or Lady Grey tea), I couldn't function without eating something in the morning. I would rather miss lunch.

MY TYPICAL DAY –

When I applied for this job over 9 years ago, I was told that working for a trade association was different to any other job I would have known because although you have a certain remit due to your job title there are so many roles that need covering.

You must be a jack of all trades, and hopefully a master of some. This is certainly true working for UKIFDA. As a very small team of 5, it really is all hands to the deck dealing with the different tasks that each day brings.

We have 3 mailboxes, our individual mailbox, an enquiries mailbox fed from the website, and a membership mailbox. I monitor all of these throughout the day. I answer those that I can and distribute to the rest of the team where necessary. This also goes for telephone enquiries as I answer the main enquiry line.

Ken Cronin, the CEO, keeps me busy as he navigates his way through the many government meetings and legislation updates he must deal with as well as keeping the pressure on so that we are able to meet the decarbonisation targets our industry is facing at this time.

We have a virtual team catch up at 11.30am each day. The rest of the day is spent completing financial tasks, monitoring driver training administration, sending member communications, updating the website, arranging and managing upcoming events, dealing with our consultancy partners and membership enquiries – which I am delighted to say have increased in the last 6 months!

MY MOST MEMORABLE WORK MOMENT...would probably be UKIFDA winning the Trade Association Forum Exhibition of the Year Award in 2017!

It had been an extremely difficult year as we were operating without a CEO and had spent the majority of the year as a team of 3 supported by the then UKIFDA current and past presidents, Jodie Allan and Duncan Grant, who encouraged us to enter mainly to show that they appreciated the work we had done. We were delighted to have made the final 3 as there were some big associations involved that run events with over 500 exhibitors and 15,000 delegates.

When we were announced as winners, I was totally shell shocked. It was a great accolade and credit to our small team and just as importantly to our fantastically loyal exhibitors, members, and delegates!



THE WORST PART OF MY JOB... is dealing with external agencies who think UKIFDA is a huge team and can spend time doing their jobs for them.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB... being able to see things through to completion. As a small team we are very aware of what each of us is doing every day and usually have some involvement within each task. Also, I thoroughly enjoy talking to and meeting our members and exhibitors.

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY... Cooking. I put the TV or some music on in the kitchen and happily prepare and cook the evening meal. How good it is is open to debate and depends on how well the day has gone.

MY FAVOURITE MEAL IS... an odd one... I LOVE spiced chicken wings. On a visit to Florida a few years back I discovered the Hurricane Grill & Wings Restaurant and could have happily eaten there every day and now try to emulate as many different versions of their dishes as possible.

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS... A lamp and my iPad. My iPad is my alarm clock, my book, the easiest way to catch up with friends and family and a handy way to make notes if things are keeping me awake at night.

An ex-boss always told me to keep a notepad by the side of the bed so that if you wake up in the night remembering something you should have done or have to do, you write it down and can usually go to sleep easier knowing you can action it in the morning.



THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS... have a quick look around the house to make things are neat and tidy. I admit to being a bit of a tidy freak and hate getting up in the morning to any type of mess.

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY... 10pm on a workday, I need my sleep! However, in the winter it's not unusual for me to go to bed earlier, put the TV on a curl up under the duvet.

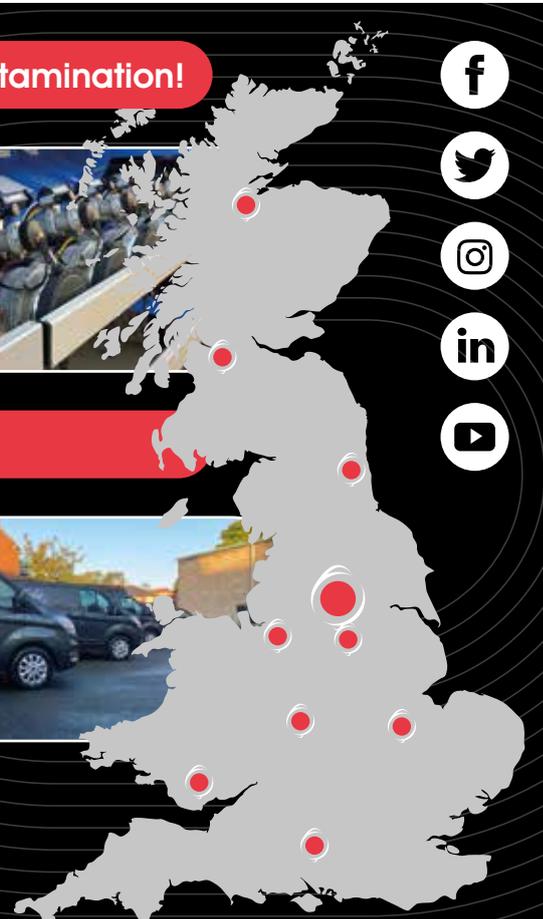
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Case study: the ‘think tanks’ at Tuffa and AMP Clean Energy help power the nation to a low carbon future

AMP Clean Energy is a company leading the way in the energy transition: funding, developing and running low-carbon heat and power facilities for businesses and organisations throughout the UK.

Low carbon energy solutions will be critical if the UK is to hit its net zero target to decarbonise electricity generation and heating in the UK. However, the sun doesn’t always shine (this is the UK!), and the wind doesn’t always blow. To support the journey to net zero carbon emissions, the electricity grid needs to meet the ever-growing demand within urban locations. AMP Clean Energy has developed its ‘Urban Reserve’ flexible electricity facilities to support this transition.

Backup power

Urban Reserve is a backup source of power



Custom-built dual-compartment lubricant oil and waste oil tank



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generation, which can be deployed when the energy supplied by renewables, such as wind and solar power, isn't sufficient to meet demand. Typically, the extra need is between 4 - 7 pm, after school or work and before millions turn on their TVs to watch celebrities eat camel hooves or more unsavoury body parts.

There are now 33 Urban Reserve sites throughout the UK, with 55 engines supplying power to strategic locations predominantly within populated areas in the southwest and northwest of England where power is needed the most.

Through continual development, site blueprints are now well-honed to provide maximum efficiency with minimal manual intervention required.

During the early development days, the system was not as robust as it is now. Invariably, lubricant oils degrade over time, and oil levels drop either by the engine's design or as it burns away. With most sites having multiple engine rooms – with 2MW or 2.5MW generators holding 1,000 or 1,200 litres of engine oils, respectively – the need for on-site maintenance equipment is high.

The initial Urban Reserve sites were maintained using IBCs and portable pumps – a laborious, inefficient method with a greater risk of oil leaks and spills.

Further development to improve the efficiency of the operations was needed and AMP Clean Energy decided to upgrade from IBCs to lubricant and waste oil storage tanks.

Meeting requirements with a bespoke solution

Researching available tanks highlighted that choosing a standard tank to solve a niche requirement wasn't viable. With a bespoke solution needed, AMP Clean Energy chose Tuffa to supply it with the tank manufacturer's unique method of design collaboration allowing the manufacture of a custom-made tank that meets precise site requirements.

A dedicated Tuffa project manager oversaw every aspect of the build, working with an AMP project development manager to produce technical specifications and drawings for a unique storage and dispensing system. As a former Tuffa tank construction supervisor with additional technical sales training and a specialism in custom-builds, Dan Simpson was perfect for the project.

Following the consultation, the proposed solution was a bundled, dual-compartment tank with roller shutter doors and specifications including:

- 1600L lubricant compartment



Replacing the old IBCs at the 33 (and counting) Urban Reserve sites

- 2" fill point c/w overfill prevention valve
- Tuthill pump
- 30-meter hose reel
- Clock gauge
- 3-channel tank alarm
- Overfill prevention valve
- 1600L waste oil compartment
- 2" top suction located within a drip tray
- Clock Gauge
- 30-meter hose reel terminating in a BSP c/w overfill prevention valve
- High-level float

Simplified maintenance

The tanks, cited within close proximity to the engine rooms, simplify the ongoing generator maintenance at the weekly site visits. With a lubricant delivery hose and waste oil extraction hose at 30 meters (10 meters more than a fire engine), the site engineers can rapidly top up the lubricant oils or complete a full oil service.

The additional capacity also means that



Tuffa's tanks delivered across the country to support the journey to net zero carbon emissions

AMP Clean Energy can benefit from fewer deliveries (around two annually per site), offering more efficiencies from bulk buying oil.

With a total of 29 of the specially designed dual-compartment tanks ordered, we caught up with AMP Clean Energy to see what the impact on the Urban Reserve operations has been.

Luis Garces, programme manager, says: "A maintenance regime is essential in keeping our flexible generation facilities running efficiently, helping provide electricity when and where it is needed most. Precision is vital as the sites are fully automated, with remote monitoring.

"Safe and efficient oil storage and distribution was the problem," Luis explains. "By working with Tuffa, we have been able to find a solution which is perfect for our sites. We plan to install a Tuffa tank in all our future Urban Reserve sites and are retrofitting existing plants with the tanks."

With Tuffa's best 'think tanks' on the job, designing the tanks in-house, collaborating with AMP Clean Energy, and fitting the best tier-one ancillary equipment possible, the tanks have become a critical aspect of the Urban Reserve blueprint.

Dan Simpson concludes: "Tuffa has built an excellent reputation for offering fantastic, reliable turnkey fuel and oil storage solutions. Our company is big enough to cope with the fast turnaround, but our culture shone through. What was exciting about this project was its end usage.

"It was great working with the team at AMP Clean Energy."

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Value Oils: leader in online fuel distribution

DONALL O'CONNOR BEGAN HIS TIME IN FUEL DISTRIBUTION WORKING FOR CONNORS FUELS – A SMALL, FAMILY-RUN, SOLID FUEL BUSINESS – BEFORE MOVING TO THE MAXOL GROUP WHEN IT ACQUIRED THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL NORTHERN IRELAND DISTRIBUTOR. IN A MOMENT OF INSPIRATION DONALL LAUNCHED AN ONLINE BUSINESS TO PLUG A GAP IN A TECHNOLOGICALLY EVOLVING WORLD, AND VALUE OILS WAS BORN. MARGARET MAJOR, FUEL OIL NEWS EDITOR SPOKE WITH DONALL, MANAGING DIRECTOR, AND ANDREW HIGGINS, MARKETING MANAGER, TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE MOVE TO ONLINE FUEL MARKETING.

Andrew begins the story: “Value Oils was founded in 2006 by its current owners – over 17 years ago! Initially the business was set up to plug a gap in the market for an on-line provider in fuel distribution. Given the run-away success of the Easyjet and Ryanair models, and armed with more than 20 years of traditional fuel distribution knowledge, the opportunity was clear.

“It’s hard to believe but, way back in 2006, internet usage was still very much in its infancy and smart phones and 5G were unheard of. However, as we saw the technology improving, and being adopted in greater numbers, the concept for setting up ValueOils.com was to automate the sales process, reduce associated overheads and offer home heating oil at competitive market prices.

“Now trading under the registered brand name ‘ValueOils.com’, the company runs a successful, independent online home heating oil price comparison website across the whole UK. The business originated in N. Ireland with the brand subsequently rolled out across the whole of the UK in 2012.”

Still rooted in experience

“The initial founders are still very much involved in the day to day running of the business,” Andrew notes. “Supported by a small team of highly experienced professionals with a broad range of skillsets. The team has extensive industry knowledge and unparalleled experience of marketing and selling to the online heating oil market.”

Donall shares his own path into the industry: “I was involved in our small family solid fuel business in my younger days whilst at Queen’s University Belfast,” Donall explains. “In 1985 we established ‘Connors Fuels Ltd’ which was very successful in N. Ireland and was sold to Maxol Group in 2001.

“At that time, we operated circa 35 tankers and employed more than 100 employees. I then moved to Maxol Group, who were a great company to work for, before setting up ValueOils.com”

The time he spent in a traditional distributor business helped guide Donall in setting up Value Oils, as well as establishing good relationships with the distributor businesses it represents as he explains: “During the era of Connors Fuels, we had a great team of people and a management team who were excellent, innovative and had a great approach to customer service. We were the largest Jet / Conoco (now P66) branded distributor in N. Ireland.

“For many years, I was a member and Chairman of the Jet Distributor Council where I developed many great relationships and made many contacts across the whole UK oil distributor industry. My extensive market knowledge of the majors and mini majors as well as at distributor level was invaluable.

“This made setting up a great network of varied, quality fuel oil distributors not just easier but also very enjoyable.”

Is knowledge of the industry essential?

Andrew replies: “Our team’s in-depth experience as successful traditional fuel oil distributors has given a unique insight and understanding of the issues faced by suppliers in general. This is reflected in the design of our online systems.

“We appreciate the importance of margin to distributors, and we seek to enhance rather than erode this vital part of the formula for everyone’s benefit. Over the years, we have continuously enhanced our systems and supplier portals while striving to keep everything as user friendly as possible. This optimises time resource and enables suppliers to secure orders at attractive margins.

“Our online systems are designed to obtain all relevant information from customers to ensure that deliveries run as smoothly as possible for both suppliers and customers.”

What is Value Oils’ role in the sector?

“We see our role within the fuel industry as providing suppliers with an easy to use “bolt-on” to their own traditional and online

offerings which secures supplementary sales on favourable terms,” Andrew continues. “We will continue to work well with our supplier network.

“We believe that our bespoke software is at the cutting edge of the online fuel market. We predict further consolidation in the on-line sales channel as this remains an obvious direction of travel for the key players in the market.”

How do you work with the distributors?

“After an initial consultation with the supplier, we tailor a set-up to suit their specific requirements. The supplier then simply inputs their prices and delivers the fuel!

“ValueOils.com has developed a recognised brand which is highly optimised across the UK for online heating oil searches. We also have a very substantial email database to whom we regularly market. The front end of our website allows customers to place their heating oil orders in just a matter of minutes using a mobile phone, laptop or traditional computer.

“We believe that our strengths lie in our trademarked brand, excellent reputation, customer database and supplier network.”

Are some reluctant to come on board?

“By this stage we have developed an established, mature supplier network,” Andrew answers. “We deal with a core network of quality, reliable, no-nonsense fuel oil distributors.

“There are some suppliers who chose not to work with third party channels to market and we respect their position. However, ValueOils.com is always interested in suppliers who genuinely want to work together for mutual benefit. We are always up for a chat and suppliers can easily get in touch.”

Why sell through Value Oils?

“There are many benefits for suppliers selling oil through our website, including:

- They are in complete control of the pricing

and delivery windows they offer and can easily update these as required to obtain lucrative orders.

- ValueOils.com processes the customers payments, so there is no credit risk and, importantly, no card processing or banking fees to be paid by the supplier.
- With an established customer database and excellent online presence, suppliers have the opportunity to pick up orders from customers who purchase exclusively online.
- Over the years, ValueOils.com have exclusively managed many Government, council and charity contracts, available only to our supplier network.

It's been a challenging few years. How has this affected Value Oils?

"The past few years have certainly been a rollercoaster in fuel distribution," agrees Andrew. "From working at home with record low prices, to back in the office with record high prices!

"As the old saying goes "out of adversity comes opportunity" and this has certainly been the case for our business. The challenges faced have brought about many successful enhancements to our systems and we often wonder how we managed before we made these changes."

Do your suppliers look after direct customers first, when supplies are low, resulting in less supply for yours?

Andrew considers this before replying. "To be honest, not at all – maybe this does happen with other 3rd party channels to market but we do not experience this. I suppose the key is that we respect our suppliers, and they reciprocate by treating us fairly.

"Scenarios such as supply issues and long delivery lead times have always been part and parcel of fuel oil distribution, but more so in the past few years. These are the parameters that we operate under. The key again is mutual loyalty and having close working relationships with a trusted supplier network and adjusting our customer offering accordingly.

"A huge element of coping is good communication with the customers and suppliers – keeping them informed and not shying away from answering phones and, finally, by not 'over-promising' in the first instance."

What other challenges do customers need help with?

"The big challenge facing customers over the past year has been the cost of the fuel itself.



With many customers' household budgets stretched, offering them flexible payment options has been a key factor in successfully helping our customers manage their monthly budgets and keeping them on-board.

"We are now also finding that many customers are ordering lower volumes than they would have done historically. Customers are running out, or low, much quicker than they would have done previously. Keeping up to date with our suppliers allows us to offer a range of reliable, prompt delivery options to aid customers running low or out of oil."

How do new customers hear about you and how much has the business grown?

"We started the business by delivering to a relatively small area around greater Belfast in 2006," Andrew says. "And many loyal customers continue to purchase their fuel from ValueOils to this day.

"In the early stages, we ran many traditional marketing campaigns – leaflet drops, calendars, newspaper, radio advertising etc. However, as the business expanded to full UK coverage, these methods became cost prohibitive. We therefore invested heavily in our online presence. With the online market for heating oil continuing its rapid growth across the UK, this investment has certainly paid off – we consistently rank highly for all the top heating oil searches across the UK. A quick scan of our positive online reviews from customers shows that they choose us for ease of placing their order, competitive prices, deliveries coming within the stated time frame and, by working closely with our suppliers keeping the customer up to date with delivery updates."

With the growth in online marketplaces, has home heating oil become more of a commodity over time?

"Price, service and relationship will always play a key role in the marketing mix of home heating oil. However, over the past year with the high price of fuel and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, the price paid for the fuel has

become the number one consideration for many customers.

"As the fuel industry moves rapidly online, the relationship with the customer has evolved and changed. We keep our customers up to date with any potential supply or pricing issues, helping them to order at the right time and at a competitive price. Of course, the old customer care values of being polite, friendly, courteous and respectful never fade whether in person, on the phone, via live-chat or email!"

What do you see as the main challenges and opportunities for the industry?

"Outside of the current high prices and supply issues, we see the main long-term challenge for the industry and society in general as being the road to net zero. Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to this challenge!"

"Within this challenge, however, lies great opportunities for fuel distributors and we are sure that liquid fuels will be a key part of the solution. From our own perspective, we have flexible software which is designed to easily offer new products and services. This coupled with a large database to keep consumers up to date with the latest developments will be crucial."

What are the most enjoyable elements of your role in the sector?

"There are a number of elements that are quite unique to ourselves and keep things fresh and interesting on a daily basis. As we deal with a significant number of suppliers and the communication with them is always interesting – it's always great to hear how things are going in different parts of the country.

"Importantly, the innovative work we do with our developers to enhance and improve the website is really enjoyable. It is so interesting when we review the many positive changes we have implemented over the years. Such improvements help suppliers, customers and of course our internal teams."

What's next for Value Oils?

"The fuel oil distribution market is mature and will consolidate further over the next 10-15 years but there is still a long way to go before alternatives take the lead.

"We always look forward and steadily improve the business performance year on year. We have a small team of excellent, innovative people who are experienced and very focused on developing the business to the next stage.

"At some point in the near future, we will no doubt diversify, go on the acquisition trail or be acquired – only time will tell!"

Latest Rix Group acquisition bolsters sustainable energy provision

Boosting its green credentials, J.R. Rix & Sons is continuing to invest in sustainability with its latest business acquisition.

The well-known Hull group, which supplies low carbon fuels, including HVO, and provides services to the offshore wind industry, has purchased Driffield firm J Foley Electrical Ltd for an undisclosed sum in a deal that will see the company renamed as Rix Energy Services Ltd, initially serving domestic and commercial customers across East Yorkshire.

James Foley, founder of J Foley Electrical Ltd, which specialises in sustainable energy technologies for consumers and businesses including solar panels, batteries, electric vehicle charging points, and low energy lighting, has been appointed to head up the new company.

Committed to energy provision

Rory Clarke, managing director of J.R. Rix & Sons, said the acquisition was part of an ongoing strategy of investment into sustainable energy provision commenting: "For more than a century the Rix brand has been synonymous with providing the fuel to keep homes and families warm, to power businesses,

and to keep vehicles moving.

"We are as committed to doing this today as we have been throughout our 150-year history.

"However, the world is moving away from traditional hydrocarbon fuels and we, as a group, are committed to making that move as well, to help create a more sustainable, environmentally friendly world.

"The acquisition of J Foley Electrical enables us to further achieve this by helping our customers decarbonise their homes and their businesses.

"It is a very exciting move."

Reducing cost and carbon

The new business will be closely aligned with new companies within the Rix group including LeaseMate which is focused on the supply of primarily electric and hybrid vehicles and Accountabl which offers expense management and carbon accounting.

These latest developments are part of J.R. Rix & Sons' ongoing strategy to help businesses and consumers lower their carbon footprint and their energy spend.

James Foley said the decision to sell the

business he had built had not been an easy one, but had been prompted by his mother's decision to retire from carrying out a business administration role in the company at Christmas.

Shared values

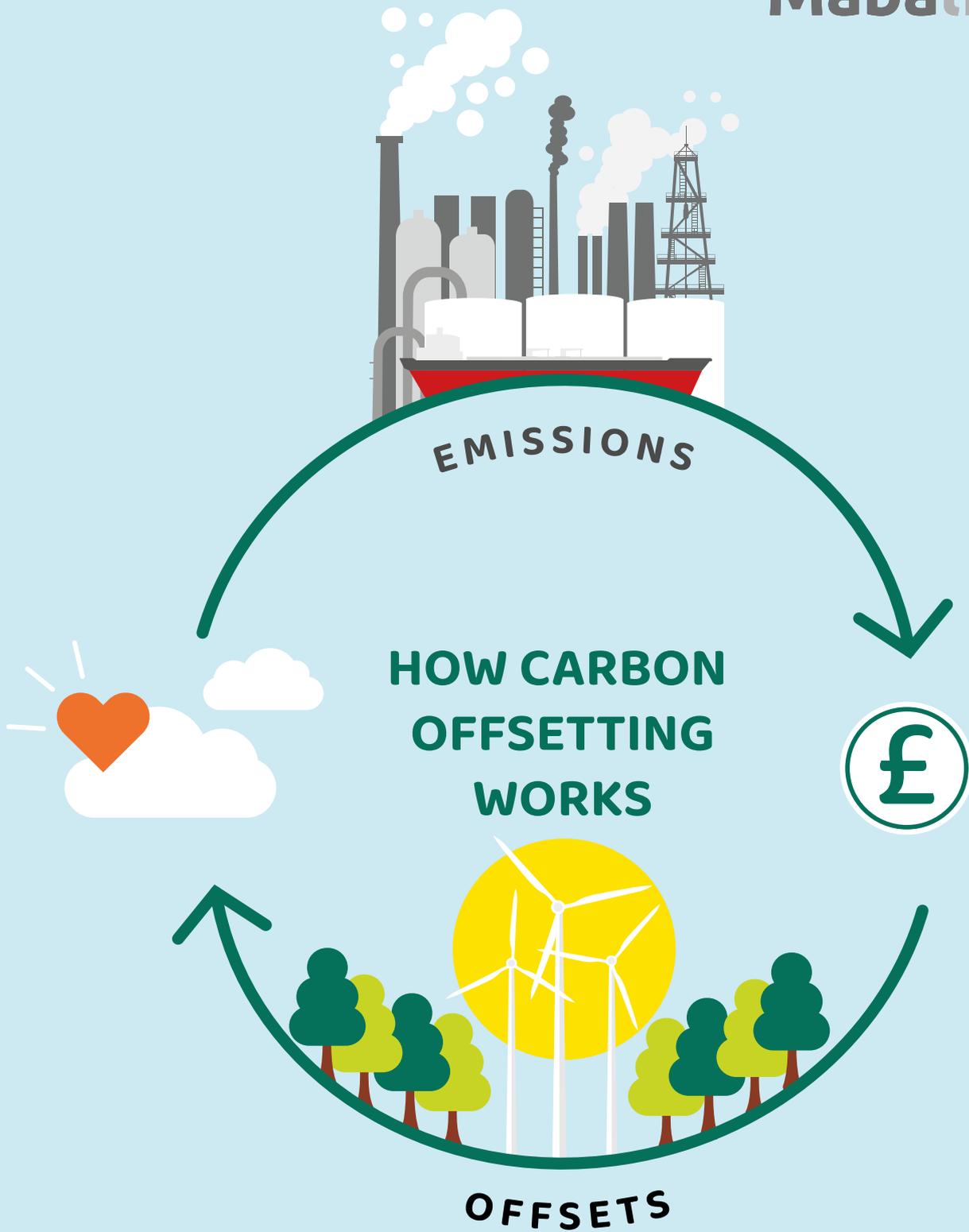
James added that, as a family-owned business, J.R. Rix & Sons shares the same values of service and integrity as his own, and that was an important factor in deciding to sell to the group.

He said: "As a long-established and substantial business, Rix will be able to provide the administrative support, finance and access to the best products that will give me the ability to realise my ambition and vision to grow the business."

The new business will be overseen by Duncan Lambert, J.R. Rix & Son's board director and managing director of Rix Petroleum.

Mr Lambert said he was looking forward to helping the company's domestic and business clients reduce their energy bills and their carbon footprint before concluding: "This is a very exciting acquisition that will enable us to bring significant benefits to our customers."





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Chris Eke: tanker driver at Darch Oil



DARCH OIL, THE SOMERSET-BASED DISTRIBUTOR, HAS BEEN SUPPLYING A FRIENDLY, RELIABLE, AND EFFICIENT SERVICE TO ITS CUSTOMERS FOR OVER 30 YEARS. NOW PART OF NWF FUELS, DARCH OIL CONTINUES TO OFFER THE BEST STANDARDS OF SERVICE.

FOLLOWING OUR CHAT WITH LEE AND RYAN AT RIBBLE FUEL OILS (MARCH ISSUE), CLAUDIA WEEKS, CONTENT EDITOR FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, CAUGHT UP WITH **CHRIS EKE**, TANKER DRIVER AT DARCH OIL. CHRIS IS ANOTHER DRIVER WITH A PASSION FOR BOTH DRIVING AND PHOTOGRAPHY AS WELL AS FOR THE CUSTOMERS HE SERVES.

Life on the road

Asked about his role at Darch Oil Chris replied: "The role of a tanker driver at Darch Oil is to be the face of the company and to deliver the product in a safe and professional manner.

"Darch Oil is based in Yeovil and Glastonbury, in the southwest of England, with a fleet of 10 trucks. We have two baby trucks and eight, 6 wheelers. Each driver can cover the whole southwest:

- From Southampton to Andover
- All the way along the M4 from Chippenham to Bristol
- Down to Minehead and Exeter
- And all the way across the south from the Jurassic Coast to the New Forest!

"You could say I get to see a lot of the countryside. We obviously drive on a wide range of road types from motorways down to the good old country lanes with grass growing in the middle!"

A typical day

Chris talks us through his day at work: "I have been at Darch Oil for the last 19 years! On a typical day, I wake up around 5:15am, feed our two dogs and let them outside whilst I make my flask of water and lunch e.g., a sandwich and a yogurt.

"I arrive at the yard for 6:00am, grab the keys, get the taco card in, and get the daily defect checks done. We use Touchstar in the cab to record any vehicle defects and to do the customer invoicing.

"The delivery count can vary anywhere from 10 to 30 drops a day. The majority are domestic, but we do a wide range of farms and industrial drops too. I have seen a lot of change in the buying habits of our domestic customers over the years. There are a lot more of the 500 litre drops being delivered these days!

"After checking the load hasn't changed,



I leave the yard. I try to plan the route so that I get to my first drop around 7am. On the domestic drops, you often make the customers jump when you arrive in the dark at an early drop – they always find it funny! Farm and industrial drops can be earlier if they require.

"I tend to stop between 10 and 11 am for a 15-minute break and then have lunch at 1pm. Sometimes you can get lucky and find a layby with a burger van in and have a treat, but not every day!

"Generally, I get back to the yard between 4 to 6pm having done around 200-300km out on the roads. I will then go and grab the load schedule for the next day and pump any product back to stock that's not needed for the next day. Then, it's back to the loading bay to load the correct products, which takes about 20 minutes, after which, finally, it's time





to park up, finish off paperwork, lock up the truck isolator, turn off the keys and hand in my papers.”

The highs and the lows

“The part of the job I enjoy the most is the customer interaction. I didn’t realise how much I enjoyed it until the first lock down, back in Spring 2020, when all the chatting with the customers and cups of coffee and biscuits stopped.

“Trying to communicate through a closed window to the elderly and vulnerable was not easy. Sometimes, I was the only person they had seen for weeks. It made me realise that I’m not just an oil delivery driver and that I have a valuable role in visiting those customers, I found it quite humbling actually.

“However, one thing about the role that I have come to realise I don’t like is that I just don’t like working in the rain. It’s not the getting wet bit, it’s the getting in and out of the truck in your waterproofs, you get so hot and then the inside of the cab gets damp.”

A memorable moment

Chris has such enthusiasm for his role as an experienced tanker driver, so I asked what he considered to be his most memorable moment so far out on the road: “One of the most memorable deliveries was around 15 years ago when I had just gone from 4-wheeler to 6-wheeler work.

“I had to make a delivery to a BP oil field on an island in the Poole Bay. The only way to get there was on a barge, but it just looked like a load of shipping containers strapped together, with an engine and a shed for the captain on it.



As you reversed on, it would flex and twist!

“The departure was reliant on tidal times and the trip times varied with the weather conditions but, on average, it would take an hour. When the weather was good, and the sun was shining, you could get out of the cab. They even had fishing gear, so I enjoyed a spot of fishing although I never caught anything. I’m not a fisherman!

“Once on the other side, it was a bit of a race to get the fuel off. I needed to get the bulk hose out so much quicker as the return trip was in one hour and they don’t wait for you! Back on the barge, I would do a bit more fishing and then it would be back to the yard for another load.”

Passion for photography

Chris has always had an interest in photography but has only recently started taking photos of his tanker out on the road: “About 8 months ago, all the drivers received a message from our colleague, Vicky Darch, asking if anyone had

photos of our trucks for the Darch Oil Facebook page. I didn’t have any photos but thought it would be a good time to start taking some! I’ve started taking photos on my phone, it’s a shame I can’t use my DSLR.

“I’ve had an interest in photography since my school days, but back then it was film and a dark room. I’m now doing more and more on my DSLR camera.

“My favourite times of day are dawn and dusk, as the natural light is so beautiful. I also love the beautiful countryside we have on our doorstep. Sometimes I do wish I could bring the truck wash with me so the truck is looking its best for the photographs, but then I suppose that wouldn’t be realistic – it is a working truck after all!”

A big thank you to Chris for sharing his favourite images - we look forward to sharing more in future issues. If a member of your team enjoys photography and has taken some brilliant photos of their work life, please get in touch: claudia@andpublishing.co.uk

Rapid growth keeps Exswift Fuels in the pink

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WE CHATTED WITH CHLOE CROFTS, CEO OF EXSWIFT FUELS, A COMPANY, AT THAT TIME, INTO ITS THIRD YEAR. WITH THE DOMESTIC KEROSENE DELIVERY BUSINESS HAVING GROWN ALMOST EXPONENTIALLY IN THOSE FIRST YEARS, EXSWIFT WAS, WHEN WE SPOKE IN 2021, AWAITING DELIVERY OF ITS 7TH TANKER AND LOOKING EXCITEDLY AHEAD TO 2022 AND THE PLANNED LAUNCH OF A COMMERCIAL ARM.

MARGARET MAJOR, FUEL OIL NEWS MANAGING EDITOR, RECENTLY CAUGHT UP WITH CHLOE TO SEE IF THINGS ARE STILL GOING TO PLAN.

Everything's growing

"A lot has certainly changed at Exswift," Chloe began. "If my memory serves me correctly, we were awaiting delivery of our 7th tanker when we spoke, and we now have a fleet of 12 with 3 brand new ones due this Summer."

The entire fleet sports the distinctive Exswift livery with bright pink cabs – impossible to miss on the roads and a great way to showcase the brand around the areas the company serves as Exswift expands into new locations.

"We have expanded our delivery areas and are now able to fully cover Kent and Sussex.

We have just launched a radio campaign on More Radio (complete with a cheesy jingle!) to introduce ourselves in Sussex, and customers there are beginning to recognise our eye-catching livery as we deliver to more and more."

It's not just the geographical reach that has expanded rapidly as Chloe explains: "There's 26 of us in the Exswift team now! The strong team we are building is one of the things I am most proud of.

Doing it Exswift style

Despite rapid fleet expansion, the business hasn't found driver recruitment too challenging.

"Recruiting new drivers has been a relatively easy process for us – so far!" Chloe commented. "We typically recruit from outside of the industry, finding HGV drivers with the core values we find most important. We then put them through any industry specific training before 'buddying' them up with one of our Driver Trainers to learn the ropes – Exswift style!"

The Exswift style also extends to customer service which Chloe highlights as one of the reasons new customers choose the distributor even in areas where it is a new name. "The feedback we are getting points to two reasons why customers put their business with us – our very competitive pricing and the customer service we provide across the board."

A new commercial division

"Another exciting development since we last



spoke has been building up our Commercial division," Chloe shares. "We have been busy establishing partnerships with other suppliers and expanding our product offering.

"It's a very new initiative and we really hope to see it continue to grow and for us to strengthen our partnerships with our peers within the industry.

"We also now have our own artic, enabling us to deliver full loads in."

"We are also continually reviewing the products we offer to ensure that, as a business, we are focused on keeping up-to-date with low carbon fuels and supporting our customers on any transition. Kerosene has always been the main body of our business, but we also provide, derv, gasoil, GTL, IHO and now we are in the process of adding renewable diesel to the list.

"We haven't seen a huge demand as yet, but I am happy to say it is growing.

"We also have our own branded additive 'Burn Bright' which is part of the Exocet family.

Giving back

"Another development this year has been an increased focus on our customers and communities to offer support in challenging times. Most recently we launched our 'Win it Back' draw. With the cost-of-living crisis this has, of course, been extremely popular.

"All orders that are placed through exswift.com directly are placed into a draw with one

customer per month winning the full cost of their order back to use against their next purchase(s) with us."

"The most common topic for our customers is price," Chloe observes. "Especially after the market volatility over the last 12 months."

With price on their minds, it's no surprise this incentive is so popular, and Chloe has also found herself benefiting: "It's been such a lovely thing to do, enabling us to give something back to our customers in a time where people are worried about the cost of living.

"I'm sure that it makes me almost as happy as the winner when I visit to let them know that they've won back the cost of their fuel order!"

And it's not just individual customers benefiting from Exswift generosity.

"We are also sponsoring the Child of Sussex awards this Summer which is very exciting to be a part of and which we are really looking forward to," Chloe shares.

"It's a truly lovely event designed to celebrate the achievements of children across Sussex. This year's event is being held on Friday 30th June at Knockhatch Adventure Park in Hailsham and I've heard that it has a circus theme. We are really looking forward to attending."

With business going so well, is anything keeping Chloe awake at night?

"Anyone that knows me knows that I live and breathe Exswift, so it'll be no surprise when I tell you I struggle to switch off at night! I try to see opportunity over challenge, though – so my mind is normally buzzing with ideas.

And expansion isn't finished yet! "We are looking to secure an additional depot," Chloe shares, with clear excitement.

"The next few years will be about securing the new depot and building that up and, as the landscape of our industry changes, helping our customers on a transition to greener alternatives."

We look forward to catching up with Chloe and Exswift in another few years and hearing how this next phase goes.

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PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

MARCH
IN VIEW

EVERY CLOUD... COULD THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE HASTEN A SUNNIER FUTURE?

Despite the untold riches currently being enjoyed by traditional oil and gas companies (see last month's report), it is also true that the crisis in Ukraine has stimulated significant activity across all energy sectors. In the short-term, demand for non-Russian oil and gas has of course boomed, but policy makers and investors are continuing to turn their attentions to renewable energy. Solar and wind power currently supply around 5% of the world's energy needs, with this figure being expected to increase to 25% by 2035 and, possibly, to 50% by 2050. More importantly, from a geo-political perspective, this is energy that can be sourced and developed outside the control of unfriendly and / or tyrannical governments. Next month our report will focus on wind but, before that, we will turn our attentions to solar power. How does it work, how efficient is it, how sustainable and, most importantly for consumers, how cheap?

“THE MOST EXPENSIVE FORM OF GENERATION OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS”

Harnessing solar energy relies on photovoltaic (PV) cell panels that are mounted on rectangular frames and linked together to form a photovoltaic system (often colloquially referred to as a 'solar array'). In simple terms, sunlight is absorbed by the panels before generating electron excitation which, when diffused through the panel's silicon film, generates an electrical current. As the output of a solar panel is direct current (DC), inverters are required for conversion to the alternating current (AC) used in grid transmission. Over 90% of PV solar panels use high-purity silicon, and converting sand into solar cells is a high-cost, high chemical and highly energy-intensive process. Silica-rich rock formations first have to be pulverized into smaller fragments, which are then treated with an array of chemicals – many of which (gallium, arsenide, hydrochloric acid, hydrogen fluoride, acetone) are toxic. The resultant 'sponge' is then melted at extreme high temperatures (arc furnace process) to form cylindrical ingots. The (now) silicon ingots are

then sliced into thin disks called wafers, which are intricately soldered together with plastic piping and copper conductivity rods to make up the main components of the panel.

Reading all of that, it would be reasonable to ask how green is this product? After all, significant amounts of fossil fuel energy are required in the manufacturing process, which also relies on copious amounts of crude oil derived naphthenic liquids, in the form of the chemicals used. Getting a precise answer to the 'environmental payback' question is predictably difficult because so much depends on how the raw materials are extracted and what type of energy (coal or gas) is used in the arc furnace. Our best estimate is that one solar panel consumes the equivalent of 250 – 300 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electrical energy in the production process. That panel should generate around 100kWh of electrical energy per annum, giving a green payback of around 2-3 years. On a lifespan of 25-30 years, this is actually quite an impressive figure.

So what about solar energy at a commercial level? Here too the calculations are notoriously difficult, as they again depend on the same factors of raw material and processing. Plus, the byzantine complexity of electricity pricing (see previous reports) makes clear-cut conclusions difficult. In 2022, the returns for solar power (along with all renewable generation) were enormous, because consumer prices were based on the stratospheric cost of gas. But this has not always been the case, such that the fixed renewable tariff applied by UK power generators (to cover the capital costs of renewable projects) have made solar (and wind) power the most expensive form of generation over the last 10 years. It remains the case though, that as the original capital investment depreciates over time, related power generation from those assets will become cheaper every year until there is no cost at all. Because...well, sunlight is free!

Emission free, zero cost generation and still much cheaper than wind turbines to manufacture, it would seem foolish to bet against the inextricable rise of solar power. Certainly, Joe Biden seems to think so in his 'new green deal', where there is a commitment to build 500m solar panels in the USA over the

next 10 years. The general public also seems to feel fairly positive about solar power. In a 2022 survey, 70% of the UK population was broadly favourable towards solar, whereas the corresponding figure for wind was only 50% (unsurprisingly, power from fossil fuels only received a 20% approval!).

“IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE A WORLD WHERE SOLAR POWER DOES NOT PLAY A HUGE PART”

Despite this, global investment in solar power lags behind both wind energy and the enormous amounts of money currently going into roadside electrical charging. Plus there remains the thorny issue of China's predictable domination of the sector, with 70% of the world's solar modules being manufactured in that country. And, whilst China's dominance of the solar industry has benefitted consumers, this is largely a result of anti-competitive practices that have manipulated the price of solar panels down by 85% since 2010. This, in a fairly obvious attempt to control the global market.

Expect that particular problem to run for a while, because energy generation typically comes under the umbrella of 'strategic importance'. Western governments might even seek to hamper solar capacity, if it was to result in over-reliance on Chinese production. But, putting politics aside and viewing things at a macro-level, it is difficult to see a world where solar power does not play a huge part in our energy solutions going forward. With a modest initial carbon and capital footprint, followed by years of minimal cost operations, solar surely has a future that is very...bright!!

For more pricing
information,
see page 50

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BP OUTLOOK 2023: the outlook for global energy to 2050



New events and dominating trends:

This year's Outlook, published in February, closely follows the prior year's format and also incorporates two new and significant events which occurred during last year and are deemed to have a material impact on the global energy sector. These are:

- The Russian attack on Ukraine and the consequent, widespread disruption to, and re-shaping of, established oil and gas flows
- Passage by the US Congress of the Inflation Reduction Act, which included a range of measures with significant incentives to promote renewables and emissions reductions

The Outlook highlights what are seen to be the four key trends that will dominate future energy use:

- A declining role for hydrocarbons
- Rapid expansion in renewables
- Increasing electrification
- The growing use of low carbon hydrogen

As in the 2022 Outlook, the same three scenarios are explored. These are not predictions of what is likely to happen, but rather they seek to capture a wide range of the outcomes possible for global energy transition up to 2050. We will now look at these.

The scenarios:

Accelerated and **Net Zero** explore how different elements of the energy system may change to achieve substantial carbon emissions reductions by 2050 (vs. 2019 levels) of **75%** in **Accelerated** and of **95%** in **Net Zero**. Both scenarios assume that there's a significant tightening in climate mitigation policies.

New Momentum reflects the current, broad trajectory of the global energy system. It emphasises substantial increases in climate pledges in recent years. Under this scenario, carbon emissions peak in the 2020s and are around **30%** below 2019 levels by 2050.

Net Zero also shows a shift in societal behaviour and preferences to support gains

in energy efficiency and the adoption of low carbon energy. The CO₂ emissions left in this scenario can be eliminated by either additional changes to the energy system or by deploying CCUS.

The pace and extent of decarbonisation in **Accelerated** and **Net Zero** are broadly in line and are consistent with the Paris COP15 target temperature changes, of 2°C and 1.5°C.

Consumption of fossil fuels declines in all three energy transition scenarios in the 2023 Outlook. Their share in primary energy declines from **80%** in 2019 to around **55%** to **20%** by 2050. This is the first in modern history incorporating scenarios showing a continued decrease in fossil fuels demand.

The rise in renewables offsets the falling role of fossil fuels. Their share will go up by as much as **65%** by 2050 because of stronger policy support for low carbon energy.

The critical importance of renewables is also driven by the growing electrification of the energy system. The share of electricity in energy use goes up from only **20%** to between **35%** and **50%** by 2050.

In all 3 scenarios, around 15% of the CCUS operating in 2050 is used to capture and store non-energy process emissions from cement production. CCUS achieves 4 to 6 Gigatonnes of CO₂ by 2050 under **Accelerated** and **Net Zero**, with only 1 Gigatonne of CO₂ in **New Momentum**.

Finally, the growing use of low carbon hydrogen in hard-to-abate processes that are difficult or costly to electrify supports the decarbonisation of the global energy system. This is particularly true in both **Accelerated** and **Net Zero** scenarios. The energy used in the production of low carbon hydrogen rises to between 13-21% by 2050 in both scenarios.

Key themes:

A number of key themes are highlighted in the Outlook, which we will now summarise.

• The carbon budget is running out.

Despite the marked increase in government ambitions, CO₂ emissions have increased in every year since the Paris COP in 2015 (bar 2020). The longer the delay in taking decisive action to reduce GHG emissions on a sustained basis, the greater are the likely resulting economic and social costs.

• Government support for the energy transition has increased further in a number of countries,

including the passing of the Inflation Reduction Act in the US. But the scale of the decarbonisation challenge suggests greater support is required, including policies to facilitate quicker permitting and approval of low carbon energy and infrastructure.

• The disruption to global energy supplies

and associated energy shortages caused by the Russia-Ukraine war will increase the importance of addressing all three elements of the energy trilemma: secure, affordable, and lower carbon.

• The war will have long lasting effects on the global energy system.

The heightened focus on energy security will increase demand for domestically produced renewables and other non-fossil fuels helping to accelerate the energy transition.

• The structure of energy demand will

change in all three scenarios, with the importance of fossil fuels declining, replaced by a growing share for renewable energy and by increasing electrification. The transition to a low-carbon world will require a range of other energy sources and technologies, including low carbon hydrogen, modern bioenergy, and carbon capture, use and storage.

• Oil demand will decline over the Outlook,

driven by falling use in road transport as the efficiency of the vehicle fleet improves and the electrification of road vehicles accelerates. Even so, oil will continue to play a major role

in the global energy system for the next 15-20 years across all three scenarios.

- **The prospects for natural gas** depend on the speed of the energy transition, with increasing demand in emerging economies, as they grow and industrialise, offset by the transition to lower carbon energy sources led by the developed world.
- **The recent energy shortages and higher prices** highlight the importance of the transition away from hydrocarbons being orderly, such that the demand for hydrocarbons falls in line with available supplies. Natural declines in existing production sources means there needs to be continuing upstream investment in oil and natural gas over the next 30 years, including in Net Zero.
- **The global power system will decarbonise**, led by the increasing dominance of wind and solar power. Wind and solar will account for all or most of the growth in power generation, aided by continuing cost competitiveness and an increasing ability to integrate high concentrations of these variable power sources into power systems. The growth in wind and solar will require a significant acceleration in the financing and building of

new capacity.

- **The use of modern biofuels** – modern solid biomass, biofuels and biomethane – will grow rapidly, helping to decarbonise hard-to-abate sectors and processes.
- **Low carbon hydrogen** will play a critical role in decarbonising the energy system, especially in hard-to-abate processes and activities in industry and transport. Low carbon hydrogen will be dominated by green and blue hydrogen, with green hydrogen growing in importance over time. Hydrogen trade will be a mix of regional pipelines transporting pure hydrogen and global seaborne trade in hydrogen derivatives.
- **Carbon capture, use and storage will play a central role in enabling rapid decarbonisation trajectories:** capturing industrial process emissions, acting as a source of carbon dioxide removal, and abating emissions from the use of fossil fuels.
- **A range of techniques for carbon dioxide removal** – including bioenergy combined with carbon capture and storage, natural climate solutions, and direct air carbon capture with storage – will be needed for the world to achieve a deep and rapid decarbonisation. Accelerated adoption of renewables vs

2022 Outlook, with a corresponding reduction in fossil fuel use has been given impetus by the invasion of Ukraine. Heightened focus on energy security has also had a part to play, especially from domestic sources - though BP's recent announcement on slowing its phase-out of oil and gas output (a cut of 25% by 2040 cf 40% prior aim - compared with 2019) has raised questions about its 'green' credentials.

As ever, daunting challenges lie ahead if the Paris Agreement on temperature rise abatement (max 1.5 C rise by 2100) has a fighting chance of being met. The Outlook does a splendid job of highlighting these as well as pointing up the measures / actions / activities needed to address.

ROD PROWSE, worked for 30 years across the full spectrum of the downstream oil sector, in both the UK and USA, which has included leadership positions in both retail and wholesale fuels businesses. Rod draws on his extensive knowledge of this global industry to bring us 'Industry Insights'.



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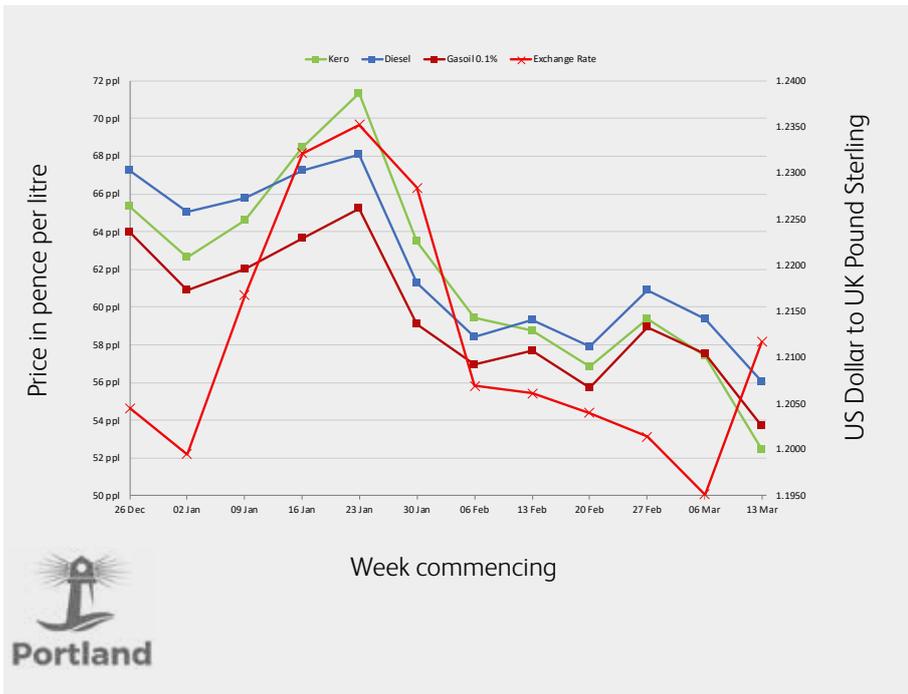
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Wholesale Price Movements: 19th February 2023 – 18th March 2023

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1%
Average price	56.53	58.55	56.47
Average daily change	0.94	0.91	0.96
Current duty	0.00	52.95	10.18
Total	56.53	111.50	66.65

All prices in pence per litre



Highest price
60.18 ppl
Fri 03 Mar 23

Biggest up day
+2.25 ppl
Fri 24 Feb 23

Kerosene

Lowest price
50.22 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23

Biggest down day
-4.34 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23

Highest price
62.04 ppl
Fri 03 Mar 23

Biggest up day
+1.99 ppl
Fri 17 Mar 23

Diesel

Lowest price
53.61 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23

Biggest down day
-4.15 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23

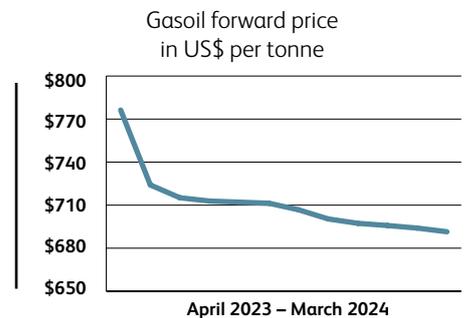
Highest price
60.15 ppl
Fri 03 Mar 23

Biggest up day
+2.10 ppl
Fri 24 Feb 23

Gasoil 0.1%

Lowest price
51.47 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23

Biggest down day
-4.17 ppl
Wed 15 Mar 23



The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

	Trade average buying prices			Average selling prices		
	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD
Scotland	59.23	70.16	115.19	67.52	74.96	119.70
North East	58.18	68.79	114.27	69.75	73.28	117.59
North West	59.75	71.39	116.66	67.71	75.56	119.62
Midlands	58.25	69.32	114.73	66.06	73.74	118.33
South East	58.35	69.28	114.71	74.47	76.98	117.83
South West	58.70	69.12	114.55	69.09	73.53	117.41
Northern Ireland	58.81	70.49	n/a	66.48	75.89	n/a
Republic of Ireland	72.57	75.92	116.13	79.33	80.41	119.81
Portland	56.56	66.84	111.42			

The price totem figures are indicative figures compiled from the Portland base rate using calculated regional variances.

Buying prices are ex-rack. Selling prices are for 1000 litres of kero, 2500 litres of gas oil and 5000 litres of ULSD (Derv in ROI). Prices in ROI are in €.

Wholesale prices are supplied by Portland Analytics Ltd, dedicated providers of fuel price information from refinery to pump.

For more information and access to prices, visit www.portlandpricing.co.uk

WELCOME TO APRIL'S EDITION OF OUR SPECIAL MONTHLY FEATURE WHICH GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO 'MEET' AN INDUSTRY FIGURE AND, HOPEFULLY, TO DISCOVER ANOTHER SIDE TO THEM BEYOND THE WELL-KNOWN FACTS. THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH **CLARE CHARLTON**, HEAD OF SALES AND MARKETING AT MABANAFT.



"ALWAYS STRIVE TO DO YOUR BEST."

CLARE CHARLTON

Please give your career history in 25 words or fewer

24 years working in the industry, always working in front office/sales roles apart from my short stint in logistics around the early 2000s.

Describe yourself in 3 words

Driven. Practical. Sociable.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?

To be a sports journalist.

Describe your dream job (if you weren't doing this?)

PE teacher.

What's the best business advice you've ever received?

Never give up and enjoy a drink after work.

Share your top tips for business success

Always strive to do your best, don't give up if you don't succeed, and network.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?

Winning a piece of business.

Tell us your greatest fear

Being stuck in a lift – and it happened recently!

Which is most important – ambition or talent?

Ambition.

What's the best thing about your job?

No day is ever the same.

Which is the quality that you most admire?

Integrity.

What are you most likely to say?

The hotspot on my mobile/laptop doesn't work.

What are you least likely to say?

Everything is running smoothly, NOT.

Describe your perfect day

Summer holiday, sitting by the sea having a cool drink.

Do you have a favourite sports team?

The Eagles – Crystal Palace.

What's the biggest challenge of our time?

Climate Change and our children growing up.

Cheese or chocolate?

Both.

Share your greatest personal achievement

My two daughters and hopefully finishing my London Marathon next month.

What's your pet hate or biggest irritant?

Chewing gum.

If you were on 'Mastermind' what would your specialist subject be?

Sports.

If you were elected to government what would be the first law you'd press for?

No one should be homeless.

If your 20-year-old self saw you now what would they think?

Doing good.

What is number 1 on your bucket list?

Taking my daughters on safari.

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

Gin, music, boat.

Tell us something about you that people would be very surprised by

I enjoy taking part in Mud Monster, Tough Mudder races.

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?

Emmeline Pankhurst.



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