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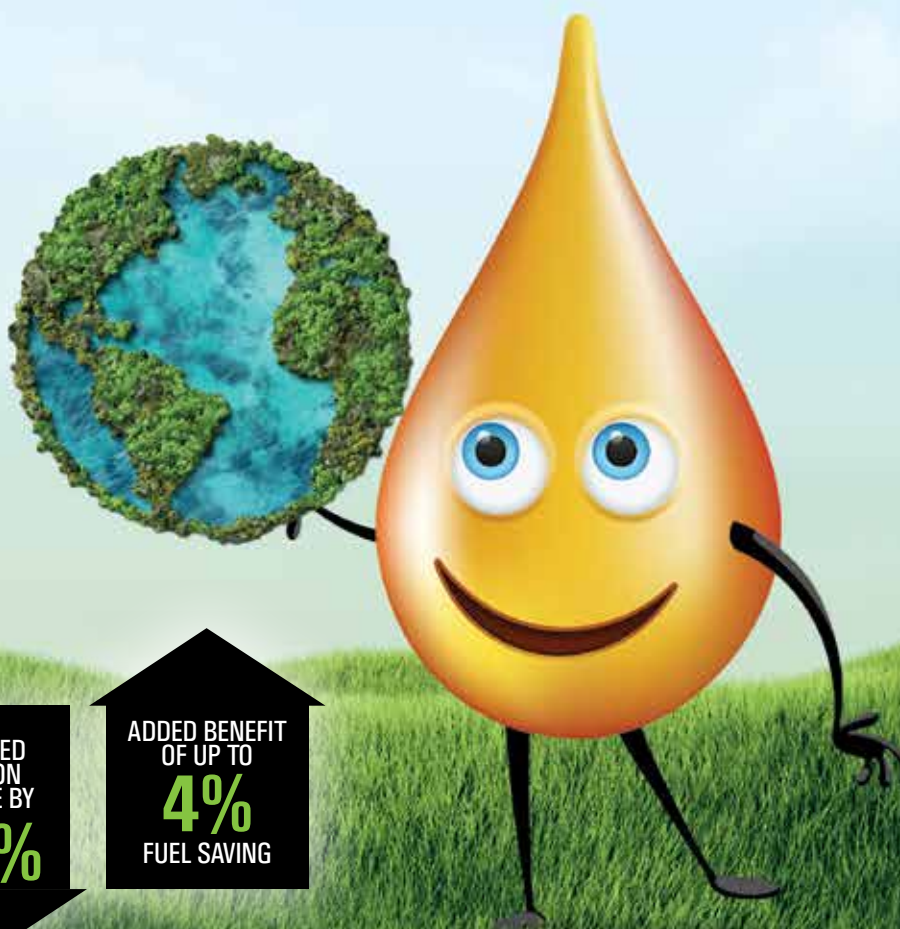


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The importance of leaving well

A man I consider to be very wise once said: "It's not important what people think when you come in, but what they think when you leave."

For those unfamiliar with the quote, it was uttered by Jurgen Klopp, recently departed manager of Liverpool FC, in response to the fanfare that accompanied his arrival at the club.

Being a tribal sport, football can be a force for division. But, during his time in the Premier League, Klopp pushed back traditional club boundaries, winning hearts right across the vast footballing community.

Maybe it was his humanity, or ability to speak from the heart, or maybe his integrity, his desire to give his everything, to be an effective steward – to leave everything, and everyone, better than before his involvement.

I have touched before on the true nature of stewardship, but what of governance? I write this just two weeks before the people of the UK decide who will lead us forward through, arguably, some of the most complex challenges we have ever faced. On the day this issue lands, the people will go to the polls to put a tick next to the party

they feel will offer the most effective governance for the country – the leadership of decision making, culture, controls and accountability.

Every party has shared its manifesto, its promise of what it intends to deliver and how. But manifestos are just words until we see the deeds, intentions meaningless until they become actions.

Each of us has, in work and personal life, responsibility for our own governance and for the impacts we make.

None of us is here for ever – we're all just passing through. We make a contribution; we maybe leave a mark; we hopefully leave things in a better way than when we arrived. We leave at some point, and we owe it to ourselves and to those around us to leave well.

We can only hope that the Government formed after July 4th places at least the same importance on our regard for it at the end of its tenure as on our regard for it at the outset.



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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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On the cover

An industry delivering: a Gleaner tanker on its journey from the distributor's Islay depot across to the Isle of Jura on a wonderfully sunny April day. As they celebrate 70 years, we find out all about this heritage business on pages 12 & 13.

In this issue

We dig deeper into sustainable liquid fuel development on pages 22 & 23 and 26 & 27, unpack the latest industry data on pages 16 to 19 and consider the potential impacts of failing to address cyber security on pages 24 & 24.

EET launches 100 grants to celebrate Stanlow centenary

With the Stanlow refinery celebrating its centenary in 2024, owner EET Fuels is offering 100 grants to support local community projects to mark the occasion.

Announcing the launch of its '100 grants for 100 years', EET Fuels has confirmed that the Stanlow Refinery 100 Grants Fund will provide financial support to benefit community projects close to the Stanlow site.

The centenary celebration will encompass a series of events and initiatives that recognise Stanlow's significant contribution to the Cheshire community, the North West region, and the UK as a whole. At the same time, the Company will use the centenary to recognise, celebrate and give thanks to the communities connected to Stanlow while demonstrating its long-term commitment to support these communities long into the future.

Giving back

"We are incredibly proud of the Stanlow Refinery's rich history and its significant contribution to the region's economy," said Deepak Maheshwari, CEO, EET Fuels. "The Stanlow Refinery 100 Grant Fund is our way



of giving back to the community that has supported us for the past century."

The fund is open to applications from registered charities and not-for-profit organisations working in the following sectors:

- Education and skills development
- Environment and sustainability
- Community health and well-being
- Culture and heritage

A group can apply for grant of up to £1,000, and applications will be judged on their potential to make a positive impact on the local community.

"We are committed to being a good neighbour and playing a positive role in the

Ellesmere Port community," said Michelle Lewis, Corporate Affairs Director, EET Fuels. "We encourage all eligible organisations to apply for a grant and help us celebrate this important milestone."

Applications are now open, and more information and details of how to apply can be found at: www.eetfuels.com/100-years

Grants will be awarded at the discretion of the company, with preference given to local initiatives that will deliver tangible benefits and/or outcomes. Once all 100 grants have been allocated, the scheme will end.

You can read more about Stanlow's centenary on page 20 of this issue.

Greenarc unveils Lancashire's first renewable fuel HVO pump

Greenarc has unveiled Lancashire's first-ever HVO pump with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held at the fuel and clean energy services provider's Padiham depot to celebrate the occasion.

Greenarc customer Greenhaul, a leading haulage company, was the first business to utilise the new pump, and their HGV truck became the very first vehicle in Lancashire to be filled with HVO at the Padiham site.

"We're excited to be part of this inaugural moment with Greenarc," said Michael Pope,

Operations Manager at Greenhaul. "Having access to HVO via a fuel card is a massive step forward in reducing our environmental impact, and perfectly aligns with our commitment to sustainable practices.

"We look forward to a continued partnership with Greenarc as we explore even more sustainable transportation options together."

Paving the way for a greener future

This initiative extends beyond just HVO. With support from fuel infrastructure partner LCM



Greenarc's Anne-Marie Knowles stands with Greenhaul driver Gavin Crane as he fills up his truck with HVO

Environmental, Greenarc has also strategically expanded its network to include AdBlue, a solution that tackles nitrogen oxide emissions from diesel vehicles.

"The launch of Lancashire's first HVO pump, alongside the introduction of AdBlue to our network, represents a significant milestone for Greenarc," said Kevin Jackson, Commercial Sales Manager, who had the honour of cutting the ribbon. "These developments directly support our mission to ease the world's journey to clean energy and make it a reality. We're confident that this new infrastructure will empower businesses across Lancashire and the surrounding areas to embrace sustainable fuelling options for their transport and operational needs."



Representatives from Greenarc, LCM Environmental, and Greenhaul at the HVO pump launch

UKIFDA appoints WCF's Phil Murray as new president

Outgoing President, Rory Clarke of Rix, has been thanked for his dedicated service as the new President was welcomed at the industry association's AGM, held on 19 June.

Following the AGM, UKIFDA announced the appointment of Phil Murray, Deputy Managing Director of WCF, as its new president, saying that: "Phil's experience in the fuel distribution industry will further strengthen the association's position as a leading voice in the sector."

UKIFDA took the opportunity to extend appreciation to Rory Clarke, the outgoing president and Non-Executive Director of Rix. Highlighting his dedicated service and valuable contributions during his tenure, the association reported that "during his stewardship, UKIFDA achieved significant milestones and expanded its influence within the industry".

Phil Murray was welcomed into his new role with the association "looking forward to working closely with him to drive the continued success and advancement of UKIFDA and the wider fuel distribution community".

Positive development

Ken Cronin, UKIFDA CEO, commented: "Phil Murray's appointment as the new president of UKIFDA is a positive development for the association and the fuel distribution industry as a whole. In addition to supporting the association's ongoing initiatives, Phil's expertise will help ensure the effectiveness of the Future Ready Fuel campaign in promoting new fuel solutions in both the UK and Ireland.

"I also wish to express my gratitude to Rory for his support of the association and I during his presidency tenure. His input has been invaluable, especially during some of the recent challenging moments the industry has



faced."

The association's Future Ready Fuel campaign delivered significant achievements during Rory Clarke's presidency. The campaign gained traction and raised awareness about the importance of transitioning towards cleaner fuel alternatives.

Shaping industry future

Rory Clarke responded: "It has been a privilege to have served as the president of UKIFDA, and I am proud of the progress we have made across this changing industry.

Supporting Ken Cronin, UKIFDA's CEO, I am confident Phil will help further propel the industry into its next era."

As Phil Murray assumes his new position, he shares his thoughts, stating: "I am honoured to take on the role of president of UKIFDA and am committed to advancing the association's mission of promoting renewable fuel solutions and driving positive change within the fuel distribution industry.

"I look forward to working with the dedicated members of UKIFDA and playing a part in shaping the future of this industry."

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Narrowboat holiday company switches to HVO after DfT green lights subsidy

Following the Department for Transport's green light for HVO to be subsidised for both onboard domestic purposes and propulsion of vessels on the Inland Waterways, Droitwich-based Trinity Boats has made the switch from diesel to HVO.

Becoming the only narrowboat hire base to currently run all of its boats on HVO, Trinity Boats will provide HVO rather than mineral diesel in its fleet of five, soon to be seven, modern narrowboats, reducing CO2 emissions by up to 90%.

Canal Boat cruising is already a relatively environmentally friendly way to enjoy a holiday, especially for those in the UK when compared to a flight abroad or other multi-stop holiday options. However, Trinity Boats is taking it a step further with the fuel switch.

100% waste-derived from residual food industry fats, tall oil by-products, and used cooking oil, among other products, HVO can be used in traditional diesel engines as a drop-in alternative to diesel. It also avoids the issues seen with first-generation biodiesel, such as diesel bugs and blocked fuel systems.



Sunflower – one of Trinity Boats' five holiday hire narrowboats and its first serial hybrid. It has a backup generator which will now run on HVO.

Committed to sustainability

Phil Webster, Director at Trinity Boats commented: "At Trinity Boats we are committed to the environment and sustainability and have therefore switched to HVO fuel for our hire fleet and for resale to boaters.

"Our holiday hires are fuel-inclusive so our customers can enjoy a more environmentally friendly holiday without any additional cost."

And, for Trinity Boats, making HVO available at the canal side is only one of the steps it is taking towards decarbonising this popular activity. The forward-looking company is also pushing forward with more environmentally-friendly boats as Phil explains: "We are also about to launch our first Serial Hybrid holiday hire narrowboat "Sunflower".

The clarification from the DfT over the Renewable Transport Fuel Certificates (RTFCs) subsidy, which agreed that the benefit can apply to fuel used for onboard domestic purposes, as well as for the propulsion of vessels, narrows the price gap between HVO and

mineral diesel.

It will also make it easier for suppliers to market HVO to the leisure boating sector as they will no longer need to establish what proportions of the fuel will be used for the domestic and the propulsion purposes on the vessel – a requirement complicated by the fact that most leisure vessels have only one fuel tank.

Making HVO the affordable choice

Trinity Boats is a partner to canal boat holiday provider Roam and Roost Holidays whose Director James Anelay believes more still needs to be done to make this renewable fuel an affordable option for all the boaters on the inland waterways.

"I would call on the government to properly fund Britain's waterways and continue to work to close what remains a significant price gap between HVO and mineral diesel to make it an affordable option for all boaters on the Inland Waterways.

Formula Student to use all sustainable fuels in 2024

Motorsport UK, the governing body for motorsport in the UK, has provided a grant for entrants to use Coryton sustainable fuels in ICE powertrains within the Formula Student competition.

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMEChE) is delighted to extend its partnership with Motorsport UK, in its role as key sustainability partner, and Coryton Fuels, to provide sustainable fuels to all competitors at this summer's competition held at Silverstone race circuit.

This initiative is a part of continued efforts to improve sustainability at the event and reduce its carbon footprint.

"Motorsport UK recognises that motorsport needs to have a broad view of the future propulsion solutions and incorporate sustainable technology, including fuels, within their genesis," explains Motorsport UK Technical Director, Ian Smith.

The SUSTAIN Racing E85 and 95 RON E10 fuels offer an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for the combustion vehicles at the competition when compared to fossil fuel-based equivalents. Both are second-generation advanced biofuels, created from agricultural waste, and have been designed to be a drop-in solution, meaning that student teams do not need to modify their existing engines to realise their benefits.

Winning formula

This follows the successful debut of these fuels as an optional choice at the 25th anniversary event in 2023, where a third of combustion engine teams opted to use them, including competition winners MoRe Modena Racing from the University of Modena, Italy, quickly dispelling any concerns about the biofuels' adverse effects on performance.

David Richardson, Director at Coryton,



said: "Sustainable fuels have a huge role to play in the future of motorsport and we're already seeing that in many series across the world. That's why it is fantastic to have this opportunity to show the next generation of engineers what sustainable biofuel can do, and to allow them to experience it in action.

"The fact that last year's winners used SUSTAIN Racing fuel just proves there is no drop in performance - but there is huge potential for the future of a cleaner motorsport industry."

IFC Inflow reveals a new mobile fall prevention solution

IFC Inflow has launched a new product, the TopTank, with Emmy Krishna, Marketing Coordinator, sharing more about it: “There are many businesses throughout the world who have to get on top of road tankers as part of their normal operations. This could be to sample or inspect the products in the tank, to open or close the manway covers, or to simply check or clean the equipment mounted on the top of the tank or vehicle.

“This process is inherently dangerous, as it involves working at height on top of the vehicle and standing on uneven, often slippery, surfaces with the added risk of trips from tank mounted pipes and covers.”

A Top Tank makeover

“For years our TopTank has provided flexible and safe tanker access solutions to tanker loading sites globally. The system is mobile, and easily operated by a single user, providing safe access and collective fall prevention for anyone wanting to reach, or work on, the tops of tankers. This solution has been hugely popular so, in 2024, we decided to give it a full makeover to meet even more of our customers’ needs.”

Acting on feedback

“By listening closely to feedback from existing customers, and using our extensive experience within the tanker safe access markets, the all-new model has been specially designed to fit anywhere along the side of the tanker, making the solution even more flexible than our previous design. The pneumatic tyres make it easier to manoeuvre around site and the winch-operated ladder with safety latch mechanism makes it just as simple to move the cage into position on top of the tanker.

“The new TopTank is even more compact than our previous design, so can be easily shipped and set up could not be simpler.

“There are 6 cage options currently available to suit different tanker designs and industry sectors, with sizes ranging from 1.5m x 1.5m to 1.5m x 2.5m, with a range of railing options.

“The TopTank 2 is ideal for any company where there is a need to provide a fall prevention solution to safely access the tops of tankers on a regular basis, but no option to have a fixed gantry on site.



New Brand Manager for Coryton’s range of sustainable fuels

Suresh Nahar has joined the Coryton team in the newly created role of SUSTAIN Brand Manager

SUSTAIN is Coryton’s range of advanced sustainable biofuels, which powers a range of organisations, teams and motorists in the racing and classic car worlds.

Suresh brings with him over a decade of experience working in automotive technology. He also has specific experience in the government sector and international business.

Distribution network

In his new role as SUSTAIN Brand Manager, Suresh will build on the commercial development of the SUSTAIN brand, primarily working on increasing the distribution network for the sustainable fuels. Initially focusing on the automotive sector, he will also be tasked with developing new market applications, with partnerships already existing within the marine and aviation industries.

Suresh commented: “My first interaction with Coryton was hearing a representative speak about their ground-breaking sustainable fuel at the British Motor Show in 2023 – and I instantly knew this was an organisation I wanted to work for. As SUSTAIN was the first publicly available sustainable fuel, I’m very much looking forward to growing the distribution network for the brand, enabling more people to access it, and raising awareness of what SUSTAIN is and the benefits it brings. We’ve got a busy year of events and partnership activity coming up, so it’s an exciting time to come onboard.”

Pivotal time

David Richardson, Business Development Director at Coryton, said: “Suresh brings with him strategic vision, fresh ideas, and huge amounts of enthusiasm.

“It’s a big task we have ahead, not only to progress the rollout of our distribution channels, but to educate more people about the role sustainable fuel can play in a greener future – and also to influence policy at a government level. This is a pivotal time for the industry as a whole, and it’s great to have Suresh on board to help us drive the brand forward.”

THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY

Send your latest news to claudia@fueloilnews.co.uk

WCF – Coast to Coast completed

Members of the Executive Board at WCF challenged themselves to walk, swim or run 171 miles each – the equivalent of the coast to coast – over the course of 6 weeks, to raise money for rural communities in Cumbria.

The WCF Warriors lead the fundraising leaderboard to date with almost £2,200 raised. Phil Murray, Deputy Managing Director at WCF, finished the challenge in first place, and Jo Ritzema, Managing Director, was in third place!

Jo reflected: “We have all thoroughly enjoyed undertaking the challenge and benefitted from both the physical and mental effort. We are all surprised how we have managed to engineer the additional hours of walking into what we thought were busy schedules already.

“By doing it as a team we have been spurred on by the efforts of the others, particularly on those dull and rainy days, and there is no doubt there has been a healthy level of competition.

“It has allowed us to explore the surrounding areas of many of the WCF depots, appreciating the beautiful landscapes that are around us – if we only know where to look. Our colleagues at WCF have encouraged us with their kind words and their donations and we are very grateful for the generosity of everyone who sponsored us.”

Congratulations to the WCF Warriors!



IFC Inflow – fun times at team social

IFC Inflow appreciates the value of team bonding events and recently got together to enjoy a team bowling night out.

Kiran Shaw, Operations Director at IFC, said: “We like to make some time to go out as a team and get away from the office for a couple of hours as often as we can.

“This time our Technical Director Greg invited us to his local bowling alley where he plays in a league. It was great fun and a fabulous evening, even if the rest of us didn’t stand a chance against Greg with the home advantage!”

Congratulations are to be given to Team 1 who came out on top, with a total score of 835, and a special mention both for Greg, the highest-scoring bowler of the evening and for the lowest scorer, Mark. Better luck next time Mark!

If you’ve recently enjoyed some team social events then please do let us know: claudia@andpublishing.co.uk

Barton Petroleum Ltd – football’s coming home

Barton Petroleum Ltd, the Northamptonshire-based fuel distributor, recently took part in a charity football tournament. The event was to celebrate the 50th anniversaries of Whitworth FC and Barton Petroleum Ltd, and to raise much-needed funds for two fantastic local charities.

Morgan Webb, Depot Assistant at Barton, said: “We entered a team of our most impressive Barton footballers into a charity football tournament. We had a brilliant day; it was full of laughs (and some pain!) and I was pleased to score 2 goals for our team! It was also great to see the Wellingborough Depot Manager, Charles Wootton, on the score sheet too!

“We have a long association with Whitworth Football Club because of Richard Croxson, our previous Depot Manager, who loves supporting them and is part of the Whitworth committee. We are also proud kit sponsors of the team!

“I would like to say a massive thank you to Wellingborough Whitworth FC for such a well organised and enjoyable event; it was great to raise money for both charities. The overall champions for the day were Kelly’s Heroes, so a big congratulations to them too!”

Over £10,000 was raised for Kelly’s Heroes, a Northamptonshire-based mental health charity that provides unwavering support to individuals navigating mental health challenges, and The Maxwell Mallows Brighter Future Fund that supports Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Congratulations to Barton FC!



Mission complete for Ben at MechTronic



Ben Firth, Sales Engineer at **MechTronic Ltd** continues to raise money for local charities in 2024. At the end of May, Ben successfully completed the 3 Peaks Challenge!

He set off on May 31st, aiming to climb all 3 National Peaks whilst raising valuable funds for The Matthew22 Fund.

The fund was set up in October 2023 to raise vital support for selected charities in memory of Matthew Hollingworth, who sadly passed away from bone cancer on the 16th February 2022.

Ben said: "The challenge was harder than I thought, but I am

glad I've done it! Thank you to everyone who has supported me and for everyone's kind words. I'm very proud of myself and grateful for all the donations I have received.

"I would recommend the challenge to anyone; the views and memories are worth it and it's something I will never forget. My JustGiving page is still live if anyone would like to donate to my fundraiser at www.justgiving.com/page/benfirth-3peaks."

Congratulations Ben!



Read all these stories and more in full at www.fueloilnews.co.uk



Prince Energy Ltd – celebrating the new Mr and Mrs Prince

Prince Energy Ltd is celebrating the wedding of Prince Energy Director, Johnny Prince, to his partner of 10 years, Isabelle Sansone.

Johnny reflected on the day: "It was a wonderful day that we were lucky enough to be able to share with all our friends and family and, despite the rather unpleasant weather the UK has been having, we were fortunate enough to see some sun on our wedding day!

"We are now enjoying a fabulous honeymoon touring Provence and the Cote D'Azur drinking an unhealthy amount of wine and eating an even more unhealthy amount of bread, pastries and croissants (because, why not?!).

"I am excited to get back to the office and catch up with the team and, dare I say it, catch up on the incredible amount of work that I am sure is piled up on my desk!"

A huge congratulations to Johnny and Isabelle from all at Fuel Oil News.

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A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Harry Boxall

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 **HARRY BOXALL**, DEPOT MANAGER AT NWF FUELS AND WINNER OF THE UKIFDA YOUNG PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD 2024, TO DISCOVER HOW HARRY SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...

6:30am.

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...

Jump in the shower!

I PREPARE FOR THE DAY AHEAD BY...

Having a cup of tea.

I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT...

My porridge.

MY TYPICAL DAY –

My typical day kicks off with a morning briefing with my sales team. We go over lead times, daily targets, and any specific goals or challenges for the day. This meeting is key for getting everyone on the same page.

After that, I spend some time catching up with our regular customers. I'm certainly not shy, and I enjoy working with people, so I like to be on the phone helping and catching up with customers.

Next up, I handle vehicle planning and maintenance. This means I'm making sure our fleet is in good shape, scheduling regular check-ups, fixing any issues that come up, and planning routes with our drivers to keep things running smoothly. Health and safety is vital, so I do regular checks to make sure we're following all the right procedures and keeping everyone safe.

It's a broad role with lots of exciting opportunities and challenges so, by the end of the day, I look over what we've accomplished and plan for another successful day ahead!



MY MOST MEMORABLE WORK MOMENT...

It has to be winning the UKIFDA Young Person of the Year Award 2024!

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB...

That not everyone is as funny as me!

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

Seeing my team achieve their goals.

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY...

Playing golf.

MY FAVOURITE MEAL IS (Breakfast, lunch, or evening meal)...

Pizza!!!

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS...

Empty drink glasses.

THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS...

Have a cup of tea.

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY...

10pm.

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ID	Customer	Release date	Start	Area	Volume
220224	W Jones Plant Ltd	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	100 Charing Cross Road, Salford...	4252.750
220225	James Marshall	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	11 Broomfield Close, Highmoor...	4252.850
220226	Jack Roacher	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	Alton Park, Highfield Rd, Salford...	4252.950
220227	Northen Plant Direct	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	200 Appleton Park, Didsbury...	4253.050
220228	Great Indesco Ltd	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	17 Broomfield Close, Salford...	4253.150
220229	W Jones Plant Ltd	22/02/24 - 27/02/24	West Manchester 123	100 Charing Cross Road, Salford...	4253.250

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A heritage to be proud of: 70 years of Gleaner

GLEANER LTD IS A FUEL DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS BASED IN ELGIN, SCOTLAND. FOUNDED IN 1954, THE COMPANY IS CELEBRATING ITS 70TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2024!

THE NAME 'GLEANER' HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE OLD AGRICULTURAL AND FISHING PHRASE 'TO GLEAN', AS IN 'TO GLEAN FROM THE LAND, TO GLEAN FROM THE SEA' AS THE COMPANY WAS INITIALLY CREATED TO SERVE THESE INDUSTRIES. NOW, GLEANER SERVES A WIDE VARIETY OF COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIES, AS WELL AS SERVING THE DOMESTIC HEATING MARKET AND RUNNING A NETWORK OF FILLING STATIONS.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH **DAVID TODD**, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT GLEANER, TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE LAST 70 YEARS AND WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR THE BUSINESS.



The history

Gleaner was founded in 1954 as an 'Authorised Distributor' for B.P. Scotland Ltd and Shell Mex Ltd and has evolved greatly since its inception. David explained more about the development of the business from the early days: "The Young family owned Youngs Coaches which was like the Scottish Stagecoach of its day. In the late 1940s, the company was nationalised, and Robin Young diversified into the white fish trawler fleet of the Northeast of Scotland. Realising the need for fuel for the boats, Gleaner was set up in 1954, based in Lossiemouth and Buckie.

"Gleaner continued to grow, and in the early 1970s (with the demise of Shell Mex Ltd) became a branded all-product distributor for Shell. Over the next three decades, the company expanded into most areas of Scotland selling oil, bulk LPG, and lubricants, whilst also establishing a strong position in petrol filling stations.

"Since Shell's sale of Stanlow, Gleaner has established a network of excellent fuel suppliers who we continue to work closely with, whilst continuing to be an official Shell lubricant distributor.

"In 2024, Gleaner continues to grow as a business. The business started with only 6 employees and now there are around 200 people working for us!"

The key milestones

Claudia asked David what the key company milestones of growth and change have been over the past 70 years.

"There have been many of course, but the continuity of family ownership remains key," David replies.

"I also feel that developing the PFS retail side of the business has been important, as well as the successful move to other suppliers.



Gleaner Founder Mr Robin Young with Nessie in 1954

"Owning our own depots brings both stability and the opportunity to provide diverse types of energy. It also puts Gleaner at the forefront of green energy offerings as the zero-carbon agenda takes off."

A family-run business

In 2014, Jane Scott, the granddaughter of the company's founder, Robin Young, along with her husband, Stephen Scott, bought her uncle's 50% share in the business making them the outright owners of Gleaner.

David shared more about the family's involvement: "The Scott family are still active in running the business and stay on top of ongoing developments. Whether its attending monthly Board meetings or giving advice over potential acquisitions, they are close to the management team.

"The family are very much custodians of the business and are keen to pass it on to their son, Evan, who would be the 4th generation to own the business."

The customer

"We use all the standard routes of advertising to our customers. We do cover a large geographic area but maintaining a local feel to the business is particularly important to us," David commented, keen to explain how new customers hear about the business and choose



Inverness Remembered Edition 18

Gleaner as their supplier.

"This is why we have avoided call centres and mega depots which, although cost effective, are impersonal to the customer. We are located in, and employ people from, the areas in which we operate, and we feel this improves customer experience. The importance of word-of-mouth really does matter."

The future

David considered what the future might look like for Gleaner: "We are already preparing for the future and provide several of our customers with green liquid energy. We see this continuing across oil, gas, and lubricants.

"As we are a big company, we feel that we have some clout in the market and that we are flexible enough to adapt to whatever the future holds."

Working in this industry

To understand more about working life at Gleaner, Claudia asked David a series of quick-fire questions!

• What has been your proudest accomplishment in the business?

"There have been many – although picking up the Scottish Family Business Award for Large Rural Companies in 2016 stands out. Also, our most recent business award from the Moray Chamber of Commerce for Most Outstanding



Three tankers at the Elgin Depot in 1993

Contribution to the Moray Economy in 2023.”

• **What was the best piece of advice you have been given in this industry?**

“Days after I started, I was told – ‘turnover is vanity, while profit is sanity’ – I find this to be so true!

• **What have you enjoyed the most about operating in fuel distribution?**

“Meeting so many different people, whether customers or colleagues, as well as living in one of the most beautiful parts of the country. I’m a lucky man!”

• **Who has had the best ideas?**

“I think it has to be Jane’s father, Evan Young Snr, and Billy Laing, my predecessor, who saw the opportunity in forecourts.”

• **What was your most memorable day at work?**

“Finishing the upgrade of our ship-fed Isaly depot which is now able to offer green



alternatives to the historic hydrocarbons we supplied. It was a great day!”

• **Who has been the funniest person you’ve worked with?**

“It has to be Jimmy Turnbull – renowned for his Northern Irish charm and humour!”

• **Who has surprised you?**

“I am especially proud of the young people we have employed who have developed in their career with Gleaner and now contribute to the future – Kirsty, Duncan, Kara, Damien... (That list isn’t exhaustive so apologies to those I have missed!)”

• **Who makes the best cup of tea?**

“I’ve always made my own!”

Plans for the future

Gleaner is a company proud of its heritage and successes from the last 70 years, but one now looking to the future and what the next 70 years might hold.

David carefully considered his thoughts on the future of the business: “Customer-focused adaptation to the many changing variables is our focus. If you don’t bring the customers along, you simply don’t have a business.”

Fuel Oil News wishes David, the Scott family, and the Gleaner team a very happy 70th anniversary and looks forward to catching up with them again soon!

Strong connections make us stronger.

We believe it's the relationships that strengthen our network. That's why we put so much care and focus into the people behind the infrastructure.



PROVIDING ENERGY.
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“All change please, all change!”

MY COLUMN IN THE LAST EDITION WAS TITLED “A WEEK IS A LONG TIME...” AND HOW RIGHT I WAS. NO SOONER HAD IT GONE TO PRINT THE GENERAL ELECTION WAS CALLED, AND BY THE TIME THIS COLUMN SEES THE COLD, HARD STEEL OF THE PRINTING PRESS, IT WILL ALL BE OVER.

For those who lived in London in the '60s and '70s, the loud bellowing of the bus conductor at the end of the line shouting “**All change please, all change**” will undoubtedly bring back memories. For some, this will include the downtrodden, miserable inspector Blakey in the drama **On the Buses**. I wonder who will be shouting, “**You stupid great lump**”, on July 5th.

The reality is that change is upon us, and just like buses no longer have conductors, the future of our industry is now at stake. The urgency of this situation cannot be overstated, and it's crucial that we act now to ensure a sustainable platform for the future.

Our consistent message to all the political parties before and during the election was that a pragmatic approach to decarbonising the 1.7 million homes in the UK that use oil for heating should include replacing kerosene oil with a renewable liquid fuel or blend:

- Provides choice to rural households**
- Removes costly upfront expenditure**
- Avoids consumer disruption**
- Government grants not needed**
- Meets existing carbon budgets**
- Avoids electric grid upgrades**
- The workforce already exists**
- Incorporates existing legislation**
- Creates local support for decarbonisation**

A number of people have asked why we are approaching the solution using a blend rather than a 100% renewable fuel. The reality is we are trying to practise what we preach – pragmatism – and, importantly, find a solution that accommodates the majority of our customers and mirrors the universal delivery of one fuel while keeping things simple.

Currently, renewable fuels such as HVO are about twice as expensive as kerosene. Albeit the differentials are going down. For the average consumer, this is likely to mean about £900 extra on their annual fuel bill, on top of the cost of changing the boiler nozzle at

c.£500. In the current economic climate, this is a tall order and it is unlikely any new government will sign it off. This is the same argument for not installing heat pumps and the only solution would be to deliver mass government grants at a time when the Treasury coffers are bare.

However, unlike heat pumps, there is a way of achieving the next ten years' worth of carbon budgets without breaking the bank or causing the need for mass consumer disruption.

The RTFO legislation already advocates the blended route, so it is easy to adopt and well understood by industry and consumers alike. A blend also allows for slightly more favourable tax treatment and is pitched at the right level with no changes to boilers. It will also enable the supply chain to expand and align neatly with government plans for sustainable aviation fuel production.

To put this into context, our current modelling shows that a 20% blend would cost an average customer an extra £36 per year without an upfront cost. It is clear that past plans, which set distant long-term goals, have stifled solutions that can be introduced quickly and cheaply today. We must also remember that many homes cannot take heat pumps, and over time, we will need to find solutions – this approach brings the solution one step closer.

Some have said that expense is not the issue. I am sorry, but on this point, I beg to differ. Just listening to our exceptional customer service teams recounting the distressing stories of customers being forced to choose between heating and eating over the past 12 months makes it clear that cost is, indeed, the issue. Simply examining the consumption numbers for the last 12 months makes it evident that consumers are facing difficulties.

Considering that the average disposable income in the UK is £32k (before any bills, but after taxes), and the average of the lowest 20% is less than £15k, an extra £900 on a fuel bill is a step too far. This is supported by the evidence from the recent Future Ready Fuel survey, which showed that 56% of consumers are willing to pay between £1,000 and £2,000 extra for a new heating system.

A blend starts our decarbonisation journey. It doesn't rely upon years of costly electric grid upgrades or huge disruption to households, and above all else, it matches our customers and their homes to a pragmatic and affordable solution.

Every bus has a destination and we have a chance to determine where that will be – time to get on board and hold tight.

UKIFDA databank: industry data update

UKIFDA'S DATABANK BRINGS TOGETHER RECENTLY PUBLISHED GOVERNMENT AND OTHER THIRD-PARTY DATA CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF LIQUID FUELS IN THE UK. IN THIS EDITION, WE CONCENTRATE ON DETAILED MONTHLY ENERGY CONSUMPTION DATA TO THE END OF MARCH 2024 WITH A ROUNDUP OF KEY DATA FOR 2023.

WHERE COMMENTS ARE MADE REGARDING COMPARATIVE DIFFERENCES, THEY ARE UKIFDA COMMENTS BORNE FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH THIRD PARTIES. PRIOR YEAR PERIOD DATA HAS BEEN UPDATED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND MAY, THEREFORE, DIFFER FROM PREVIOUS UKIFDA REPORTS.

Domestic Energy Consumption Summary

Q1 2024	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
Heating Days	27.5	26.6	30.7	26.7	27.6	26.0	-5%	-6%
Kerosene Sales (Ktoe)	1,116	1,314	1,238	1,115	1,082	1,011	-9%	-7%
Domestic Gas Sales (GWh)	117,166	115,134	133,434	112,647	103,353	104,923	-10%	2%
Domestic Electricity Sales (TWh)	30.2	30.4	32.4	28.9	26.8	27.0	-11%	1%
Average Kerosene Price (ppl)	52.4	48.6	45.6	78.1	81.6	71.1	36%	-13%
Average energy price cap per home (£)	1,137	1,179	1,138	1,277	2,500	1,928	70%	-23%

Domestic Energy Consumption Summary

Energy consumption reduced in 2023, led by a fall in household consumption for both gas and electricity with overall household consumption lower than at any point in the last fifty years.

Domestic gas sales in the three months to March 2024 were slightly up in the same period potentially reflecting changes in consumer behaviour following comparatively lower energy prices compared with the previous year. **Industrial gas use** fell slightly while **gas used in the services sector** (which includes commercial, public administration and other consumers) was up by 8.3 per cent.

Domestic electricity sales in the first quarter increased by 0.5 per cent on the same period last year, with increased consumption from the extra leap year day and lower energy prices being offset against higher temperatures. **Industrial electricity sales** rose 0.5 per cent in the three months to March 2024 compared to the same period a year ago. This rise is in line with observed increases in measures of industrial productivity. Consumption by other final users (including commercial users) increased 0.1 per cent in the three months to March 2024 compared to the same months the previous year, with the extra leap year day offset by warmer average temperatures.

In the three months to March 2024, **total deliveries of petroleum products** were marginally up by 2.0 per cent compared to the same period last year. **Jet fuel** demand continues its recovery, up 9.9 per cent on last year, but remains 11 per cent down on the same period in 2019 (pre-pandemic in the UK). **Petrol** demand saw an increase of 3.5 per cent, while **diesel** rose by 0.6 per cent. Petrol deliveries remain at around half the total volume of diesel deliveries at 2.9 million compared to 5.9 million tonnes.

Temperature and heating days

February 2024 was the warmest February recorded in the series since February 1998, with the daily average temperature at 7.6 degrees Celsius, 1.0 degrees Celsius higher than the same month in 2023 and 2.5 degrees Celsius higher than the long-term mean. Between November 2023 and January 2024, the average temperature was 6.5 degrees Celsius, 0.4 degrees Celsius higher than the same period a year earlier.

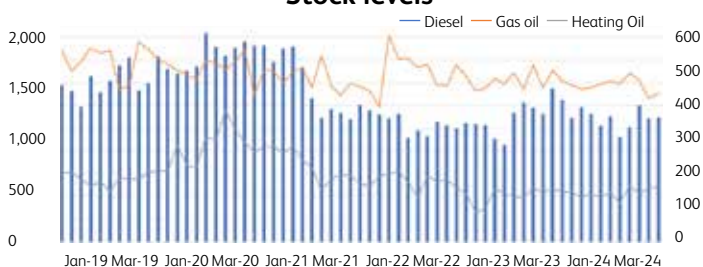
(Tables on opposite page)

Stocks

UK stocks are up on last year and remain substantially above the levels mandated by the IEA.

In January 2024, the UK held a total of 10.2 million tonnes of total stock, up by 11 per cent compared to January 2023. Stocks of Crude held at terminals drove a 12 per cent increase in primary oil stocks, with product stocks up 10 per cent on the year before due to higher kerosene stocks. Overall, UK stocks have been relatively stable since exiting the EU and aligning with the IEA's stockholding system in January 2021.

Stock levels





Temperature and heating days

	Average Temperatures					Average heating degree days				
	30-year mean	2019	2022	2023	2024	30-year mean	2019	2022	2023	2024
January	4.9	4.2	5.2	5.3	5.0	10.6	11.3	10.3	10.2	10.5
February	5.2	6.9	6.8	6.6	7.6	10.3	8.6	8.7	8.9	7.9
March	6.8	7.9	7.7	7.0	7.9	8.7	7.6	7.8	8.5	7.6
April	9.0	9.1	9.1	8.6	9.5	6.6	6.4	6.4	6.9	6.0
May	11.8	11.2	13.0	12.6		3.9	4.3	2.5	2.9	
June	14.6	14.3	15.1	16.8		1.7	1.6	0.9	0.6	
July	16.7	17.6	18.2	16.3		0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	
August	16.5	17.1	18.3	16.4		0.7	0.2	0.0	0.4	
September	14.2	14.3	14.5	16.5		1.9	1.4	1.7	0.6	
October	10.9	10.1	12.7	12.0		4.6	5.4	2.8	3.6	
November	7.6	6.5	9.1	7.5		7.9	9.0	6.4	8.0	
December	5.2	6.0	4.0	6.9		10.3	9.5	11.5	8.6	

Heating Oil - Total Consumption (ktoe)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	415	404	428	370	340	387	-7%	14%
February	362	418	435	394	371	319	-12%	-14%
March	339	491	375	351	371	304	-10%	-18%
Quarter 1	1,116	1,314	1,238	1,115	1,082	1,011	-9%	-7%
Total Year	3,358	3,429	3,155	2,876	3,097			
Year on Year Change		2%	-8%	-9%	8%			
Change from 2019		2%	-6%	-14%	-8%			

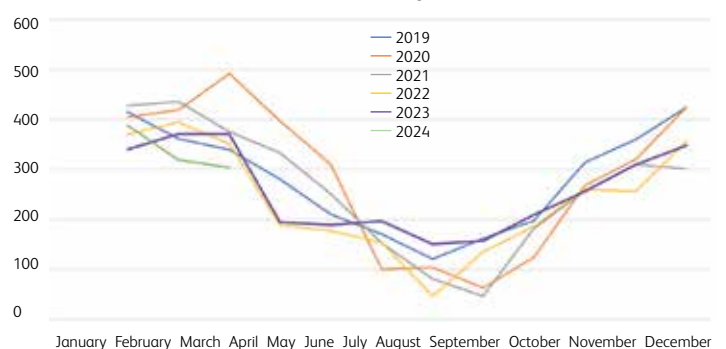
Heating oil

Total Consumption (ktoe) – table above

Overall, 2023 recorded an 8% increase in total kerosene consumption against 2022, with sharp rises experienced in the spring and summer. However, 2023 continued the trend of consumption reduction compared to the base year of 2019. January 2024 consumption was 14% ahead of 2023 but still 7% below 2019. These gains were reversed in February and March with warmer weather and higher prices.

The split between domestic and non-domestic kerosene for 2023 shows a marked difference, with non-domestic kerosene increasing, presumably from the switch from gas oil to industrial heating oil.

Overall Kerosene consumption 2019-2024



Kerosene Consumption

	Non-Domestic						Domestic					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 vs 2019	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 vs 2019
Q1	481	683	531	500	537	12%	635	630	707	616	545	-14%
Q2	366	467	390	254	296	-19%	297	342	346	266	286	-4%
Q3	321	182	193	257	378	17%	160	112	119	111	142	-12%
Q4	414	463	344	370	436	5%	684	549	525	503	478	-30%
Full Year	1,582	1,795	1,458	1,381	1,646	4%	1,777	1,633	1,697	1,496	1,451	-18%

Pricing

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recently produced its April monthly figures for domestic heating oil prices alongside broader inflation numbers.

Heating oil prices in April 2024 were 70 ppl compared to 68 ppl in April 2023.

Gas oil and DERV

Gas Oil Consumption (ktoe)

Gasoil consumption in Q1 2024 bucked recent trends with an increase of 6% against the prior year.

Deriv Consumption

Road diesel sales are back to pre-pandemic levels

ONS Heating Oil Price (ppl)



Gas Oil Consumption (ktoe)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	365	312	332	335	127	152	-58%	19%
February	449	368	373	371	111	123	-73%	11%
March	423	370	384	413	172	162	-62%	-6%
Quarter 1	1,237	1,050	1,090	1,119	410	437	-65%	6%
Total Year	5,300	4,753	5,061	2,963	2,066			
Year on Year Change		-10%	6%	-41%	-30%			
Change from 2019		-10%	-4%	-44%	-61%			

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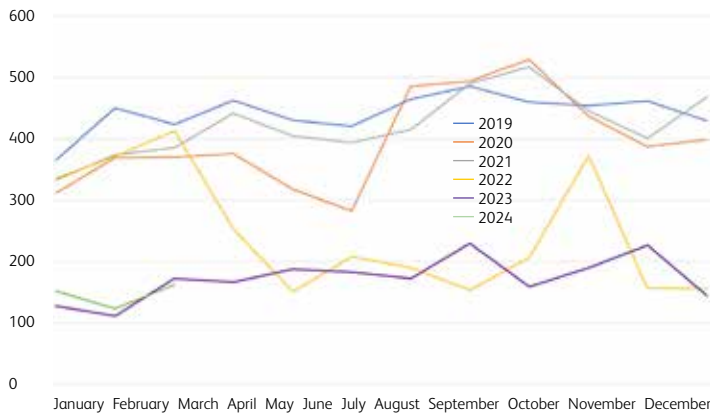
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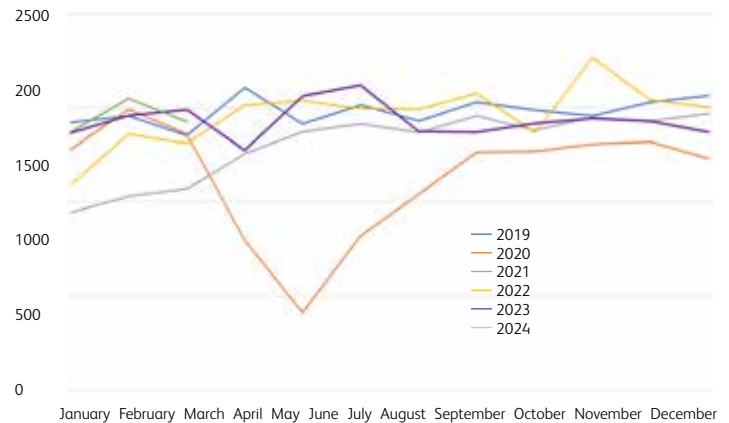
Kässbohrer Ingenuity, since 1893



Gas oil consumption 2019-2024 (KTOE)



Road diesel consumption 2019-2024 (ktoe)



Deriv Consumption

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	1,921	1,779	1,447	1,592	1,866	1,874	-2%	0%
February	1,959	1,991	1,529	1,863	1,958	2,049	5%	5%
March	1,852	1,862	1,569	1,809	1,990	1,927	4%	-3%
Quarter 1	5,733	5,632	4,545	5,263	5,814	5,850	2%	1%
Total Year	23,770	19,593	21,641	23,558	23,177			
Year on Year Change		-18%	10%	9%	-2%			
Change from 2019		-18%	-9%	-1%	-2%			

Domestic gas consumption

Domestic gas consumption

GWh	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
Q1	117,166	115,134	133,434	112,647	103,353	104,923	-10%	2%
Q2	52,000	48,366	65,271	44,565	39,168			
Q3	20,033	24,901	21,040	19,056	16,718			
Q4	103,229	103,394	90,491	78,205	77,017			
Total	292,429	291,795	310,236	254,472	236,257			
Year on Year Change		0%	6%	-18%	-7%			
Change on 2019		0%	6%	-13%	-19%			

Domestic electricity consumption

Domestic electricity consumption

TWh	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
Q1	30.21	30.36	32.35	28.94	26.82	26.97	-11%	1%
Q2	22.86	23.32	24.55	21.47	20.15			
Q3	20.18	21.16	19.87	18.80	18.04			
Q4	29.28	31.34	28.58	25.26	25.14			
Total	102.54	106.18	105.35	94.46	90.15			
Year on Year Change		4%	-1%	-10%	-5%			
Change on 2019		4%	3%	-8%	-12%			

Stanlow Refinery: a century of the North West powering Britain

Located at the heart of Ellesmere Port in Cheshire, the Stanlow refinery has been a cornerstone of the UK's energy sector, providing essential transportation fuels and bolstering both the nation's and North West's economic strength – producing over 16% of the UK's road fuels.

2024 marks a special year for the refinery as it celebrates 100 years of continuous operation at the site. It reflects not just a major achievement for the refinery, but also for the families from the surrounding communities who have worked and continue to work at the site to power the UK's future.

A century of progress

Established in 1924, Stanlow began as a bitumen plant under Shell, focusing on blending and distributing imported oil products. The demand for refined fuels during World War II catalysed its expansion into producing aviation spirit, crucial for fuelling the nation's fighters and bombers that defended its coastlines from the threat of Nazi invasion. Following the war, and recognising the strategic importance of proximity to customer markets, a fully-fledged crude oil refinery was constructed and completed in 1952.

Stanlow's journey from a bitumen plant to a comprehensive refinery underscores its adaptability and importance. Since its construction it has been instrumental in fuelling the UK's transportation, infrastructure and manufacturing sectors. It supplies major retail fuel brands, supermarkets, Manchester Airport, and regional transport networks, including trains and buses.

In 2011, the Essar Group acquired Stanlow from Shell, and has invested over \$1 billion to date into a series of modernisations and enhancements to the refinery's capabilities under the name, Essar Oil UK. Essar then established Essar Energy Transition (EET), in February 2023, with the intention to create the UK's leading energy transition hub in the North West with Stanlow spearheading this initiative.

As part of this transition, Essar Oil UK rebranded to EET Fuels in January 2024, symbolising a new chapter for Stanlow as it shifts towards future fuels, and a focus on



The eldest brother, Neil Clarke (pictured far left), joined the very first year of Stanlow's TTE (Technician Training and Education) program (then operated by Shell) in 1990

becoming the UK's first low-carbon refinery. EET Fuels' plans to decarbonise include Industrial Carbon Capture and Hydrogen Fuel Switching projects with the aim of supporting the UK's decarbonisation policies, and also of creating long-term, highly skilled jobs within the Northern Powerhouse economy.

Celebrating community and legacy

The centenary celebrations are as much about acknowledging the community as they are about celebrating Stanlow's legacy. The refinery has been a vital source of skilled local employment and economic stability across generations.

Starting as an apprentice in 2004, Stuart Clarke has worked as both field and panel operator on various production units for almost two decades, and now serves as a Production Team Leader. He also happens to work at the refinery alongside elder brother, Neil (Refinery shift manager) and younger brother, Gavin (Utilities Production Specialist), as well as cousin Christian and his cousin, Matt.

Despite having an 11-year age gap, Stuart and Neil's work on the same SHOP (Shell Higher Olefins Production) plant has certainly kept the family close, and the Stanlow refinery has served to keep the broader family in touch. "We all have our own families now, with 8 children between us, so, as you get older, time spent with each other naturally reduces. However, working together at Stanlow means we still get to see each other as much as possible".

"I think working at the same location

has kept us 'up to date' with each other's lives." Neil added. "I left home when Stu and Gav were quite young, so, even though we've almost been two separate families, Stanlow has kept us together".

Stuart commented: "Stanlow and Essar have been very important for keeping the family connected. I've had the privilege of representing the company during AFC Essar's title winning season in the Chester and Wirral League Division One, whilst lifting the inaugural Stanlow 100 Cup at Prenton Park ahead of my brothers and nephew is undoubtedly a crowning moment." Inter-company sport tournaments are enabled by EET Fuels, who focus on fostering close engagement with the surrounding communities.

"As local residents, my family has relied on Stanlow as our primary source of employment for many years, and I sincerely hope it continues to be so for many years to come. It's been a privilege to contribute to Stanlow's rich 100-year history and I hope we continue to help shape the next 100 years."

Looking ahead, Stanlow's future is exciting. The refinery's centenary is not just a celebration of its past but also a commitment to the families and communities that have worked and engaged with the site.

As the Clarks and countless others have contributed to its rich history, Stanlow's future is set to continue to be impactful, ensuring its role as a vital economic and environmental asset for the future.



Left to right: Sam (Neil's eldest son), Stuart, Gavin and Neil Clarke at Tranmere Rovers' Prenton Park Stadium for EET Fuels' Stanlow 100 football tournament



OMJ launches B7 Blended ULSD - UCOME Benchmark for UK

The Oil Market Journal has launched a B7 benchmark price which reflects product supplied at a UK refinery level. The new OMJ benchmark is based on a blend of Platts 10ppm ULSD and Argus UCOME prices.

The new B7 blended ULSD - UCOME End of Day prices are published in US \$/t. and GBP PPL in the **OMJ End of Day Reports**. OMJ intraday real-time indications are available on the OMJ Professional Service website, smartphone app, ticker and wallboard.

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ESL FUELS IS A FAMILY BUSINESS THAT DESIGNS, BLENDS, PROCESSES AND SUPPLIES A RANGE OF FUELS FOR THE ROAD, HEATING AND MARINE MARKETS.

OVER THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, THE COMPANY HAS SUPPLIED OVER TWO BILLION LITRES OF FUEL TO THE UK MARKET AND OFFERS NATIONWIDE COVERAGE THROUGH ITS RELATIONSHIP AS A SUPPLIER TO THE NATION'S LEADING DISTRIBUTORS, WITH SUPPLY POINTS AT IMMINGHAM, ELLESMERE PORT, DAGENHAM AND GRANGEMOUTH.

CONTINUALLY INVESTING IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, ESL FUELS HAS A HIGHLY TECHNICAL TEAM WHO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT AND DEVELOP FUELS BEST SUITED TO END APPLICATIONS.

FROM THE EARLY DAYS OF PIONEERING BIODIESEL, TO CREATING MARKET-CHANGING HEATING AND MARINE GAS OILS, ESL HAS CONSISTENTLY LED INNOVATION IN THE INDUSTRY. IN RECENT TIMES, THEY HAVE EXPANDED TO PRODUCE A RANGE OF RENEWABLE LIQUID FUELS, DEMONSTRATING THEIR ABILITY TO ADAPT AND EVOLVE. MARGARET MAJOR, PUBLISHING DIRECTOR FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH **RICHARD DONOVAN**, GENERAL MANAGER, AND **ANDREW WALKDEN**, COMMERCIAL MANAGER, TO DELVE INTO THE HISTORY OF THIS FORWARD-THINKING INDUSTRY SUPPLIER AND TO DISCUSS THE CAPABILITIES THAT ENABLE ESL TO CONTINUALLY PIVOT TO MEET FUTURE FUEL DEMANDS.

For many, sustainable liquid fuels have emerged over recent years yet you have been producing them for around 25 years – what originally drove this?

Andy: Our story started in the 1990s when owner Stephen Whittaker was researching and testing the viability of processing used cooking oil (UCO) and blending it into diesel. At that time, UCO was a waste in every sense and producers would pay for its collection and disposal, presenting an opportunity to produce a fuel at a lower cost per litre.

Steve bought a trailer and would drive round local restaurants, then take it back to his barn to process. In parallel with the work to make it physically possible, a significant amount of government lobbying and HMRC consulting was also required.

Ultimately, this proved successful and, in 2000, the company was incorporated and we became the first UK-based entity to sell biodiesel commercially.

What was the company's journey from that early success to the present day?

Andy: Following the early success mentioned above, the oil majors also began to produce biodiesel and it was evident that ESL Fuels would be unable to compete with their economies of scale. In anticipation of this, Steve had continued innovating and, in 2005, he developed and launched Greenflame renewable heating oil, shortly followed by the launch of Ultra 35, a gas oil alternative for boilers. It was the fossil version that proved to be the bigger success at that time and this led to a period of sustained growth.

In 2012, the company bought the mothballed BP Castrol terminal at Stanlow, a facility with over 100 tanks, and we undertook



a major renovation program to bring it back into service. Amongst various projects at the site was the trialling of processing of a range of wastes, providing many learnings that would prove useful in later years.

In 2013, we developed and introduced a marine gas oil grade with a maximum density of 860, that enabled us to enter a new market and establish new relationships.

In 2016, we sold Stanlow Oil Terminal to Argent Energy, a move that allowed us to increase our focus on product development and move production of our main grades to a more logical hub at Immingham. Our offices moved to Thornton Science Park, part of Chester University, and we commenced a program of investment building up our laboratory.

Two years later, we expanded our production capabilities by commencing operations at Dagenham. We also broke ground on a new site at Ellesmere Port, where the focus was on developing new technologies to process waste and residual feedstocks.

By 2021, we were ready to launch a range of renewable fuels, returning us to the company's roots. We achieved ISCC certification for handling sustainable material

and gained approval under the Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme (RFAS). We now offer a variety of sustainable solutions to the road, heating and marine markets, and these are either produced at our Ellesmere Port site or imported to Immingham. This year we expect 40% of our sales to be renewable fuels.

With your drive for sustainable solutions, tell us about your company values.

Richard: Our values are emblazoned across the walls of our main office, ensuring we remember and live by them.

Innovate: we encourage creative thinking and continuously strive for improvement in everything we do.

Nurture relationships: building strong, mutually beneficial partnerships across our business. This applies to suppliers as well as customers.

Be the best: we are committed to delivering the highest quality, value, and service. Excellence is our standard.

Act with integrity: integrity is paramount in all aspects of our operations. We build this into every decision and action we take.

Who are the ESL team that deliver these?

Richard: We currently have 27 employees, half of which are office based with the other half operating our Ellesmere Port site. We'll focus here on the members of the team most likely to interact with the industry.

Stephen Whittaker continues to drive innovation in products and technology, and can usually be found in our laboratory or on the plant developing his latest ideas.

Richard Donovan runs the business at a strategic and tactical level and has been General Manager for eight years now. His achievements were recently recognised by being awarded Commercial Finance Director of the Year, following a nomination from HSBC.

I am the Commercial Manager and the longest serving employee of ESL Fuels. I work closely with distributors to identify and supply the most appropriate product for the end application.

Working alongside me to look after our customers, and with deep understanding of the markets, are Chris Dolphin and Charlie Simpson.

David Hinsley oversees all things operational, supported by Ellie Molloy on supply and Col Ellison on transport. With their flexible and creative approach there's rarely a challenge that this team can't solve.

Colin Dixon is Head of Business Development and is always seeking new opportunities in a role that spans supply and sales. He'll soon be handing over the reins to a new recruit who will continue his good work.

James Ashton recently joined us as Financial Controller and suppliers and customers will be familiar with his team – Becky Bate, Dev Seth and Liz Dodd.

What are your main products?

Andy: Ultra 35 is, historically, our biggest selling product. It is a drop in replacement for gas oil / diesel boilers, providing a tailored specification with facets such as improved lubricity, at a favourable price to standard grade. This is complemented by other heating products such as Openflame and Openflame Lite which offer even more economical alternatives; those particular two being for open furnace applications.

GreenFlame D100 is a renewable alternative – it is also compatible with all gas oil / diesel boilers and, being produced from ISCC certified sustainable feedstocks, it delivers up to 90% GHG savings.

GreenFlame is currently a unique market proposition and we are enormously proud of having developed this over the past few years.



It is produced using proprietary technology and from a variety of feedstocks.

Renewable diesel / HVO is a paraffinic diesel that is now well known in the market. Where it is sold for an obligated use, we supply it under RFAS, with respect to which we are now the longest-approved supplier for this product. It is FAME free, reduces particulate matter and nitrogen oxide (NOx), is virtually sulphur and aromatic free, has excellent cold weather performance, a high flashpoint and also delivers up to 90% GHG savings.

We supply distributors and traders / brokers with a marine gas oil that has a maximum density of 860 and offers improved lubricity and excellent cold flow properties. More recently, the marine sector has also stepped up its interest in renewable fuels and we have developed a range of products to meet a variety of specification and sustainability requirements. More information is available on our website!

Alongside your fuel range, what other services do you offer?

Andy: We offer technical support to assist distributors in identifying the ideal fuel for end customer applications, and are often asked to correspond directly with them to provide technical know-how and the reassurance that can be required when switching fuels.

We are also pleased to work with UKIFDA, the vital trade association for the liquid fuel distribution industry and other industry bodies.

"ESL Fuels, an associate member, provides invaluable technical advice and support to UKIFDA" – Ken Cronin, CEO UKIFDA.

"ESL Fuels have provided valuable technical advice and support to our members on fuel oils and sustainable liquid fuels", David Kilpatrick (Director, The Combustion Engineering Association).

Another popular service is our offering of fixed prices and premiums, which can be back-to-backed with end customers. Many companies want to fix their fuel prices during their budgeting process, valuing the certainty

that it brings. We manage the hedge positions and can generally offer a variety of options.

Given the nature of our business, we naturally have an extremely well-equipped laboratory that has seen an investment in the region of £1 million the past few years. Although it is primarily used in-house, we do also offer its services to our customers.

The laboratory is clearly a vital part of your business. What is it used for?

Richard: Routine activities are the testing of incoming components, monitoring processing and testing the finished product. Then there is also research and development which naturally comes in peaks and troughs.

Our site at Ellesmere Port receives a variety of biogenic, waste and residue feedstocks, which can vary greatly in their qualities. It is critical that we assess each load to determine whether it meets specification and is acceptable, then decide what processing it requires, recommend what it should, or can be, blended with and, ultimately, plan how to best use it in the production of finished products. Testing is just as rigorous when in tank and at the duty point, ensuring tight quality control throughout.



Research and development in the laboratory can relate to both technology and products. Ideas scale up to pilot plants, before being fully commissioned on-site. We also have three test boilers, which are used for trialling different products and technology.

Looking to the future what is the vision?

Richard: Our vision is 'to be and remain the most innovative and technically capable company in environmentally sustainable liquid fuels'. We will continue to work closely with our customers and suppliers, reinvesting our profits in focused research and development, and scaling our production and supply in sync with market growth.

Perhaps most importantly, we'll remain agile, to ensure we can react quickly as new opportunities and threats emerge.



Cyber risks: why cyber security matters

IN AN INDUSTRY IN WHICH DEALING WITH LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA IS A DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITY, AND MANY ASPECTS OF FUEL DELIVERY ARE RELIANT ON TECHNOLOGY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THOSE INVOLVED UNDERSTAND THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF CYBER ATTACKS. IN THIS ISSUE, WE HEAR FROM KARL JONES OF DOWNSTREAM FUEL INDUSTRY INSURANCE SPECIALIST OAMPS, WHO DISCUSSES THE ACTIONS THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO BOTH AVERT CYBER RISKS AND TO MINIMISE BUSINESS IMPACTS OF ANY SUCH ATTACKS.

Although big names including the BBC, Boots and British Airways are currently deciding how to react to ransom demands from Russian hacker group “Clop”¹ (who have stolen personal data of more than 100,000 members of staff), the announcement that a recent ransomware attack pushed KNP Logistics into administration is a reminder that the cyber threat exists for businesses across the financial spectrum.

Business owners barely need a reminder that cyber security matters when high-profile attacks on critical infrastructure have rippled across the globe in recent years, leaving communities, corporations and countries without access to resources like gas, power and more. So, it is now more important than ever that steps are taken to improve cyber resilience in the event of an attack.

Cyber security company Proofpoint released its annual “State of the Phish” report in February 2023, revealing the impact of phishing attacks in 2022. According to its findings, eight out of ten UK organisations (82%) experienced an attempted ransomware attack in 2022, with 62% suffering a successful infection. Of those infected, just 33% of organisations were able to regain access to data after paying an initial ransom².

Improving resilience

Ransomware is the biggest cyber threat facing UK organisations, both large and small, and phishing is a common vector for cyber criminals to infect networks.

We know that phishing emails are getting harder to spot, but there is guidance available on what to look out for, and how to improve your organisation’s resilience. Raising staff awareness of the threat is also vital.

We’d encourage all organisations to familiarise themselves with the NCSC advice on mitigating malware and ransomware attacks.

In a survey by the SANS Institute, around 40% of ethical hackers said they can break into most environments they test, if not all. Nearly 60% said they need five hours or less to break into a corporate environment once they identify a weakness³.

The SANS ethical hacking survey, in partnership with security firm Bishop Fox, was the first of its kind and collected responses from over 300 ethical hackers working inside organisations in different areas and experience levels of information security. The survey also revealed that on average, hackers would need five hours for each step of an attack chain: reconnaissance, exploitation, privilege escalation and data exfiltration, with an end-to-end attack taking less than 24 hours³.

So, with the post COVID world still adjusting to hybrid working, a surge in online crime and the potential spill over from attacks on the UK’s schools⁴, the Electoral Commission⁵ and the Royal Mail⁶, there’s never been a more important time for SMEs to have the right cybersecurity strategy in place.

So what can UK SMEs do to protect themselves?

For many small to medium-sized businesses, it’s just not feasible to spend a significant proportion of their profit on a cyber protection strategy that could withstand attempted breaches from hacker collectives or a rogue nation state.

However, you can:

- Educate your employees about cybersecurity; creating an environment where they take responsibility for safeguarding the company data and the integrity of the system. This includes only using secure systems for communicating with colleagues wherever possible, and not sharing information via personal email, as well as the obvious avoidance of clicking on links you’re not 100% certain about.
- Minimise the threats posed by malicious employees – from restricting access to sensitive data, banning the use of removable memory hardware and limiting bring your own device (BYOD) use.
- Keep your security software and operating systems up to date

What about cyber insurance?

According to the UK Government’s 2022 Cyber Security Breaches Survey, under 4 in 10 (37%) of businesses reported being insured



against cyber insurance risks. This is despite 32% of businesses suffering a breach in the last 12 months, which is also much higher for medium business (59%) and large businesses (69%). The average (mean) annual cost of cyber crime for businesses is estimated at approximately £15,300 per victim⁷.

Here's a sample of some of the reasons businesses don't believe they need cyber insurance:

- We've never been hacked before
- We're compliant with GDPR, PCI DSS and other regulations, so we're secure
- We've invested in IT Security, so we don't need cyber insurance
- We outsource IT, so we won't be exposed to an attack
- We don't collect or store any sensitive data, so it isn't necessary
- We're too small to have a cyber attack
- We're already covered under other insurance policies

However, for many businesses, the reality is that they were targeted; their systems weren't robust enough to prevent a breach, and there was no insurance cover in place to help cover the costs.

Cyber insurance is a valuable tool to consider in your cyber strategy; many policies can be tailored to provide cover for the areas that most businesses are concerned about – social engineering, phishing, and ransomware. Some of the policies can also provide access to specialist support in the event of a system breach, help identify why and how the breach occurred, as well as advice on preventing further breaches.

The OAMPS team are happy to provide further information on this important issue and can be contacted via: <http://https://www.oamps.co.uk/contact>

The sole purpose of this article is to provide guidance on the issues covered. This article is not intended to give legal advice, and, accordingly, it should not be relied upon. It should not be regarded as a comprehensive statement of the law and/or market practice in this area. We make no claims as to the completeness or accuracy of the information contained herein or in the links which were live at the date of publication. You should not act upon (or should refrain from acting upon) information in this publication without first seeking specific legal and/or specialist advice. Pen Underwriting Limited and OAMPS Hazardous Industries (part of Pen Underwriting Limited) accepts no liability for any inaccuracy, omission or mistake in this publication, nor will we be responsible for any loss which may be suffered as a result of any person relying on the information contained herein.

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¹ UK Cyber Security & Data Breach Stats 2023 - Databasix UK (dbxuk.com)

² <https://www.proofpoint.com/uk/newsroom/press-releases/proofpoints-2023-state-phish-report-reveals-email-based-attacks-dominated>

³ SANS in partnership with Bishop Fox (2022), Inside the mind of modern adversaries

⁴ Schools Across the UK Crippled by Ransomware - GDPR for schools blog

⁵ <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/privacy-policy/public-notification-cyber-attack-electoral-commission-systems/information-about-cyber-attack>

⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-64718824>

⁷ Cyber security breaches survey 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2021/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2021>

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TRANSITION TALK

Renovare Fuels: establishing the pathway towards a greener future

LONDON-BASED RENOVARE FUELS, DESIGNS, MANUFACTURES, AND MARKETS A NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR CONVERTING BIOGAS INTO LIQUID FUEL.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH THE COMPANY'S CHAIRMAN, **MATTHEW STONE**, TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUSINESS AND RENOVARE'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

An innovative technology

"Renovare Fuels has designed and manufactured, and is now marketing, a new innovative technology for converting biogas, produced from landfill waste using anaerobic digesters, into liquid biofuel," Matthew began, explaining the technology behind the business.

"Our patented technology, developed with NASA and the US Department of Energy, converts biogas created by organic waste from landfill and anaerobic digestors into an advanced liquid biofuel.

"This process utilises novel disruptive technologies (TRIFTS) to revolutionise waste into an advanced renewable biofuel to decrease the UK's reliance on foreign oil imports and other fossil fuels.

"Our sustainable biofuel acts a direct 'drop in' replacement for diesel, petrol and aviation fuel, with no requirement for engine modifications, and can cut greenhouse gas emissions by up to 97 percent."

The biogas market

"Renovare Fuels' innovative technology is unique in being able to capture natural biogases and convert these into sustainable advanced liquid biofuels," Matthew continued.

"This is a rapidly increasing industry, but, with increasing UK Government support through their Renewable Transport Fuel Certificate (RTFC) scheme and the Government's future intention to introduce legislation to mandate food waste collection, there is an extremely encouraging future for our unique technology as a whole."

Creating a sustainable future

Matthew reflected on the exciting developments for the business last year: "2023 was a landmark year for Renovare Fuels, with the launch of our first European site in Craigmore, Northern Ireland.

"Our £9 million biofuel plant in Country



Dr Babu Joseph, Devin Walker, CTO Renovare, Matthew Stone, Chairman, Renovare and Timothy Roberge

Derry is set to open later this year, and will see nearly two million litres of our advanced renewable biofuels produced each year. The site will be the largest development fuel production site anywhere in the UK.

"This crucial investment will play a leading role in creating a sustainable future for the transport sector, setting a global standard for environmental and financial performance.

"Looking ahead to the future, Renovare Fuels will continue to develop our pipeline of projects throughout the UK and Europe, with a firm focus on making renewable biofuels more accessible, primarily across the aviation industry.

"Renovare Fuels recently launched an equity raise of approximately six million pounds. We launched this investment to unlock a pipeline of cutting-edge technology to drive sustainable fuel projects throughout the country and across the continent, which could be worth up to £500 million. Following the announcement of this equity raise, we have been attracting lots of interest from institutional investment."

The mission

Matthew was clear on the mission of the business: "Our mission is to support the practical transition to net zero and broader climate ambitions, across the UK and beyond and especially to help the transport sector rapidly reduce emissions.

"Renovare Fuels aims to create a more sustainable future through providing greener alternatives to petrol, diesel, and jet fuel. The aviation industry faces some of the largest barriers to lowering emissions and this is a key focus of our innovative technology."

A sustainable solution

Explaining how Renovare aims to combine a sustainable solution with the energy demands and excessive waste of modern-day culture, Matthew said: "Renovare Fuels' innovative technology does this by harnessing organic waste and converting it into an advanced renewable biofuel.

"By supplying fuel distributors and multinational petrochemical and airline companies with our greener fuel alternatives, we are helping to meet our global net zero ambitions, through rapidly lowering greenhouse gas emissions by up to 97 per cent. This is especially important as, last year, one-quarter of all emissions across the UK originated from the transport sector.¹

"UK Government estimates suggest some 32 million tonnes of biodegradable waste is generated annually – enough to produce more than two billion litres of biofuels annually.² Biofuels can support industries facing the largest barriers to net zero, including the aviation, road haulage and maritime sectors. Our innovative methods also harness everyday organic waste, providing a clear dual benefit to the environment and a truly circular solution."

A landmark biofuels site

"Our landmark biofuels production site is a first for the UK and European market. Based at the Craigmore landfill site, near Coleraine, County Derry, the site will see close to two million litres of advanced renewable biofuels produced each year, made from the biogas produced by landfill waste.

"The £9 million investment is being



developed alongside leading Northern Ireland renewable energy operator and biogas specialists, B9 Energy Control Limited, and leading UK anaerobic digestion operators, Powerhouse Management Ltd. The Craigmore landfill site, which first opened in 1993, is operated by RiverRidge, one of Northern Ireland's leading waste operators.

"The state-of-the-art facility is set to be the largest development fuel production site in the UK, displacing 94 percent of greenhouse gas emissions compared to normal equivalent fuels. Additionally, the site will create dozens of local jobs during construction, as well as several long-term skilled engineering positions.

"This project is set to boost Northern Ireland's role in the transport sector's transition to net zero and will pave the way for further sites across Europe.

"The site's functionality is quite impressive. It has the capacity to accept up to 200 thousand tonnes annually of non-hazardous and inert waste. It's worth noting that since 2015, the site has developed the capability to capture biogas from the waste in a commercially viable manner.

"With the company's modular operations, Renovare Fuel's technology can be installed quickly and does not require any form of grid connection. This paves the way for landfill operators around the UK and across Europe to embrace this new technology and tap into the potential of trapped landfill gas."

Government policy and legislation

Claudia asked Matthew about his thoughts on Government policy: "We think that the Government's efforts – and indeed the wider policy consensus in Parliament – to achieve a timely, yet sustainable transition to net zero, while ensuring we can strengthen the UK's energy security by producing the fuel we need for the future at home is a sensible approach.

"We are pleased that Renovare Fuels'

advanced renewable biofuel qualifies for extra support under the Department for Transport's Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO). This long-standing legislation provides strong support to innovators, like Renovare Fuels, who are leading the way to support the practical transition to net zero in the transport sector.³

"Developments in RTFO legislation in 2018 mean major UK fuel suppliers are now obligated to increase their supply of sustainable biofuel from 4.99 vol% in 2018; to 10.64 vol% in 2020; and 10.96 vol% by 2032. Renewable aviation fuels also qualify under the legislation.

"Furthermore, the food waste market is likely to expand rapidly in the coming years, given the expectation of separate food waste collections to become mandated for local authorities. This will strengthen Renovare Fuels' future position with the likelihood of rapidly increased biogas capability at food waste plants in England.

"There are 79 food waste plants in England, and a further 16 others elsewhere in the UK, with our technology presenting an attractive option for anaerobic digestion operators."

Will there be sufficient supply to meet the growing demand?

"Our projections suggest the County Derry site alone will be capable of producing some 1,000 metres cubed of biogas an hour, which can then be converted into approximately 1.8 million litres of advanced renewable biofuels annually. These ambitious production capabilities can only be achieved by a steady stream of organic matter being made available on site, with Craigmore having the capacity to accept up to 200,000 tonnes of non-hazardous and inert waste each year.

"Our technology is rapidly scalable, with the company's modular technology set to put us in good stead to increase our operations at landfill sites across the UK, Europe and beyond, with plans for seven more sites to be operational by 2030."

"The Northern Ireland site is a real first test for the European advanced renewable biofuels market, following our previous success in the United States, alongside the US Department of Energy and NASA.

"Renovare Fuels will manage the capture and filling of all new intellectual property, which may be developed over the course of the Northern Ireland project. With such innovative processes underway, it is likely that

new intellectual property will be developed in relation to contaminant removal and catalyst optimisation, potentially boosting the efficiency of production methods into the future."

The future for Renovare

Clearly motivated and excited for the future of the business, Matthew explained their objectives: "Renovare Fuels' ambitious five-year plan hopes to be operating a further 48 projects, generating up to 35 million litres of biodiesel annually. By 2030, the company aims to have seven landfill and anaerobic digester sites across the UK and Europe to help meet international net zero targets.

"Our rapidly scalable technology, due to the modular nature of our operations, mean this ambition is realistic, provided the necessary planning applications are granted.

"Within the next decade, Renovare Fuels will be on a good stead to be generating tens of millions of litres of biodiesel across Europe and beyond, achieved by close working with anaerobic digestion experts and leaders in waste management."

While we were speaking with Renovare, reports surfaced suggesting that Fulcrum Bioenergy, a company seen as a pioneer in the effort to turn waste into sustainable jet fuel, is on the brink of collapse. Responding to these reports, Matthew Stone, Chairman of Renovare Fuels said: "The reported collapse of Fulcrum Bioenergy is concerning and demonstrates the continued challenges facing the sector and the need to balance financial investment with the speed of infrastructure development.

"If the UK is to meet its environmental targets, there needs to be a continued and accelerated commitment to this agenda. We are pleased that we are seeing strong interest from investors and industry partners, and we are confident that our highly-scalable technology creates a robust plan for growth and is set to supercharge the aviation sector's transition to net zero."

Matthew and the team at Renovare Fuels have a clear strategy for establishing the pathway towards a greener future and we will be following their journey with interest.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-and-environment-statistics-2022/transport-and-environment-statistics-2022>

² <https://adbiresources.org/industry-directory/renovare-fuels-limited/>

³ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61c1ef77d3bf7f1f749d7545/renewable-transport-fuel-obligation-compliance-guidance.pdf>



PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

JUNE
IN VIEW

ELECTIONS AND ENERGY POLICY: A POWERFUL COMBINATION

Normally at this time of the year (roughly the half-way point), we look back over the past 6 months to see how oil and energy markets have developed since January. But with 4 general elections taking place in 4 major countries around the world in the space of 30 days, it felt more appropriate to look at each country and how their approach to oil and energy differs.

First up at the beginning of June was the South African election, which saw the party of Nelson Mandela (The African National Congress = ANC) take a huge bloody nose, as it lost its overall majority and was forced to go into coalition with the main opposition party (Democratic Alliance). Having been in absolute power since the ending of Apartheid, this was huge news in South Africa and the dire state of the country's power infrastructure was a major factor behind the ANC's failure.

Despite having huge mineral reserves and so much coal that the national oil company (SASOL) actually refines the stuff to make it into diesel, bountiful raw material supply has not manifested itself in energy security. Since 2008, the country has experienced rolling blackouts (euphemistically called "load shedding"), often lasting more than 10 hours at a time. This culminated in 2023, when the national power provider (Ekstrom) – responsible for supplying over 95% of the country's electricity – suffered an incredible 1,742 hours of power outage (around 73 days). Such profound interruptions to the nation's power supply has, of course, disrupted productivity, deterred foreign investment and, more importantly to voters, negatively affected public safety because of minimal street lighting. No wonder the ruling party was punished at the ballot box.

Next on June's election timeline was Mexico, where the populist left-winger Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, was replaced by his protégé Claudia Scheinbaum (who becomes Mexico's first female President). Both Obrador and Scheinbaum are avowed economic nationalists (ie, believing in state owned entities, rather than private corporations) and for the last 5 years, the national oil company (PEMEX) has been used as a vehicle for

both economic state building and poverty alleviation. New domestic oil exploration licenses have been granted, whilst 7 new refineries are in the process of being built (to end the country's reliance on US imports of fuel). At the same time, subsidies on fuel, gas and electricity have all been increased. This pro-fossil fuel stance makes for an unusual left-wing administration in global terms, because decarbonisation programmes have principally become the mainstay of left-leaning politicians around the world. There seems little desire to follow this route in Mexico however, where its socialist leaders see fossil fuel power as inextricably linked to political power.

Unlike South Africa and Mexico, where energy policies are important locally but have little bearing elsewhere, India currently has more impact on the global energy picture than probably anywhere on the planet. In a country where the population (1.6bn) has now outstripped China (1.4bn) and economic growth (6.7% GDP growth in 2023) mirrors demand in energy growth (up 7% in the same year), decisions around energy policy really do have profound reverberations. Be that in Europe, with its reliance on imported Indian diesel, or in Russia, where India's frenzied purchase of cheap Russian crude is propping up Putin's war economy. Or perhaps it is in the gas markets, where we are seeing increased price pressure on seaborne cargoes of Liquefied Natural Gas, as they are inextricably drawn to the Indian market.

In the election itself – culminating in June – we once again saw a ruling party (this time the Bharatiya Janata Party = BJP) taking a beating. Whilst it was a surprise to see the increasingly messianic Narendra Modi lose his overall parliamentary majority, the BJP still retained power, albeit in a similar vein to South Africa where a coalition of different parties is now required. This means that Modi will be shaping energy policy for several years to come, and this may mean having to balance his great desire for economic growth with the inevitable implications of this on India's CO2 footprint. Over 70% of power generation in India comes from coal, which makes the country the third biggest CO2 emitter in the

world (2.7bn tonnes per annum), after the USA (4.9bn tonnes) and China (an eye-watering 12.7bn tonnes). It seems clear then that India's energy decisions for the next 10 years will affect far more than the energy markets...

Finally, we have dear-old Blighty, which sees its general election on 4th July. Whilst by no means a central issue in the election, energy policy has, at least, been debated. In Scotland, the future of the oil and gas sector is a predictably hot topic, with the Scottish Nationalists brassily declaring themselves as the protector of North Sea jobs, having spent the last 5 years denigrating the sector to appease their coalition partners in the Green Party. Meanwhile, Labour's plan for a Great British Energy Company (with its main focus on renewables) is ambitious for a seriously indebted country but, as a bold new idea, merits some credit. As for the Tories, they have chosen to push back the bans on petrol cars to 2035, which practically achieves little, mainly because most car manufacturers had already committed to the earlier deadline (2030). But it has generated unnecessary heat from the green lobby and has also meant that the real environmental achievements of the last 10 years (largest offshore wind generation in Europe, frequent coal-free electricity generation, highest number of electric / hybrid cars registered in Europe in 2023, explosion in solar power generation) have all been overlooked

And if you can't manage the message on the things that you have done reasonably well, you are definitely going to be up against it when it comes to the things you have done badly...!

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The Cobo Conference 2024

COBO, THE SPANISH TANKER MANUFACTURER, WITH ITS HEADQUARTERS BASED CLOSE TO THE PORT OF SANTANDER, RECENTLY HOSTED THEIR ANNUAL TRIP FOR FUEL OIL DISTRIBUTORS TO TOUR THE FACTORY AND SEE TANKERS IN THE VARIOUS STAGES OF PRODUCTION. THEY ALSO KINDLY INVITED THE FUEL OIL NEWS TEAM TO JOIN THE GROUP TO HEAR MORE FROM THE DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY AND EXPERIENCE THE FAMOUS COBO HOSPITALITY FIRST HAND.

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The Cobo Conference

Claudia Weeks, and Margaret Major, Fuel Oil News, caught up with Joby Clark, Sales and Project Engineer at Cobo, to hear his thoughts on the 2024 trip.

“On the 6th of June, a group of existing and potential customers headed to the Cobo factory near Santander for a presentation and factory tour.

“We like to run our “Cobo Conference” at least once a year as we feel it is a great way for people to gain confidence in the company as they get to see the quality and organisation of our facility.

“A total of 31 guests visited on this trip, and it was possible for some of these to see their own units in build which they were thoroughly excited about!

“We organised flights out of Stansted early

on Thursday morning, so some of us stayed at the airport on Wednesday night which meant some of the group could meet and mingle in a relaxed environment ahead of the trip.

“We landed in Spain and headed straight to the factory for a presentation on the design of the tankers and some of the technologies used in production as we feel this gives a good insight into the quality of the product.

“After that we split into smaller groups for a tour of the factory so our guests could get a better understanding of how the units are built and could see for themselves the quality and the modern technologies employed.”

Spanish hospitality

Clive Morin, Managing Director at Barton Petroleum Ltd, has attended the Cobo trip several times: “It was another thoroughly

enjoyable visit. From the presentation at the start, through the factory tour and tapas at the end, you cannot fail to be impressed by it all!

“We managed to see our next batch of vehicles in build and meet some of the team responsible for the design. It’s obvious that there is a great sense of pride from everyone involved.

“The trip also provides a good networking opportunity over a few drinks, which is always worthwhile. A wonderful location and of course, the hospitality from the Cobo team was first class! Thanks Cobo!”

Ruairidh Beath, Director and General Manager at Rix Petroleum, added: “It was great to be met with such enthusiasm at COBO. Their appetite for finding new engineering solutions to solve problems is a wonder to behold.

“The factory is also a remarkable hive



of activity, and really comes to life when you are guided around by Fernando and Joby. Their enthusiasm for engineering solutions is matched, if not surpassed by their commitment to looking after their guests. Your glass or plate is never empty for long if you're out with Cobo! It was also great to see some old and new faces in Spain."

Danielle Knowles, Senior Planner at Local Fuels, enjoyed her first trip to Cobo: "What a fantastic opportunity to be able to see and experience the 'birthplace' of our vehicles and to meet so many of the people that make our business possible."

"Being able to see the process that goes into the manufacturing of the tankers and trailers was fascinating. The team at Cobo were beyond hospitable and it was great to meet so many other people from the fuel industry."

Investment reflected in quality

All the guests were thoroughly impressed by the tour of the facility which opened in 2001 and now employs over 130 staff. It was truly fascinating to see the factory in action; there was a real buzz of activity. There were many tankers at various stages of the build process, with the Cobo team hard at work on each stage. It was clear that each process is carried out with an impressive level of attention to detail. It was also great to see state of the art machinery in action, especially the automated

process that delivers Cobo's superior weld quality.

James Hunt, CEO at New Era, was also keen to feedback on a successful visit: "Being able to see the process that goes into the manufacturing of the tankers and trailers was fascinating. The team at Cobo were impressive hosts and it was great to meet so many other people from the fuel industry."

"As usual the trip is so well organised, I have been previously on a few occasions, this time our transport manager and fleet engineer attended. Our Fleet Engineer, Roy Foster, has worked in the industry and on tankers for many years and it was great for him to see the workings and processes of a build from start to finish."

"The tour gives an inside view on how the staff ensure efficiency and attention to detail is maintained throughout the whole process with dedicated teams on each workstation right through to delivery and sign off. It's so interesting to see the new processes and technology Cobo are using. Roy felt he got a real sense that they were listening and understanding the ways to further develop the tankers to ensure that our needs are always met."

"New Era was fortunate enough to have 8 tanks in production and we got to see them during every step of the process. The confidence New Era have in the quality of our tanks was proven by the tour, and all questions were

answered, and feedback taken on board.

"It was great to catch up with partners in the industry and chat about challenges and the future, plus a few beers do go down well in Santander!"

A fantastic success

Joby continued: "Once we had completed tours of the factory, everyone enjoyed a lunch of typical Spanish fare in the grounds. A bit of free time late afternoon gave our visitors the chance to have a good look around the beautiful city of Santander before meeting up again for a few refreshments and a traditional evening meal."

"The trip, we feel, has yet again proved to be a fantastic success. It's brilliant for people to see the facility and gain confidence in the product and company. By hosting a large group at the same time, people can network, and potential customers can get an honest answer from existing customers about their experiences of buying a Cobo tanker."

The Cobo family are understandably proud of their facility and actively encourage visits and tours. The Fuel Oil News team valued the opportunity to see the latest developments at the facility as well as spend time with members of the distributor community and would like to say a huge thank you to Joby Clark and all the team at Cobo Tankers and Services Ltd for the invitation.



Driver training: starting out on the right foot

EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE DOWNSTREAM FUEL DISTRIBUTION FORUM (DFDF) HELD A CONSULTATION WITH ITS HAULIER MEMBERS TO PROVIDE SOME GOOD PRACTICE ADVICE ON THE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF NEW DRIVERS WITH NO PREVIOUS FUELS EXPERIENCE. THIS ARTICLE FROM THE DFDF, SHARES THE RESULTANT ADVICE AND ALSO REITERATES THE DFDF'S STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF NEW DRIVERS AND ITS RECOGNITION OF THE CRITICAL NEED FOR EXTENSIVE TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL NEWCOMERS PRIOR TO THEM BEING ABLE TO WORK UNSUPERVISED.

Training for new fuel tanker drivers starters – good practice

The Downstream Fuel Distribution Forum (DFDF) was established in 2012 to provide a collaborative platform for the discussion and resolution of issues relating to health and safety as well as training in the downstream fuel industry. Its membership ranges from hauliers, to trade associations, government departments – namely the Department for Transport and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero – and trade unions.

As part of its early collaborative work, in 2014, the DFDF launched the Petroleum Driver Passport (PDP) Scheme, a voluntary industry scheme, supported by government, designed to ensure that all tanker drivers in the UK are trained and assessed to a consistent standard in loading, transporting and offloading petroleum fuel products from road tankers. Ten years on from its launch, over 11,000 tanker drivers in the UK hold a PDP card demonstrating to terminal operators, hauliers, customers and the wider public that they have been trained to the same consistently high and externally verified standard in all aspects of tanker driving from pre-vehicle checks to loading, driving and discharging.

The fuel distribution sector is reliant on competent drivers. As it looks to the future and to making the most of opportunities ahead in terms of existing and new fuel products, the sector will need to address both immediate and future skills shortages by attracting, training and retaining new tanker drivers. Indeed, against the backdrop of a high proportion of the workforce set to retire in the short to medium term who will take with them critical skills, knowledge and experience, as well as competition for talent more widely, the

sector must act now if it is to secure a resilient workforce for tomorrow.

The DFDF strongly supports the recruitment of new drivers and recognises the critical need for extensive training and assessment of potential newcomers prior to them being able to work unsupervised. In this context, the DFDF is clear that the provision of good quality induction and training will not only help to maintain high standards of safety in the industry but also boost the attraction of the sector to new recruits. In order to aid this process, the DFDF has recently consulted with its haulier members to provide some good practice advice on the training and assessment of new drivers with no previous fuels experience.

Necessary attributes

The good practice advice is clear in that new drivers must hold the appropriate class of driving licence and ADR. As part of their training, new drivers will also need to pass their written and practical PDP assessments. DFDF further recommends that the initial pre-employment assessment includes a driving assessment as well as an interview stage to ascertain whether the person demonstrates the required attributes to be a tanker driver.



Training plan

The next step would be for the employer to provide the new starter with a training period with a fuels specific driver trainer. This should include in-depth classroom theory, vehicle and trailer familiarisation, terminal inductions, as well as familiarisation in loading and unloading. Before progressing any further, new drivers should have successfully completed this initial training period. The recommendation is that this is followed by a further period of training/supervision by a driver trainer, with the new driver initially only observing, before progressing to completing loading and delivery workloads under strict supervision, with the new driver gaining experience and confidence at delivery sites. During this period, time needs to be allowed for a driver trainer to coach and assess the driver for safe and efficient driving and slow speed maneuvering.

Assessment

When the driver trainer/driver coach deems the new driver competent, the new driver needs to take, and pass, their written and practical PDP assessments. No unsupervised work should take place until the new driver has passed a full assessment and is able to demonstrate the ability to work to a safe standard aligned with industry and the employer company's own standards, and holds all the necessary qualifications, including PDP. Finally, to be able to load unsupervised at a terminal, the new driver will be required to be signed off as competent, typically by demonstrating the ability to load three loads at the terminal in question.

Retail specifics

For those new drivers joining retail, to gain



period may need to be extended depending on feedback from the driver trainer, and also taking into account the new driver's own feedback/confidence.

Mentoring

Another important aspect is that of ensuring that new drivers feel welcomed and supported, especially during their first six months. Employers could consider the establishment of formal mentoring programmes with experienced staff members i.e. buddy up a new driver with a Driver Mentor/Coach once they have completed their PDP practical and terminal pass out.

Ongoing

As ever, ongoing follow-up and assessment is vital to maintain standards. As part of the PDP Scheme, all drivers will be required to take a practical assessment and classroom refresher training every year. Additional good practice could include: ongoing periodic training; spot checks; sending out a new starter out with a trainer for a day after a few weeks of running solo as a proactive attempt to address any issues that may have crept in before these become habits; write new drivers to flag the risks associated with the job becoming unconscious, with a reference to the conscious competence models that are out there.

The DFD is committed to continuing to provide a platform for the discussion of training in the downstream fuel industry and the important work of attracting, training and retaining the next generation of tanker drivers. This good practice advice is testament to this commitment, and the high priority being given to supporting the provision of good quality induction and training for new drivers.

the experience of forecourt delivery's and locations, they will be required to deliver safely by having a Site Specific Risk Assessment (SSRA) for that Petroleum Filling Station (PFS), and by being aware of ACoP L133 and the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR).

Most crucially, it is noted that employers should work on the basis that the training

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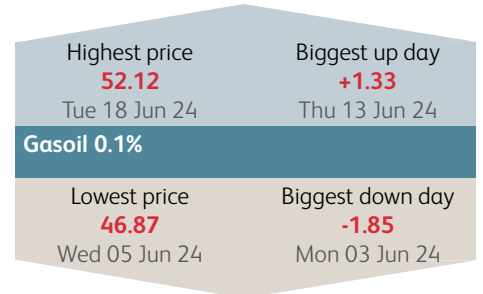
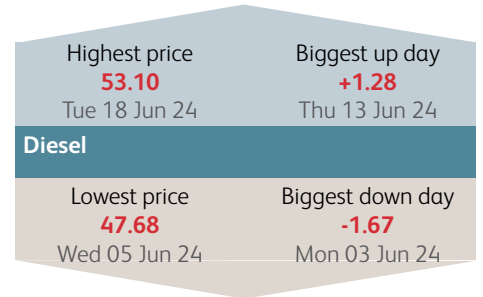
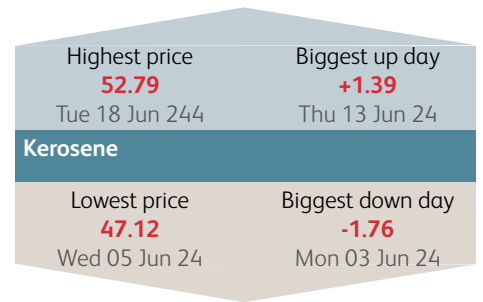
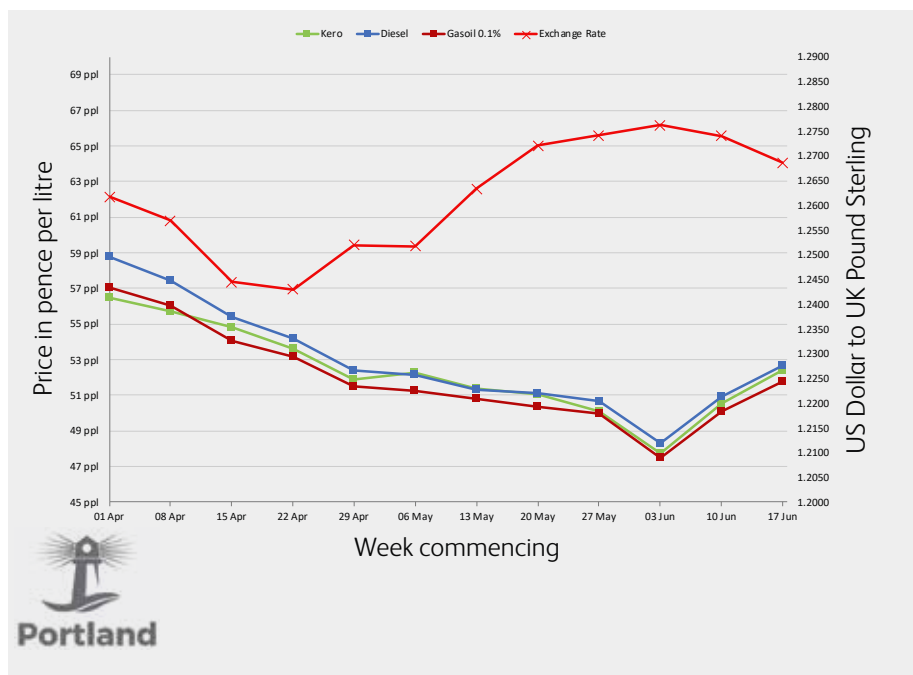
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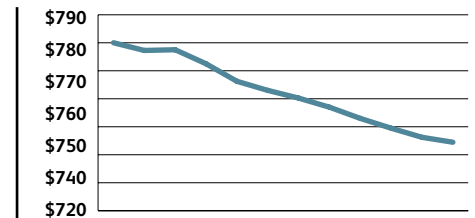
Wholesale Price Movements: 19th May 2024 – 18th June 2024

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1%
Average price	50.08	50.47	49.67
Average daily change	0.64	0.63	0.63
Current duty	0.00	52.95	10.18
Total	50.08	103.42	59.85

All prices in pence per litre



Gasoil forward price
in US\$ per tonne



July 2024 – June 2025

The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

	Trade average buying prices			Average selling prices		
	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD
Scotland	51.44	61.81	105.82	58.64	66.04	109.96
North East	50.39	60.44	104.90	60.41	64.38	107.94
North West	51.96	63.04	107.29	58.88	66.72	110.01
Midlands	50.46	60.97	105.36	57.23	64.85	108.67
South East	50.56	60.93	105.34	64.53	67.70	108.21
South West	50.91	60.77	105.18	59.92	64.64	107.80
N. Ireland	51.02	62.14	n/a	57.67	66.90	n/a
Republic Of Ireland	64.78	67.57	106.76	70.81	71.57	110.14
Portland	48.77	58.49	102.05			

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 JULY'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 **FIONA BELLAIRS**, SALES DIRECTOR FOR MAGNUS MONITORS.

"NEVER TRY TO DEFEND THE INDEFENSIBLE."

FIONA BELLAIRS

Give your career history in 25 words or fewer.

Telesales, Total Distributor, Field Sales, Fina Distributor, Regional Sales Manager, Butler Fuels, Business Development – Logistics, Supply Manager, Sales Director

Describe yourself in 3 words.

Feisty. Fun-loving. Loyal.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?

To mirror my father in obtaining the gold Duke of Edinburgh award.

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

Working on quarantine at an Australian airport, uncovering all the undeclared food where people have said 'no food' on their passenger card.

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

Never try to defend the indefensible, and always put it right before it collapses.

Share your top tips for business success.

Learn when to say no and when to seize the opportunity.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?

Having our company be nominated for, and win, the UKIFDA Innovation Award and being personally recognised by the nominees for how I work with them.

Tell us your greatest fear

Being buried alive.

Which is most important – ambition or talent?

Ambition.

What's the best thing about your job?

Providing a solution that gives a great ROI to the distributor. It's not about the hardware, it's how you use the data.

Which is the quality that you most admire?

Empathy and integrity.

What are you most likely to say?

Absolutely – let's give it a go.

What are you least likely to say?

No.

Describe your perfect day

Water bungalows out in the Indian Ocean; an early morning swim, long lazy lunch in the sun and watching the sun go down on another day with a gin cocktail.

Do you have a favourite sports team?

Leicester Tigers.

What's the biggest challenge of our time?

The obvious one is climate change, but also



not letting our future generations become totally dependent on social media for interaction with peers, siblings and business colleagues.

Cheese or chocolate?

Cheese – the stronger the better – my favourite being Morbier which is made from the morning milking with a layer of ash and then the evening milking on top.

Share your greatest personal achievement.

Completing the Moonlight Marathon Walk for Breast Cancer in London, in a decorated bra, and raising over £2k in sponsorship.

What's your pet hate or biggest irritant?

Where do I start?... People who eat with their mouths open and people who talk on their mobile phones whilst at a checkout – just rude to the checkout person and those around them.

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

Friends or Only Fools and Horses (it doesn't matter how many times I've seen them, I just love them).

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

Means test the winter fuel payments to ensure that our most vulnerable pensioners living in fuel poverty benefit from a sizeable payment rather than sending to everyone over a certain age – let's face it, Mick Jagger and Sir Paul McCartney don't need it.

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

Cut yourself a bit of slack – you are way too hard on yourself sometimes – and know that you are appreciated.

What is number 1 on your bucket list?

Fiji and Bora Bora.

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

My beautiful old German Shepherd, a radio, and a truck load of champers.

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

I started life as a WPC (as female police officers were known then) with a handbag and having to wear a skirt and tights – scaling fences in pursuit was always interesting, and it was easier to throw the handbag at the back of an escaping offender than to try and bring them down with a so-called truncheon.

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?

Dame Maggie Smith or Dame Judi Dench.



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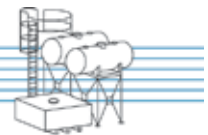
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