Fuel Oil News

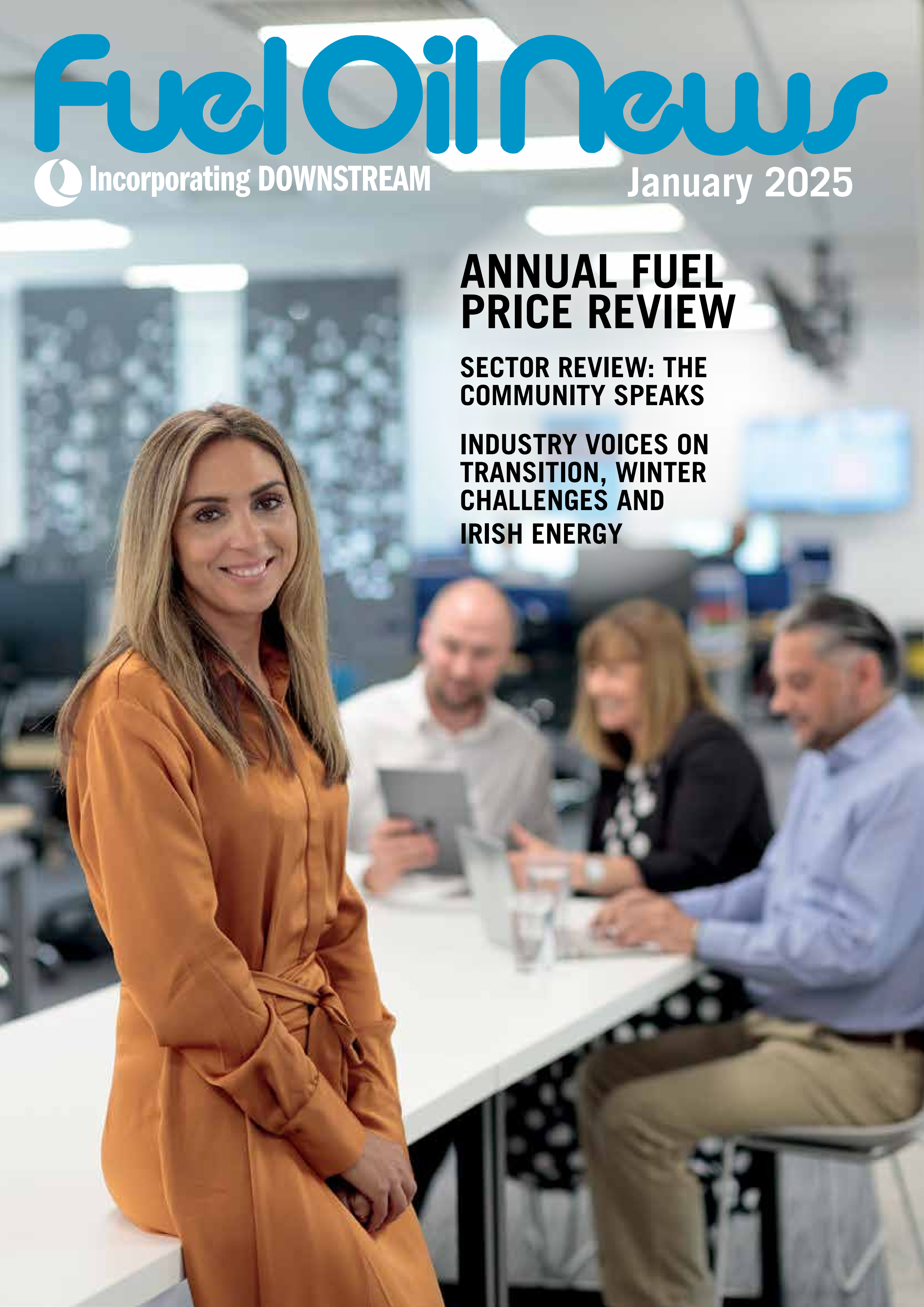
Incorporating DOWNSTREAM

January 2025

ANNUAL FUEL PRICE REVIEW

SECTOR REVIEW: THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS

INDUSTRY VOICES ON TRANSITION, WINTER CHALLENGES AND IRISH ENERGY



When things get back to normal..

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025! We meet here again, having survived the chaos of 2024. A year that proved, once again, that our industry is as dynamic and resilient as it is vital. As an industry, we're used to adapting to challenges, but last year was a masterclass in staying ahead of the curve, wasn't it?

You've danced through disruption, withstood challenging margins and navigated ever-changing demands – all whilst keeping the UK warm, the generators humming and the motors running.

I hope you have found at least a little time, over the festive season, to take a well-deserved break with family and friends, and to raise a liquid-fuelled toast to your part in making it happen.

Looking ahead, 2025 promises to be a year of opportunity. The industry is innovating. From more efficient delivery systems to cleaner-burning fuels, we're proving that tradition and innovation can make remarkably successful bedfellows. A growing enthusiasm for biofuels continues to shine an increasingly powerful light on a sustainable industry future.

But, have you ever found yourself saying 'when things get back to normal we will…' or planning your next activity for the time 'when things settle down…'? Well, unless your experience is vastly different to mine, then it's a case of 'tomorrow never comes' and you will wait for normality in vain.

The time to act on any front is now. Whether 2024 proves to be a more 'normal' year (whatever normal is…) or a year of further unpredictability, as the place where the industry comes together, we will focus on collaboration, community and solutions. Looking to improve every aspect of 'business as usual' as well as illuminating a path forward, let's share stories, swap ideas, and together, be inspired.

Here's to a prosperous 2025. May your tanks be full, but regularly emptied, your deliveries on time, and your optimism endless.

Together, we'll navigate the road ahead, one litre at a time.

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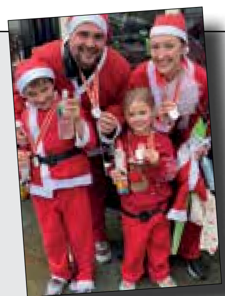
On the cover

Miriam James, Managing Director of Silvey Fleet, with some of the team from this evolving company. Read how they are creating a business that the team, customers, group and community are all proud to be a part of on pages 12 & 13.



In this issue

Something for everyone in this issue! Latest industry data unpacked on pages 24 to 28, our annual in-depth price review on pages 15 to 19, your thoughts on 2024 and hopes for 2025 on pages 9 & 11 and our Christmas jumper gallery on pages 36 & 37.

Oilfast launches into retail sector with unmanned forecourt

Oilfast, an independent fuel supplier based in Motherwell, Scotland, has opened its first unmanned retail fuel facility at Balbeggie, near Perth

The site, which features the Oilfast logo and image, marks the company's entry into the UK roadside retail market.

Managing Director Tony Stewart commented: "As one of the UK's largest distributors of fuel, lubricants, AdBlue and fuel cards, we have long seen entry to the retail market as a logical step, and today marks an important milestone in that journey."

A fresh choice for fuel supply

"We believe in the fuels sector, and our growth has been marked by our customer service," Tony continued. "We know we can offer dealers a much-needed fresh choice for supplying fuels and/or through leasing or acquiring their forecourts.

"Not all forecourts have large shops or room to expand, and these locations are suited to our unmanned model. It's not just current trading sites – we are also interested in converting ex-filling stations back to use. That is what we have done with Balbeggie and with depots across Scotland as well as Immingham, Kingsbury and London, we have a pipeline of prospects and are actively looking for more locations across the UK."

Oilfast Balbeggie was a former Shell-branded site which closed years back and was converted to car sales and servicing without fuel. The building continues to trade as a garage, but the forecourt has been transformed with

the installation of two brand new Tokheim Quantium ML pumps plus an AdBlue tank and pump all managed through a self-contained cabinet on site.

A great advert for the business

"We saw potential here, with the new Tay link bridge being built here north of Perth, and with us having depots in Forfar and Crieff in this region. It's a great advert for our business and we have the expertise and model to sell retail fuel competitively. Here customers can fuel or buy AdBlue using debit or credit cards and we have even gone contactless for extra speed and convenience.

"We also wanted to provide a full car valeting facility and so, a new jet wash, vacuum and airline are all on site."

Following this first launch, Oilfast is aiming to increase its forecourt numbers both by attracting dealers to the brand and by acquiring more locations specifically for unmanned use.

DCC announces new collaboration with SHV Energy

DCC Energy has announced the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SHV Energy launching a collaboration to address the supply challenges for renewable liquid gas.

A spokesperson for DCC Energy said: "DCC Energy and SHV Energy, two global leaders in the liquid gas industry, are working together to promote the development of renewable liquid gas.

"We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore sustainable opportunities for the generation of renewable liquid gas (rLG) and renewable and recycled carbon dimethyl ether (rDME). We intend to collaborate to identify the best solutions to supply challenges in Europe, which will open the door to production of rLG and rDME at scale, with the goal to secure widespread commercial adoption."

Cleaner energy for everyone

Fabian Ziegler, CEO of DCC Energy, said: "It is part of our published strategy to find even lower carbon solutions for our millions of liquid gas customers. We are pleased to partner with SHV Energy on this important project, which will bring us closer to realising our goal to provide cleaner energy to everyone."

Certas partnership delivers another HVO fleet switch

British haulage business Chamberlain Transport has switched its local Palletforce collections and delivery vehicles to HVO fuel supplied by Certas Energy.

The family-owned company is expected to reduce its annual carbon emissions by more than 150 tonnes (150,000 kilograms) as a result of this change.

Shifting the dial

According to Chamberlain Transport's Managing Director, Simon Chamberlain, this was a 'straightforward decision', designed to 'shift the dial' for other UK hauliers who are considering ways to decarbonise their fleets. Under the partnership, the haulier will trial HVO for six months before considering a wider expansion to its fleet of 40 vehicles.

Domestic transport continues to be the UK's largest emitting sector, responsible for 28% of total greenhouse gas emissions in 2022, a year in which it rose by 1.6% and proved to be an outlier compared to other sectors.

Demand for HVO in the UK has doubled in the past two years, and Certas Energy anticipates this to continue to rise to roughly one billion litres by 2030.

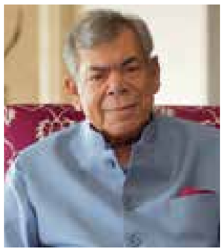
Increasingly choosing HVO

Darren Holloway, Commercial Director for Energy Solutions at Certas Energy, said: "Chamberlain Transport is one of a growing number of hauliers turning to HVO in order to help meet short- and medium-term decarbonisation targets while transitioning to electric vehicles.

"This partnership demonstrates how seamless the transition can be from fossil diesel to renewable fuels, resulting in immediate carbon reduction benefits. We are pleased to see that the transport sector is increasingly choosing HVO as the necessary bridging solution for its journey to net zero."

Simon added: "We must start somewhere, so what better place than in your own back yard? By targeting the areas our trucks visit regularly, where we live, work and go to school, we can make our surroundings the cleanest possible for the people that matter most."

Shri Shashikant Ruia, Essar



It is with great sadness that we report the passing, on 25th November 2024, of Shri Shashikant Ruia, aged 81.

The Ruia and Essar family shared the following statement: "It is with profound grief that we inform of the passing of Shri Shashikant Ruia, Patriarch of the Ruia and Essar Family. He was 81.

"With an unwavering commitment to community upliftment and philanthropy, he touched millions of lives leaving an enduring impact. His humility, warmth, and ability to connect with everyone he met, made him a truly exceptional leader.

"An iconic industrialist, Shri Shashikant Ruia, Chairman, Essar Group, played a significant role in redefining India's corporate landscape. He laid the foundation of the Essar Group and made it a global conglomerate.

"Shri Shashikant Ruia's extraordinary legacy will remain a guiding light for all of us, as we honour his vision and continue to uphold the values he cherished and championed."

TSA Associates Day

The Tank Storage Association Associates Day, hosted by the TSA's President, Wilma Kelly, Director of Safety, Sustainability and Engineering at Certas Energy, was held on the 19th of November at the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

Peter Davidson, CEO of the Tank Storage Association, said: "The Tank Storage Association's Associate Members (suppliers) play a critical role in skills, technical, safety, health and environmental matters and work with the Association on various sector-specific issues.

"Our annual Associates Day, interactive in nature and designed to stimulate discussion, represents an important opportunity for our community of associate members (suppliers) to come together, share knowledge and insights, and discuss the bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector in the UK as well as the Tank Storage Association's initiatives and projects.

"I was delighted to see so many friends and colleagues attend this year's event to discuss and reflect on the issues that matter the most to our membership and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our President, Wilma Kelly, for hosting such an important event for our Association."

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

THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY

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

WCF Ltd: A great place to work

WCF Ltd is proud to announce that they are officially a great place to work!

A spokesperson for the business said: "As part of our commitment to listening to, and responding to, our team's feedback, in October this year, WCF partnered with a Great Place to Work® as our new employee engagement surveying tool.

"Great Place to Work® is a global evaluator of workplace culture. Their lists and global benchmarks are the industry standard, built on data from more than 100 million employees worldwide. Our aim when partnering with GPTW was to ensure that every employee-owner has pride in what they do, enjoys their time at work, and has the support and sense of community with the people they work with. The Great Places to Work platform would help us collate this information and turn the feedback shared into meaningful insight.

"As part of our annual engagement survey cycle, we used the Great Place to Work Trust Index survey. A series of 60 questions, it covers areas such as equity, pride, community, leadership, and camaraderie, to name a few."

Turning insight into actions

"Being an employee-owner of WCF means using your voice to drive meaningful change for all, and we are thrilled that 80% of our colleagues chose to take part and share their insight on what we are doing well, and importantly, where we can make improvements. We are now working with our teams to keep the conversation going, working together to turn insight into actions which we are all responsible for."

Karen Kelso, Head of People and Culture, WCF Ltd, explained more: "For me, becoming a 'Great Place to Work' isn't just a badge or external recognition, it reflects the culture we've collectively built with our employee-owners. It's a sign that our people feel valued, supported, and proud to be part of the WCF team.

"We achieved an average rating of 73% across the Trust Index survey statements and focus areas, with 80% of our colleagues choosing to take part. Achieving certification is proof that we are living up to our Guiding Principles which are at the heart of everything we do here at WCF.

"We will be working with our teams to ensure we nurture what we do well, as well as looking at what we can do more of to enhance the culture and experience for our people. A huge thank you to my WCF colleagues, you are all incredible and are the reason we are now (officially) a Great Place to Work."

Gleaner Ltd: Raising money for worthy causes

Gleaner, the Elgin-based, family-owned, fuel distributor, is very proud of Martin Goddard, Depot Manager for Inverness and Grantown, for his recent fundraising.

Martin took part in the Big Ibrox Sleep Out event at Rangers Football Club. Sleep Out participants were invited to sleep outside overnight in the stadium while raising money for those affected by homelessness.

Sleep Out participants spent the night either on the technical area pitch-side or in the stand and got a small glimpse of the nightly conditions experienced by people who are street homeless. Participants taking part were asked to bring along warm clothing and a sleeping bag and the Foundation provided hot soup and beverages in the evening as well as a hot breakfast in the morning.

An inspiration

Martin explained more: "I was raising money for The Glasgow City Mission, The Simon Community Scotland and the Rangers Charity Foundation. Both The City Mission and The Simon Community help people affected by homelessness and poverty. The Rangers Charity Foundation is important to me too as I can identify with the strong charitable values of the club.

"I wanted to raise money for these charities to help fund the work they do for people less fortunate than most. I go to Glasgow a lot to watch my team, Rangers, and the amount of people begging in the streets is staggering. It is a sad indictment on society that we cannot give these people a decent home to live in.

"I am fortunate to have a very stable and supportive family at home and my employer, Gleaner Ltd, a family-owned firm, is also very supportive so I realise I am very lucky to have both in my life."

David Todd, Managing Director, added: "Gleaner is immensely proud of Martin for his commitment to supporting a great cause by participating in the Big Ibrox Sleep Out. His dedication and effort in raising vital funds are truly commendable – an inspiration to us all."

WCF Chandlers: Planning a Valentine's Ball

WCF Chandlers, the Lincolnshire-based distributor, is continuing to raise money for the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance Service, and has plans for a Valentine's Ball in February.

Two Lincolnshire businesses have joined forces to raise £10,000 for the air ambulance service by organising a charity ball. WCF Chandlers and Belton Woods Hotel are showing their support for the life-saving charity by hosting the glitzy Valentine's themed event in February.

A black-tie event, the Valentine's Ball will take place at Belton Woods Hotel in Grantham on February 15th 2025 and will feature music, dancing, entertainment and a three-course meal.

Local businesses are being invited to take tables at the event, or donate prizes for the auction on the night, in support of the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance (LNAA), which marks its 30th anniversary in 2024.

An event to remember

Charlotte Carratt, General Manager of Sales and Marketing, WCF Chandlers, said: "WCF Chandlers is a long-standing supporter of the LNAA and wanted to take its support to the next level.

"The LNAA provides a vital, life-saving service to this area and it's a cause close to the hearts of many of our customers who live and work in our rural communities.

"As a company, we have supported the LNAA for several years through fundraising as a team, but we felt the time was right to take the next step and organise a major fundraising event with the aim of raising £10,000.

"We were delighted to be able to join forces with the team at Belton Woods, who have chosen the LNAA as their charity of the year, to make it an event to remember."

Celebrating 30 years of the Air Ambulance Service

The LNAA covers a 3,500 square-mile region across Lincolnshire and

Nottinghamshire and responded to 1,771 incidents in 2023. The service needs to raise £13 million this year and relies on donations to remain operational.

Joe Harper, Corporate Partnerships Manager at the LNAA, said: "As we celebrate our 30th anniversary and reflect on reaching the incredible milestone of 30,000 life-saving missions, we're incredibly grateful to WCF Chandlers and Belton Woods Hotel for hosting the Valentine's Ball in support of the Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance.

"Our dedicated crew carries out critical interventions, often in the most challenging of circumstances. We receive no government funding, and it's only thanks to the generous support of the people and businesses across our region that we can continue to provide this essential service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. On behalf of everyone at the LNAA, thank you for your continued support."

Tickets cost £75 per person. Sponsorship packages are available for individuals and businesses from £150. To find out more or to book your place at the Valentine's Ball email events@beltonwoods.co.uk or call 01476 514379.

LCM Ltd: Employee of the Quarter

LCM Ltd, the Lancashire-based, fuel, energy, and infrastructure specialist, has proudly announced the joint winners of their Employee of the Quarter Award!

Richard Wallace, CEO of LCM, said: "I'm delighted to announce that Tom Littlewood (Operations Manager) and Craig Harrison (Operations Manager for the Coatings and Linings Division) have been jointly selected as Employees of the Quarter.

"Their exceptional contributions to our team have been invaluable. Both Tom and Craig consistently demonstrate reliability, teamwork, and adaptability, embodying the core values of our company.

"Their dedication to their roles, and their commitment to delivering outstanding results have significantly impacted our success. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to their continued contributions to LCM."

Congratulations to Tom and Craig!

How would you summarise 2024?

THE FUEL DISTRIBUTION COMMUNITY TAKES A LOOK BACK OVER LAST YEAR.

ASKED FOR 'A SENTENCE THAT SUMS UP WORKING IN FUEL DISTRIBUTION IN 2024' OUR COMMUNITY OF DISTRIBUTORS SAID:

Tough, unpredictable and erratic.

A very challenging year!

Tough! We always get peaks and troughs - we just have to ride it out!

There is a lot of room for disruption.

Uneventful!

A different year, HVO seems to be gaining popularity, and this seems encouraging as both good for the environment and customers to help them with the longevity of their equipment and supply.

Always challenging but, at the same time, very enjoyable. It is still a great industry to be part of.

2024 was another challenging year, but we are positively influencing the future of UK renewable liquid fuels as the futility of "fully electric" alternatives is now a reality.

It has been challenging with allocation from the refinery at times with not having the luxury of a wet depot and suppliers who could source fuel from everywhere.

As dynamic and collaborative as ever.

Challenging - the industry is going through a profound change, and many companies are still working out how to approach the new challenges.

A year full of internal and external challenges, and opportunities, and one that has firmed up the importance of working towards a greener, cleaner future.

And asked for a question for FON to help to find answers to…

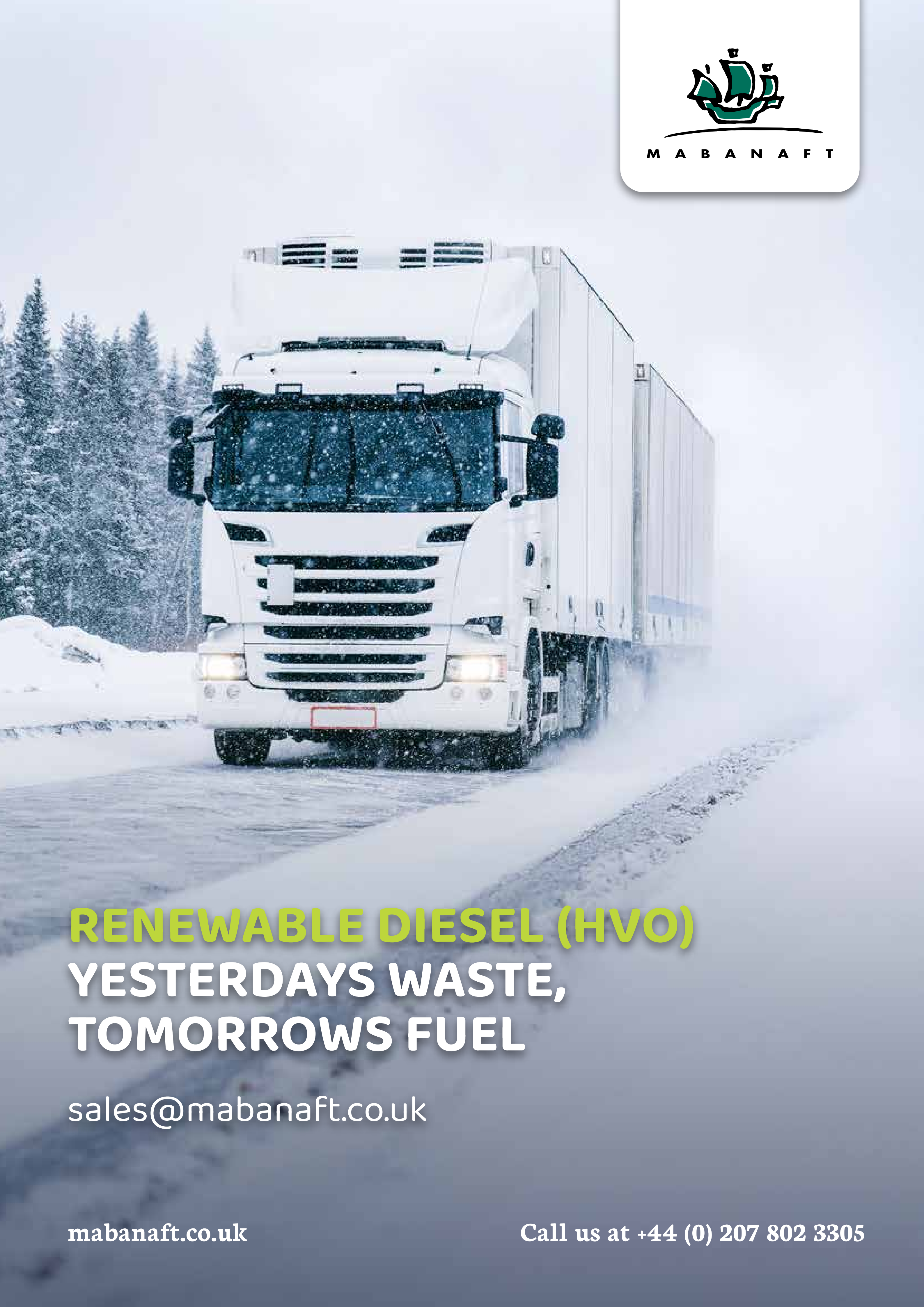
What are the main challenges to the energy transition to renewable fuels and what should we all be doing to overcome them?

What's the future of heating oil?

Where do you predict the downstream distribution sector will be in 2035?

How do we encourage young, talented people to join our industry?

Why are some distributors hell-bent on giving oil away?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What are your hopes for 2025?

THE FUEL DISTRIBUTION COMMUNITY ALSO TAKES A LOOK FORWARD TO THIS NEW YEAR.

WHEN ASKED FOR 'A SENTENCE THAT SUMS UP YOUR HOPES FOR 2025' OUR COMMUNITY OF DISTRIBUTORS SAID:

Traditional seasons (with a long cold winter!), a prosperous, growing UK economy and an end to conflict in both the Ukraine and the Middle East.

More government support for low-carbon fuels is the main one.

A drier summer, a motivated and curious team, higher demand.

Cold weather. Healthy staff. Change of Government.

Frost, snow and ice!

A cold winter . Duty relief on on-road HVO. A major advancement on synthetic fuels.

That we grow, are making good profits and have a new truck replenishment program.

Confidence in business and markets to encourage investment and long-term growth. The political parties to pull together for the best of all in the long term – there are no quick fixes. A more common-sense approach to new fuels and new energy, not one size fits all, a more joined-up approach to suit all pockets and customers, as not every customer can afford new kit.

The announcement of a materially higher RTFO in future years, development of an equivalent Order for heating, progression in incorporating the shipping sector into the ETS.

Tech- and data-enabled improvements to drive more variety and surety for customers.

Probably the same as the last couple of years. A successful year, a happy workforce and good health for all!

More clarity and direction from Government on the future of HVO. More confidence in our customers to invest in the future. Arsenal to win the Premier league, FA Cup and Champions League!

Reduction in employee turnover. Commercial growth. A cold, dry Jan-April (I know I don't ask for much!)

And more questions for FON to help to find answers to…

Is pricing likely to remain this low and stable?

How long before the price of synthetic fuels comes down to a sensible price per litre as an alternative to other green energy?

Will HVO finally take off as a renewable liquid fuel?

How can the government incentivise low-carbon liquid fuels (this is the most scalable and immediate solution for decarbonisation)?

Has the popularity for electric cars started to dwindle?

What do you like most about working for Fuel Oil News?

Silvey Fleet: your partner for the transition journey

ORIGINALLY FORMED IN 1870 AS A FAMILY BUSINESS, SILVEY FLEET IS NOW AN INDEPENDENT BUSINESS OWNED BY THE MABANAFT GROUP. A LITTLE OVER 3 YEARS AGO, WE SPOKE WITH **MIRIAM JAMES**, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF SILVEY FLEET, TO HEAR ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF THE BUSINESS, FROM BULK FUEL PROVIDER TO FLEET SOLUTIONS PROVIDER UNDER THE SILVEY FLEET BRAND. WE RECENTLY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CATCH UP AGAIN, WHEN MARGARET MAJOR MET WITH MIRIAM TO HEAR HOW THE COMPANY CONTINUES TO EVOLVE ITS SOLUTIONS TO SUPPORT CUSTOMERS THROUGH THE TRANSITION, POSITIONING ITSELF PERFECTLY FOR AMBITIOUS FUTURE PLANS.

Miriam begins by explaining how her own role has changed since our previous conversation: “I took responsibility for the Onroute business in November last year, with Silvey Fleet and Onroute now integrated under Commercial Road Transport (CRT) – an international business unit of Mabanaft Group.

“Rather than operating by geographical regions, we are more focused on business activity and leveraging group synergies to further strengthen and expand our end-customer business.

“Our strategy, both as a group and as the Silvey Fleet and Onroute businesses, is to invest in the right areas and assets, bring in the best talent and expand our portfolio to continue to meet our customers’ future energy needs.”

Supporting customers through the energy transition

“We are fully committed to supporting our customers through the transition.

“When we talk to our customers, we find many are aware of the need to consider their transition, especially as supply chain demands and the requirement for businesses of a certain size to publish their emissions, increase the pressure to do so, but some customers don’t know which way to go.

“For us, it’s about working with our customers, as they consider what the transition looks like for them, to find the right solutions and ensure that we can provide those solutions into the future. It’s about considering the pain points of today, but also future ones and providing solutions.

“Whatever those solutions are, we will provide what the customer requires, and agility is key to achieving this. We service our customers today with the future in mind, and can’t be precious about specific solutions. We try to plan for eventualities and manoeuvre as needed.

“In terms of our truckstop sites, we plan to offer multi purpose solutions, including hydrogen and liquid biofuels (Renewable Diesel, HVO) and EV charging. We now have Renewable Diesel, HVO at all our sites, and believe it has a major role to play in the transition.

Our customer conversations around HVO are driven by their green agenda, and more needs to be done to raise awareness of the benefits of HVO.”

Do you think the government should do more to force the direction of travel or is it right that the market decides?

“It’s government, it’s vehicle manufacturers – there are so many influences involved – but if the pathway and legislation were clearer, it would make investment decisions easier.

“This is why HVO needs far more publicity, promotion and endorsement. The industry has done an excellent job with members, customers and lobbying, but there needs to be much more noise around the benefits of switching and the strength of HVO as a transitional solution that doesn’t require a change of vehicle to deliver emission reduction.”

Carbon offsetting

“My role is very focused on mobility and roadside fuelling, and delivering more decarbonised solutions for that but, for our customers, the need to decarbonise is, often, a much broader issue than just the carbon footprint of their roadside refuelling. To address these broader needs, we offer a carbon offsetting solution.

“Rapid action is required to halve global emissions in the next decade, and reach net zero emissions by 2050. There may, for example, be customers who want to transition to an electric fleet but, since carbon-free electricity is not yet 100% possible, they also want to offset the remainder of their emissions. Or it may only be possible to migrate part of their fleet to a low carbon solution, so they can use carbon offsetting on a transitional basis to demonstrate their willingness while more complete carbon removal solutions are implemented.

“It is a pragmatic solution to address emissions that cannot be otherwise eliminated but need to be correctly declared.

“What is important is that businesses consider their environmental credentials – in exactly the same way as they would consider data security, for example. It is simply good business practice.

“The decision to take action depends very much on the attitude of the business. As a business, we haven’t waited for changes such as emission reporting etc. to become a requirement, instead, we have implemented change where we have seen a compelling reason to do so and a clear business benefit.”

Standards that stand out

A good example of Silvey Fleet taking action to deliver a better business is the company’s commitment to Investors in People which, Miriam explains, is about “our desire to do more than ‘just the basics’”.

“We want to be the best employer,” Miriam

continues, “and what that looks like is not determined by me. We are extremely proud of the award of a Platinum ‘We Invest in People’ accreditation to Silvey Fleet – something only 2% of assessed organisations ever achieve.

“Investors in People believes that the success of an organisation begins and ends with people. We firmly share this belief and are dedicated to further development of all areas of our business, making Silvey Fleet a great place to work for our people and the supplier of choice for the many businesses we support.

“Finding good quality, talented recruits, will always be a challenge, but we know that our commitment to Investors in People, putting our people first and living our core values, supports us in attracting the right recruits. It gives the younger generations something to benchmark us against externally.

“We also launched a graduate programme last year. With apprenticeships in most of the commercial areas of the business we have a focus on delivering a progression path. That may be within our own businesses, such as Silvey Fleet and Onroute, but we are also able to leverage the wider group to deliver that clear progression plan.

“It is essential not to stall anyone’s development, we strongly believe in continually developing people’s skill sets, so they remain fully engaged.

“If we look after employees, they will look after our customers.”

High standards

This culture of continuous improvement runs throughout Silvey Fleet as Miriam explains: “As a service provider, we are constantly seeking to improve the way we work with, and what we deliver to, our customers. Change is viewed as ‘the norm’, allowing the business to grow and we continue to develop the fleet management solutions we offer.

“Delivery of the Investors in People accreditation is not the only standard we hold ourselves up to. We also have ISO 27001 – information security, ISO 40001 – environmental, and ISO 9001 – quality. We have delivered all these because we believe they are important to the business and create a culture of continuous improvement.

“The culture aligns everyone in the company behind a common purpose – to create a stand-out business that our team, customers, group and community are all proud to be a part of. Our people work together to develop ideas that have positive outcomes for the business, often resulting in excellent developments to our products and services.”

Mobility payment solutions – the future for fuel cards

“A good example of this successful collaboration has been the development of our Miles Monitor fleet management app. Miles Monitor gives our customers a complete overview of their fleet expenses and operational workings, enabling them to see where they can make cost savings and improve efficiency.”

The focus on delivering the highest quality service and the right customer solutions also extends to the Silvey Fleet fuel card offering as Miriam elaborates: “We take time to understand each individual business, looking at route usage and closest fuel stations for example, so the specific solution offers the greatest convenience and best savings.

“We now refer to ‘fuel cards’ as mobility payment solutions, since it will not remain fuel in all cases. It is no longer about providing the product, it is about providing the broader solution and acting in a more consultative role to deliver an excellent customer journey. Convenience is key for the end user and, for us, it is about overcoming the pain points.

“With the potential to switch to transitional products, the account management side is becoming far more important as we work with the fleet manager to consider the most viable future solutions.

“There is a wide customer audience out there and a significant gap in the market and we believe we can add value to the customer. It’s a big opportunity. It would be very easy to focus on our own business objectives, but we start with the customer in mind and, when we get it right for them, it works for our business too.”

Achieving growth in times of change

With Miriam’s clear enthusiasm to deliver Silvey Fleet bespoke solutions within the traditional fuel cards sector, I asked about other opportunities the changing energy scenario presents to the business.

“We have ambitious expansion plans. We went live in Ireland on the Silvey Fleet side two years ago, and we will be expanding into other regions in Europe as well as accelerating growth in the UK. This will be through a combination of organic growth and by increasing resources on the sales and marketing side.”

And what about Onroute – is there opportunity there for additional sites or acquisition from other providers?

“To meet our customers’ transitioning needs, we need to deliver multi-purpose hubs for the future, so we look to locations where we can supply liquid fuels, electric, hydrogen etc.

“When we talk about expansion and, for example, Silvey Fleet, it is not brand specific, it is an expansion to the Commercial Road Transport division, ensuring it has strategically placed sites with all of the services for both domestic and international customers along with supporting mobility payment solutions.”

What does the future look like?

“We want to be the best fleet management solution provider and to continue to expand our customer base by challenging the status quo and embracing the opportunity that change presents.

“We will continue to evolve our fleet management solutions to meet the changing needs of our customers, and this is the key to our success – our focus on the customer and the customers’ needs – both today and into the future.

What price oil? 2024 In review

IN ASSOCIATION WITH *THE OIL MARKET JOURNAL*

THE FOLLOWING PAGES PRESENT A GRAPH THAT SHOWS HOW FUEL PRICES HAVE VARIED THROUGH 2024. FOR THE FIRST TIME WE PRESENT DATA FOR HVO DIESEL ALONGSIDE THE BRENT CRUDE DATA. WITH DATA SUPPLIED BY THE OIL MARKET JOURNAL, THE MARKERS AND TEXT BOXES HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE KEY EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR THAT HAVE IMPACTED ON THE PRICING.

WE HOPE THAT IT PROVIDES AN INTERESTING AND INSIGHTFUL LOOK BACK OVER A YEAR WHICH, ONCE AGAIN, HAS PRESENTED THOSE OPERATING IN THE LIQUID FUEL SECTOR, WITH A BROAD VARIETY OF CHALLENGES.

Oil price in review

Q1

2024 was eventful for international oil prices, with much of the narrative focused on the supply side. Houthi rebels in Yemen continued to attack ships traversing the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Three crew personnel were killed in a missile attack, and one ship, the Rubymar, was sunk. Supply disruption impacted prices for the first half of the quarter with product diverted around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. Weaker crude prices prompted OPEC+ into action again as they agreed to extend Q1 2024 voluntary production cuts until the end of Q2. European refineries also entered planned and unplanned maintenance, while Russian refineries were targeted by Ukrainian drone attacks. Early indications of Q1 demand suggest weakness for diesel. The German Truck Toll Index has been below the 5-year average for the quarter while manufacturing output has been performing poorly in Europe and the US.

January

Security and logistics issues in the Red Sea dominated January. Numerous cargo ships, including oil tankers, were targeted, and hit by Houthi rebels from Yemen. Product was diverted around the Cape of Good Hope to avoid attacks. In turn, this caused delays to product getting to Northwest Europe.

February

Supply distribution continued into early February. This was exacerbated by German refinery maintenance lowering domestic production. ICE Gasoil also experienced a short squeeze ahead of expiry as traders bought contracts to rebalance their positions. Following expiry, prices moved downward for middle distillates as product made its way to Europe and stocks began to replenish, exacerbated by weaker demand. Petrol prices performed well ahead of the seasonal transition with fundamentals remaining tight.

March

Lower crude oil prices pushed OPEC+ into action once again. They decided to extend their voluntary production cuts until the end of Q2 2024. Revised supply and demand forecasts from OPEC, the US EIA, and the IEA all suggested a supply and demand deficit in 2024, which has led to upward pressure on oil prices. Ukraine also increased its attacks on Russian refineries with Reuters reporting that about 14% of Russia's oil refining capacity has been taken offline for repairs.

Q2

Geopolitical tensions continued into Q2, with conflict in the Middle East on markets' minds. Ukraine continued to attack Russian oil refineries, but not to the same extent as in Q1. The large 240,000 bpd Tuaspe refinery was hit on 17th May, which had only just restarted following previous drone strikes. Drones also hit the 70,000 bpd Slavyansk refinery on May 18th–19th, forcing it offline. All in all, 12 refineries or storage areas were targeted in May, albeit most remained at least partially operational. Despite European and US refineries entering a period of maintenance and Russian refinery outages, oil prices remained subdued on weaker demand and ample supply. Diesel barges began trading at discounts to front month futures as early as 4th April with ICE Gasoil M1 flipping to contango on 17th April. At the start of June OPEC extended voluntary production cuts for another quarter and involuntary cuts until the end of 2025. Prices began rising again. ICE Gasoil flipped back into backwardation from its slight contango.

April

The beginning of the quarter was volatile. Iran and Israel each launched missile and drone strikes on each other, with markets fearing supply disruption. Prices, however, fell once markets came to realise that no supply disruption would materialise. ICE Gasoil occupied a tight range between $740/t/. and $750/t. with weak fundamentals and macroeconomic indicators keeping prices capped.

May

Oil prices were stable in May, with main futures and spot pricing remaining largely rangebound with little geopolitical news or shifts in fundamentals to drive any meaningful volatility. Oil inventories in the ARA storage hub continued to build with demand muted and the middle distillate market flipping to a slight contango in April. Markets began awaiting OPEC's decision on output, due to take place on 2nd June.

June

OPEC agreed to extend voluntary cuts by another quarter to September 2024, whilst also extending involuntary cuts until the end of 2025. Voluntary cuts would then be phased out from October 2024 onwards. Oil prices began rising following OPEC's decision, despite an initial fall. Market expectations were that the oil market would be in a structural deficit for the rest of the year, which led to upward pressure in prices towards the end of June.

Q3

Q3 2024 was dominated by fears of global economic slowdown and an increased prospect of lower interest rates. In July, Chinese GDP growth was lower than expected which ignited concerns over global oil demand with prices falling in turn. August saw weak US payroll data and the largest downward revisions to historical data in 15 years. This led Fed Chair Powell to declare that the 'time has come' to cut interest rates with the Fed lowering interest rates by 0.5% in September.

OPEC announced that it was extending production curbs until October and then extended curbs until December when prices weakened further. Libya banned oil exports over a central bank dispute between rival governments. Tensions continued to rise in the Middle East with Israel attacking Hezbollah communication devices and assassinating its leader in Lebanon in September.

July

July was turning into a weak month until the final few days. ICE Gasoil fell below $800/t. before testing $700/t. and recovering slightly higher. Brent Crude also fell to $80/b., which is turning into a very strong support level. Chinese GDP growth was lower than expected at 4.8%, which had sparked some fears of global oil demand growth, dragging on prices. Geo-political tensions led to upwards moves on the last trading day of the month as Israel killed Ismail Hamiyeh in Tehran. The move sparked fears of an escalation to wider conflict in the region. US president Joe Biden dropped out of the US presidential election and was swiftly replaced by his current Vice President Kamala Harris.

August

Oil prices were mixed in August, with US payrolls for July and a large historical revision causing Fed Chair Jerome Powell to announce that 'the time has come' to cut interest rates. However, prices were supported by the Libyan ban on oil exports in a row between rival governments over the central bank. The US DoE agreed to buy 2.5 mb of crude for the Bryan Mound SPR facility with delivery in Q1 2025.

September

September started with an underwhelming US driving season ending and the IEA downgrading Chinese demand due to 'broadly based slowdown'. ICE Brent Crude dipped below long term resistance of $70/b. before oil prices found support in the middle of the month. Storm Francine shut in over 730,000 bpd of US Gulf Coast Supply, the Fed kickstarted the rate easing cycle with a 0.5% cut. Israel's attack on Hezbollah communication devices and execution of its leader in Lebanon escalated tensions in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia indicated that it would prioritise market share over a target price in a hint that it will increase production.

October

October began with increased tension in the Middle East, as Iran launched a missile attack on Israel on 1st October. However, prices lowered as Libyan crude supplies increased after the temporary export ban. Prices fell further as Israel launched a smaller attack than expected at the end of the month. Chinese demand concerns continued with further weak economic indicators. Inflation fell at a faster rate than forecast and Q3 GDP growth disappointed. Hedge funds continued to sell, reducing their net long positions of all products in the final week of the month.

November

November got off to a bullish start as the US re-elected Donald Trump in the presidential election. OPEC delayed production curbs for an additional month until January 2025. ARA oil stocks were depleted early in the month with gasoil at a 14 week low on 7th November. The conflict in Ukraine escalated further with Biden sanctioning the use of long range missiles against Russia. The IEA and OPEC's revised demand growth lower for 2025. Chinese economic fears continued with industrial production lower than expected and crude runs falling by 7% on the year in October. Israel agreed a ceasefire with Lebanon, de-escalating Middle East tensions.

HVO price in review

Q1

HVO began the year with falling premiums to ICE Gasoil amid a well-supplied market that was struggling to compete with low certificate costs across Europe. Cheap certificates disincentivised blending which reduced demand for HVO. Matters were exacerbated when the German government announced delays to unrestricted HVO100 sales which had been due to commence in April 2024.

January

Amid uncertain government policy, German HVO demand fell in January to the lowest level since February 2023. Meanwhile, Swedish HVO demand fell by 85% on the year in the wake of government cuts to GHG obligations, emphasising the connection between government policy and HVO markets.

February

On 2nd February, Class IV HVO prices rose for the first time since September 2023 after 5 months of stagnation. On 23rd February, Cepsa began construction of a new HVO plant in Spain with capacity for 500,000t of output per year.

Oil price review: 2024 highlights

JANUARY
12 IS warned that if the UK and US navies attack Yemen "we will attack Americans"
15 First US flagged ship is attacked in the Red Sea

FEBRUARY
4 Ukraine attacks 289,000 bpd Lukoil PJSC refinery in Volgorad

MARCH
3 OPEC extends production curbs until the end of June
12 EIA forecasts supply deficit for 2024

APRIL
4 Israeli strike on Iranian embassy kills 3 generals
17 ICE Gasoil enters contango

MAY
17 Ukraine hits 240,000 bpd Tuaspe refinery

JUNE
2 OPEC extends production curbs until 30 September
11 EIA upgrades 2024 oil demand forecasts

JULY
4 ARA Jet Kero stocks at 3 year high
10 Chinese inflation falls to 0.2% prompting fears of economic slowdown
11IEA warns Chinese oil demand growth "pre-eminence is fading"
16 Chinese GDP grew by 4.8% which was lower than expected
30 Israel kills Ismail Hamiyeh, the political leader of Hamas in Tehran, Iran.

AUGUST
2 Weaker than expected US non-farm payrolls with large downward revisions
13 DoE agrees to purchase 2.5mb of crude for the Bryan Mound SPR
23 Fed Chair Jerome Powell declares 'the time has come' to lower interest rates
27 Libyan oil production shutdown amid government dispute over central bank chief

SEPTEMBER
1 US driving season ends
9 ICE Brent Crude closes below $70/b. for the first time since 2021
11 Storm Francine shut in over 730,000 bpd of US Gulf Coast Supply
12 IEA downgrades global oil demand forecasts primarily because of China
17 Israel detonates explosions in 3,000 Hezbollah pagers in Lebanon
17 Fed lowers interest rates by 0.5% in the first cut after post pandemic inflation
26 Saudi Arabia indicates that it will prioritise market share rather than a price

OCTOBER
1 Iran strikes Israel in large scale missile attack
2 OPEC extends production curbs for 2 months until December
3 Libya reopens oil fields
14 OPEC cuts Chinese demand forecast
17 Israel killed Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar
21 China GDP growth lowest in 18 months
25 Israel carries out a limited air strike on Iran

NOVEMBER
4 OPEC delays curbs until Jan 2025
6 Donald Trump US election victory
19 Ukraine fires US long range missiles in Russia
26 Biden announces Israel/Lebanon ceasefire

March

Q1 ended on a bullish note as demand picked up. Demand was primarily driven by the Netherlands where HVO fell below certificates which led to increased blending. On 22nd March, Germany voted to allow HVO100 sales at public pumps form 13th April 2024.

Q2

Q2 began with the UK government announcing plans to end biofuel import tax relief. This policy decision would in turn push up HVO prices domestically.

April

On 18th April, the German government announced a further delay to HVO sales amid mixed government communications.

May

The eventual decision to allow sales of HVO100 in Germany was made by the end of May.

June

In June, the UK Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) Launched an investigation into Chinese biofuel dumping. At the end of June, Neste struck a deal in the first of its kind to supply Dutch cruise ships with renewable diesel.

Q3

July

On 1st July, the French government approved the sale of HVO100 to the public, which began the third quarter on a bullish note. However, the following day, Shell paused construction of its biofuel plant in Rotterdam amidst concerns over the profitability and sustainability of the venture. In mid-July the EU announced provisional anti-dumping duties on Chinese biofuels. The announcement supported prices on increased fears over long-term supplies. In July Swedish HVO deliveries increased by 60% on the year. Meanwhile biofuels accounted for 7.5% of the total UK fuel mix during the year to date which was below 8% in the same period the previous year.

August

In August, the EU delayed its final decision on Chinese anti-dumping duties. On the 28th August, Sweden re-instated GHG obligations from July 2025 in a move that reversed earlier reductions. HVO was lifted in the final days of the month with ICE Gasoil.

September

In September, the UK TRA announced that it would push back the timeline of its Chinese anti-dumping investigation which created uncertainty over government policy direction. By mid-September, HVO prices were being weighed down by ICE Gasoil losses. Falls extended when a German draft law proposed that certificates could not be carried into next year. This meant that they must be used by the end of the year or be lost. In practical terms there was a decrease in physical blending which pushed back demand.

Q4

HVO prices began to lift in Q4 as market participants placed value on the lower cold filter plugging point of HVO ahead of the winter months. The UK Renewable Transport Fuel Association (RTFA) filed complaints with the TRA over the use of Malaysia as third country in UK investigation. The RTFA argued that Malaysia also has distortions in its own domestic market and that Brazil would be a more suitable comparison given broader similarities to China in terms of societal development.

October

At the end of October, BP launched a pilot of HVO100 pumps across Spain.

November

November was an extremely volatile month with major supply disruptions. On 7th November, Eni's biorefinery in Sicily was taken offline for maintenance. The next day, Neste's Rotterdam refinery was taken offline after a major fire broke out. On the same day, TotalEnergies closed its La Mede biofuel plant for repair works. This caused prices to spike with the price of Argus HVO Class II settled on 13th November at $2,452.54/t. compared to $2,037.95/t. on 7th November. On 15th November, China announced the end of its UCO tax rebate from 1st December. On 18th November, the Netherlands retrospectively increased its 2024 GHG reductions which increased demand alongside ongoing major supply disruptions. By 19th November, HVO supply concerns were beginning to ease on the back of increased deliveries from the USA. Argus HVO Class II settled on 21st November at $1849.22/t.

HVO price review 2024 highlights

JANUARY
12 HVO premiums to ICE Gasoil drop amid a well-supplied market
23 Germany to delay unrestricted HVO100 sales which had been due from April
31 Swedish HVO demand fell by 85% after the government cut GHG obligations
31 German HVO demand fell to lowest since February 2023

FEBRUARY
2 Class IV HVO rose despite ICE Gasoil for the first time since September 2023
23 Cepsa start construction of 500,000t per year HVO/SAF plant in Spain

MARCH
4 Dutch HVO demand picks up as prices fall below certificates
22 Germany allows HVO100 at public pumps from 13 April 2024

APRIL
3 UK government announces plans to end biofuel import tax relief
18 Germany delays HVO100 introduction

MAY
28 German HVO100 is approved

JUNE
5 UK Trade Remedies Authority launches Chinese biodiesel dumping investigation
27 Neste to supply renewable diesel to Dutch cruise ships

JULY
1 France approves HVO100 for sale
2 Shell pauses construction of Rotterdam biofuels plant
19 EU announces provisional anti-dumping duties on Chinese biofuels
31 Renewable fuels made 7.5% of UK mix Jan-Jul 2024 v 8% in 2023
31 Swedish biofuel deliveries up 60% on the year

AUGUST
12 EU delays final decision on Chinese anti-dumping duties
28 Sweden reinstates GHG obligations from July 2025
29 HVO prices rise with ICE Gasoil

SEPTEMBER
5 UK pushes back timeline on Chinese biofuels investigation
10 HVO prices weighed down by ICE Gasoil
20 German draft law proposes no certificate carryover

OCTOBER
7 HVO premiums rise as participants value the lower cold filter plugging point
21 Renewable Transport Fuel Association (RTFA) files complaints over use of Malaysia as third country in UK investigation
25 BP pilots HVO pumps in Spain

NOVEMBER
7 Eni's biorefinery in Sicily is taken offline for maintenance
8 Neste's Rotterdam refinery offline after fire breaks out
8 TotalEnergies closes La Mede biofuel plant for works
8 UK announces extension of duties on Argentinian biofuels
15 China cancels UCO tax rebate from 1 December
18 Netherlands retrospectively increases 2024 GHG obligations
19 HVO supply concerns ease on increased US deliveries

Oil price review: 2024 highlights

Q1 Highlights

15 JANUARY First US flagged ship is attacked in the Red Sea

4 FEBRUARY Ukraine attacks 289,000 bpd Lukoil PJSC refinery in Volgorad

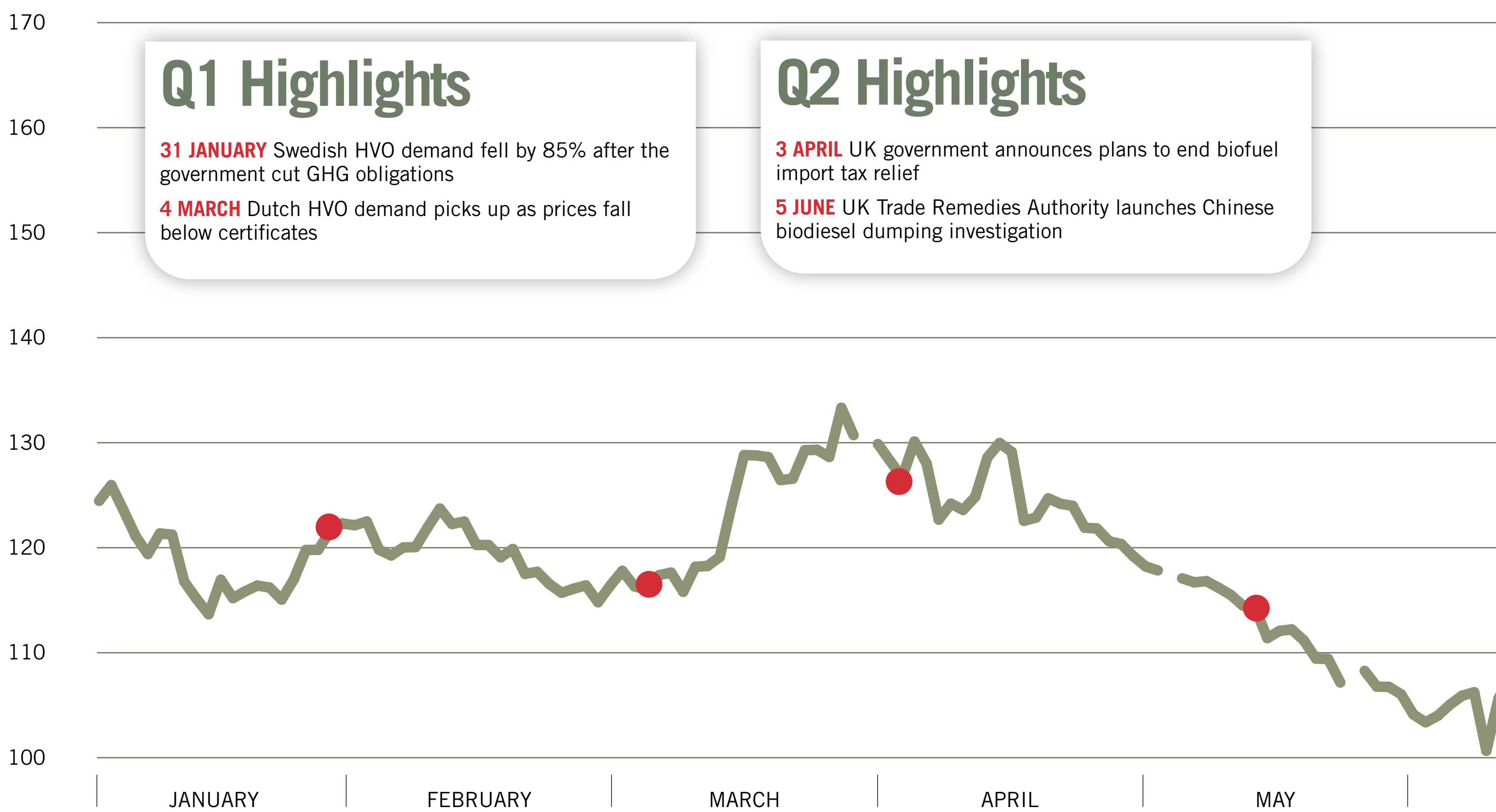
3 MARCH OPEC extends production curbs until the end of June

Q2 Highlights

17 MAY Ukraine hits 240,000 bpd Tuaspe refinery

11 JUNE EIA upgrades 2024 oil demand forecasts

HVO price review: 2024 highlights



Q1 Highlights

31 JANUARY Swedish HVO demand fell by 85% after the government cut GHG obligations

4 MARCH Dutch HVO demand picks up as prices fall below certificates

Q2 Highlights

3 APRIL UK government announces plans to end biofuel import tax relief

5 JUNE UK Trade Remedies Authority launches Chinese biodiesel dumping investigation

ICE Brent Crude - $/b (ICE) (Month 1)

Q4 Highlights

14 OCTOBER OPEC cuts Chinese demand forecast

6 NOVEMBER Donald Trump US election victory

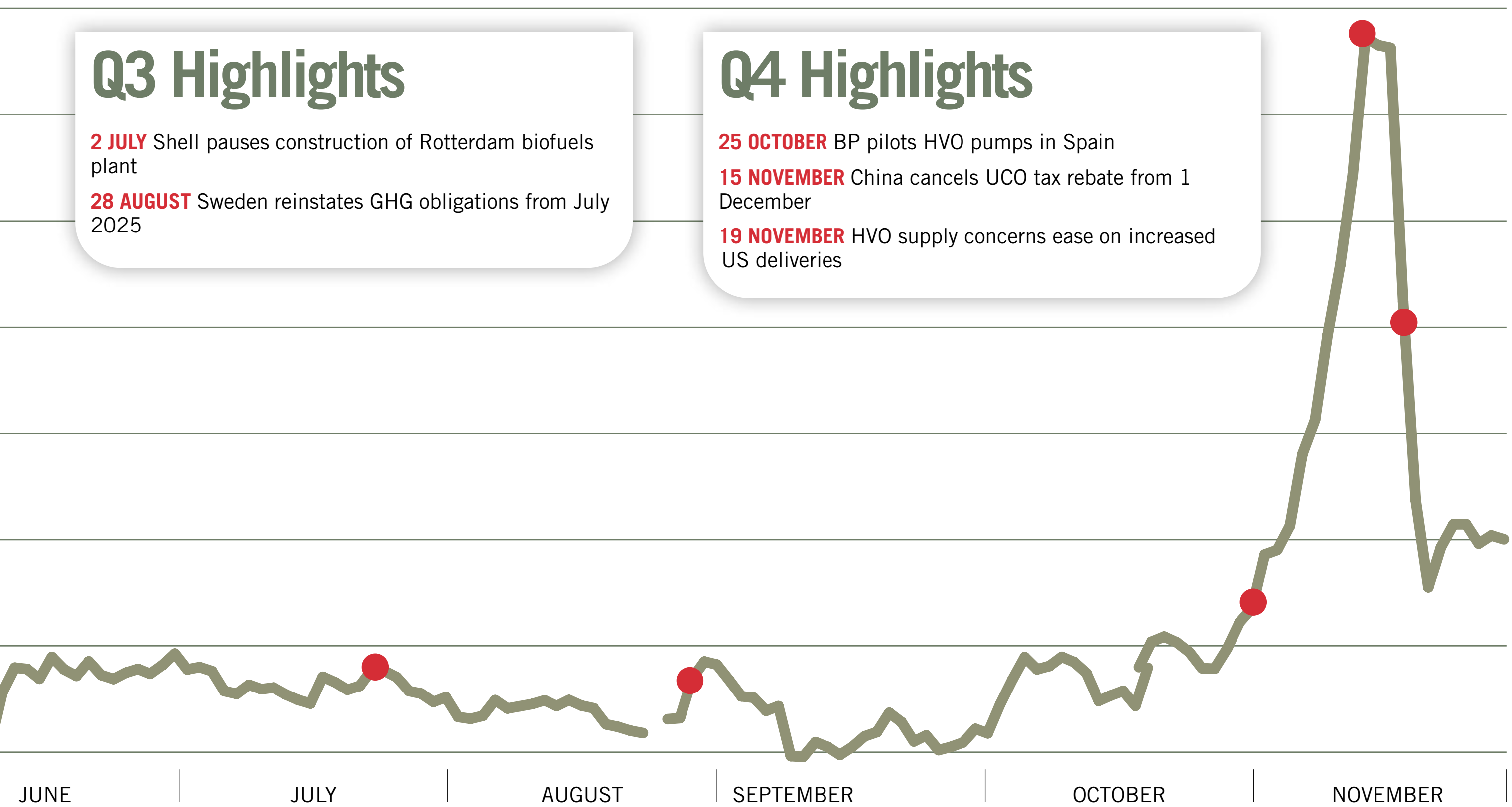
Q3 Highlights

30 JULY Israel kills Ismail Hamiyeh, the political leader of Hamas in Tehran, Iran.

9 SEPTEMBER ICE Brent Crude closes below $70/b. for the first time since 2021

17 SEPTEMBER Fed lowers interest rates by 0.5% in the first cut after post pandemic inflation

HVO Diesel (UK-A) I UK - PPL FT + Duty (Bio Fuels)



Q3 Highlights

2 JULY Shell pauses construction of Rotterdam biofuels plant

28 AUGUST Sweden reinstates GHG obligations from July 2025

Q4 Highlights

25 OCTOBER BP pilots HVO pumps in Spain

15 NOVEMBER China cancels UCO tax rebate from 1 December

19 NOVEMBER HVO supply concerns ease on increased US deliveries

A DAY IN THE LIFE...

James Johnson

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 **JAMES JOHNSON**, NATIONAL SALES MANAGER AT GREENARC, TO DISCOVER HOW JAMES SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.

MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...

7am if I'm in our Halifax office, 6am if I'm in our Burnley office, that's if I'm not out on the road on my way to clients by that time!

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...

Get in the shower and brush my teeth (usually at the same time as I've stayed in bed too long!)

I PREPARE FOR THE DAY AHEAD BY...

Making a coffee and putting on some music, then I'll check the diary and I will make a little to do list/what I want to get out of the day list! Sometimes you'll catch me at the gym for a workout or at the pool for a swim before work.

I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT...

Picking up my glasses and saying goodbye to the dog.

MY TYPICAL DAY –

At the start of a typical day, after getting the morning routine out of the way, I'll head to whichever office I'm in, or whichever client I'm going to see that morning.

After making the first coffee of many in the office, I'll open my laptop and respond to any emails that I need to, followed by catching up with clients/ prospective clients. As my role is national, I can be travelling for most of the day sometimes, so when I'm in the office it's important to catch up with the rest of the Greenarc team.

Being client facing is one of the best parts of my job. I like getting to speak to new people and building relationships, as well as catching up with long standing customers, allowing me to ease their journey's to clean energy.

My day to day is very varied, which is a huge positive for me, new meetings, new conversations and new challenges are what keep me on my toes! Every day is a school day.

Teams meetings usually fall at 11am and 3pm giving me enough time either side to prepare before and summarise/follow up with next actions afterwards. At the end of a working day, I wrap up what I've been working on, tick off my to do list and if there's anything I've not got round to, that will be at the top of tomorrow's list!

MY MOST MEMORABLE WORK MOMENT...

Receiving the keys to my company car, an Electric Cupra Born. I was overcome with a sense of accomplishment, and I still find myself walking out the house and looking for my old car (Vauxhall Corsa), seeing the new car and getting the same feeling all over again!

There are some honourable mentions in there however, such as completing and passing my apprenticeship through Greenarc, or putting together my application video for the job in the first place! This was a new and different way to apply for a job and that's partly why it attracted me.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB...

As a proud Yorkshireman, it can be difficult crossing into Lancashire sometimes…!

It sounds like the typical thing to say, "I can't think of a worst part of my job", however I am very fortunate that I work with such good people, colleagues and clients, in a forward-thinking company that's in a fast paced, ever-changing industry.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

A hard question to answer… My colleagues must be up there, making every day easier for me, we are a well-oiled machine. The types of clients I get to deal with; every organisation is different, and the variation and new knowledge is challenging yet rewarding.

The industry that I work in has a personal interest of mine, we get to help people reduce their emissions, helping them transition to cleaner and greener fuels, such as HVO (with other technologies following), but prioritising their wider business objectives and wrapping sustainability around business objectives, not the other way around.

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY...

Luckily, my social life is just as packed as my work life. I believe heavily in a work-life balance, a fact my colleagues will vouch for!

I play Rugby Union for a team called Old Crossleyan's in Halifax which takes up two of my weeknights and my Saturdays. I tend to go for a run on an evening as well as a visit to the pub quiz when it's on!

MY FAVOURITE MEAL IS...

I don't tend to eat breakfast, and my evening meal tends to be all over the place due to my busy schedule so, as a result, lunch tends to be the best meal of the day.

Sometimes, when I'm being sensible, it will be a Sainsbury's/Tesco meal deal. Other times it may be something a little tastier.

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS...

I've always got a book on my bedside table. At the moment, I'm reading Eddie Jones – Leadership. My Amazon Echo (Alexa) lives on the bedside table too.

THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS...

I make sure the dog has been walked and fed and once I've sorted myself out too, I'll be in bed watching a little bit of Netflix, usually The US Office.

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY...

10pm.

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Strong and Stable

I began this column exactly a year ago by saying, **"I am from the Government and I am here to help – How to win friends and influence people!"**

This was in the context of 2024 being one of the most significant election years in history and I quoted Ronald Reagan's most famous quote: *"The most terrifying words in the English language are – I am from the Government and I am here to help."*

In the past twelve months, we have witnessed significant changes: the breakdown of the SNP/Green collation in Scotland, the Labour Party winning a landslide majority in Westminster, the resumption of the Northern Ireland Executive, a change in the First Minister in Wales, and the two central parties in Ireland getting close to a working majority, while their previous partners, the Green Party, lost most of their seats.

It is with Ireland I start. At the beginning of 2024 we set two broad objectives: to influence the manifestos of the main parties and to move forward the argument for a Renewable Heating Obligation. I am pleased to report that we have made progress in both areas. The two main parties likely to form a government have openly supported HVO for home heating, with Fianna Fail stating they would "promote HVO and BIOLPG as alternative fuels for homes" and Fine Gael stated they would "work to promote HVO and BIOLPG as alternative fuels for rural homes". We also know that before the election, there were plans to announce a Renewable Heating Obligation.

The next 12 months in Ireland are crucial for our industry. As the main parties get around the negotiating table, it is critical that they fulfil their manifesto commitments to promote renewable liquid fuels in home heating and put forward a workable Renewable Heating Obligation.

In Scotland, the Scottish Government has recognised that Bioenergy can be classified as a net zero fuel and in Northern Ireland, the role of HVO and other renewable fuels has also been acknowledged.

We recently contributed to the draft Grangemouth transition plan, which outlines the strong connection between the site and

our industries. We have strongly advocated for the inclusion of a biofuel plant in these plans and for every market that could utilise biofuels to be supported by government policy. This approach will ensure the best possible opportunities for the site's success.

"THE NEXT 12 MONTHS IN IRELAND ARE CRUCIAL FOR OUR INDUSTRY."

In Northern Ireland, we await the consultation on renewable liquid fuels. Notably, in the Executive's initial consultation, which was predominantly heat pump-orientated, it was stated that using a heat pump with an efficiency of 2.82, *"the cost of running a heat pump is less expensive compared to a gas boiler but would be more expensive compared to an oil boiler."* While this finding is not a surprise to many in our industry, it marks the first time a government organisation has acknowledged that the running cost of a heat pump is higher than an oil boiler. This revelation has significant ramifications for public discourse moving forward.

In the rest of the UK, we started 2024 on a positive note, having secured the Renewable Liquid Heating Fuel Obligation in the Energy Act before falling victim to the general election. The reality is that policy developments at Westminster were slow in 2024. Nevertheless, considerable effort has been expended since the election- highlights include the parliamentary select committee's visit to the HVO village in Cornwall and meetings with over 50 newly elected MPs. The new government is clearly concentrating on achieving the clean power target by 2030. This is a highly ambitions goal, which will be much harder to achieve if renewable fuels are not given a role.

What is interesting is that the new government is restating concerns around HVO stock availability and cost but ignoring them when it comes to aviation, where these issues seem to be of no concern. It is also interesting that other governments with the same information have less concern. We will continue to make the case.

As we enter 2025, another energy-related issue brewing is that of foam insulation, which the last government promoted under subsidy schemes. It has left many unable to sell their houses due to the risks of mould and other related problems.

This situation highlights the key theme of UKIFDA's argument: we must match the house and all of its specific characteristics with the appropriate technology. A one-size-fits-all solution has never existed, which is why there has always been a plethora of technologies and why promoting a similar multi-faceted, technology-neutral ideology is essential as we move forward.

Yes, governments have been helpful in the last year, but now, with the elections behind us, we hope for some stability with a strong focus on the key issues that really concern consumers and a growing realisation it is going to take many solutions to address decarbonisation.

Data: an update from the UKIFDA databank

UKIFDA'S DATABANK BRINGS TOGETHER RECENTLY PUBLISHED GOVERNMENT AND OTHER THIRD-PARTY DATA CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF LIQUID FUELS IN THE UK. IN THIS EDITION, WE CONCENTRATE ON DETAILED MONTHLY ENERGY CONSUMPTION DATA TO THE END OF SEPTEMBER 2024. KEROSENE SALES ARE SHOWN AS TOTAL KEROSENE SALES (WITH A DETAILED SPLIT BETWEEN DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL SCHEDULED FOR THE NEXT UPDATE).

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

First 9 months	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
Number heating days	41.5	39.2	46.5	38.4	39.2	38.4	-8%	-2%
Kerosene sales (ktoe)	2,273	2,493	2,322	1,889	2,079	2,211	-3%	6%
Domestic gas sales (GWh)	189,200	190,756	226,249	180,887	160,083	167,472	-11%	5%
Domestic electricity sales (TWh)	73.2	74.7	76.7	68.5	65.2	66.4	-9%	2%
Average kerosene price (ppl)	52.7	38.5	47.9	93.5	72.4	66.4	26%	-8%
Average annual domestic gas and electricity price cap per home (£)	907	873	917	1,552	2,500	1,729	91%	-31%

Domestic energy consumption summary

The number of heating days in the first nine months of 2024 was 2% below 2023 and 8% below 2019. In the last quarter (July 2024 to September 2024), the average temperature was 15.6 degrees Celsius, 0.8 degrees Celsius lower than the same period a year earlier.

Domestic gas and electricity sales were up 5% and 2% compared to 2023 largely as a result of gas consumption by domestic users being up 34% and electricity consumption by 2% in the three months to September compared to the same period in the previous year, partly caused by colder temperatures particularly in September.

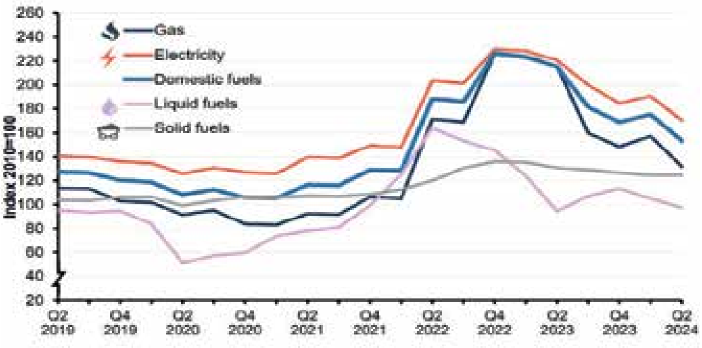
Total kerosene sales for the first nine months of 2024 were 6% higher than 2023. This was driven by significantly increased sales in the last quarter (40% up on 2023) driven by the colder weather and prices being 26% lower than the same quarter in 2023.

In the three months to September 2024, total deliveries of petroleum products were up 3.9% compared to the same period the previous year. This was largely driven by increases in the three major transport fuels. Deliveries of petrol increased by 0.9% and white diesel deliveries were up by 4.4%. Deliveries of jet fuel were up 8.3% and are 11% up on the same period in 2019 (pre-pandemic). As such, the post-pandemic jet fuel recovery continues, with all months from May to September in 2024 showing jet fuel deliveries of over 1 million tonnes.

Comparison of domestic energy prices (to June 2024)

The chart in the next column, from the ONS, shows quarterly changes in the domestic sector price indices (in real terms) over the past 5 years accounting for overall inflation.

The price paid for electricity quarter 2 (April to June) 2024 (in real



Source: Office of National Statistics, Consumer Prices Index
Data in real terms, adjusted for inflation using the GDP (market prices) deflator

terms and including VAT) decreased by 10.6% when compared to the previous quarter. Between quarter 1 2024 and quarter 2 2024, the real terms prices, for gas decreased by 16.0%.

When comparing quarter 2 2024 with quarter 2 2023, the price paid for electricity decreased by 23% and gas decreased 39%.

Liquid fuels comprise domestic kerosene and similar heating oils. The price for liquid fuels between quarter 1 2023 and quarter 2 2024 decreased 7.1% and the price of liquid fuels in quarter 2 2024 was 3.3% higher than the price in quarter 2 2023 in real terms.

Temperature and heating days

Heating days in the first nine months of 2024 was 2% below 2023 and 8% below 2019. In the last quarter the average temperature was 0.8 degrees Celsius lower than the same period a year earlier. The average number of HDD was 0.9, 0.5 higher than the same period a year earlier.

Temperature and heating days								
	Average temperatures				Average heating degree days			
	30-year mean	2019	2023	2024	30-year mean	2019	2023	2024
January	4.9	4.2	5.3	5.0	10.6	11.3	10.2	10.5
February	5.2	6.9	6.6	7.6	10.3	8.6	8.9	7.9
March	6.8	7.9	7.0	7.9	8.7	7.6	8.5	7.6
April	9.0	9.1	8.6	9.5	6.6	6.4	6.9	6.0
May	11.8	11.2	12.6	13.8	3.9	4.3	2.9	1.8
June	14.6	14.3	16.8	14.3	1.7	1.6	0.6	1.8
July	16.7	17.6	16.3	16.2	0.6	0.1	0.3	0.5
August	16.5	17.1	16.4	16.8	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.2
September	14.2	14.3	16.5	13.8	1.9	1.4	0.6	2.1
October	10.9	10.1	12.0	11.5	4.6	5.4	3.6	4.0

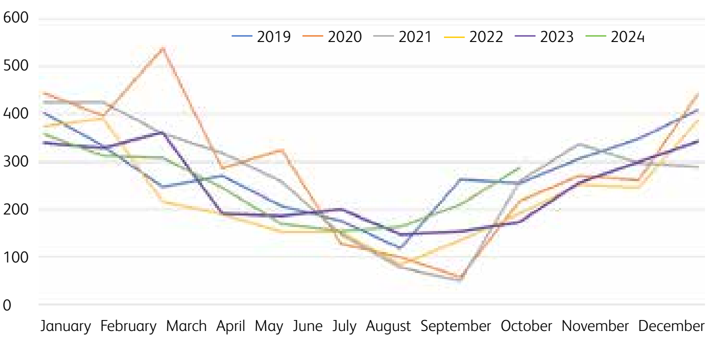
Heating oil Total consumption (ktoe)								
thousand tonnes	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	403	445	424	375	339	358	-11%	5%
February	333	396	424	390	329	313	-6%	-5%
March	247	538	360	217	361	308	24%	-15%
April	271	286	319	190	190	246	-9%	30%
May	206	326	259	152	187	170	-18%	-9%
June	175	128	148	152	200	155	-12%	-23%
July	119	100	79	84	147	164	38%	11%
August	263	58	50	136	153	209	-20%	37%
September	255	218	260	192	173	288	13%	66%
End of month 9	**2,273**	**2,493**	**2,322**	**1,889**	**2,079**	**2,211**	**-3%**	**6%**
Total year	3,336	3,469	3,246	2,774	2,979			
Year on year change		4%	-6%	-15%	7%			
Change from 2019		4%	-3%	-17%	-11%			

Heating oil

Total consumption (ktoe)

In the first nine months of 2024, total kerosene sales (domestic and commercial) were 6% ahead of 2023 but 3% below 2019. However, sales patterns have been erratic with a significant uplift in sales in the last quarter as shown by the graph below.

Overall kerosene consumption 2019-2024



The split between domestic and non-domestic kerosene will be shown in the next databank.

Pricing

Heating oil price in September 2024 was 58.9 ppl bringing the price back into the 10-year average.

ONS Heating Oil (ppl)

Gas oil and DERV Gas oil consumption (ktoe)								
thousand tonnes	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	387	249	310	323	126	180	-53%	43%
February	334	201	309	309	113	157	-53%	39%
March	331	331	363	300	257	185	-44%	-28%
April	560	277	452	253	167	132	-76%	-21%
May	551	307	405	135	188	150	-73%	-20%
June	363	419	416	246	181	203	-44%	12%
July	461	441	488	237	160	239	-48%	49%
August	414	489	291	353	229	189	-54%	-18%
September	514	657	643	195	221	197	-62%	-11%
End of month 9	**3,916**	**3,370**	**3,678**	**2,351**	**1,642**	**1,632**	**-58%**	**-1%**
Total year	5,171	4,531	4,841	2,975	2,185			
Year on year change		-12%	7%	-39%	-27%			
Change from 2019		-12%	-6%	-42%	-58%			

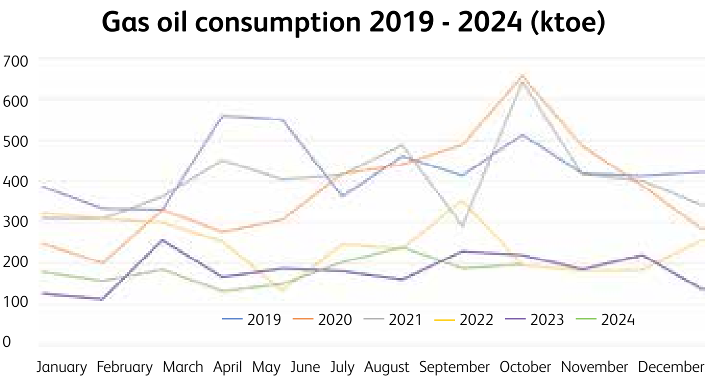
Gas oil and DERV

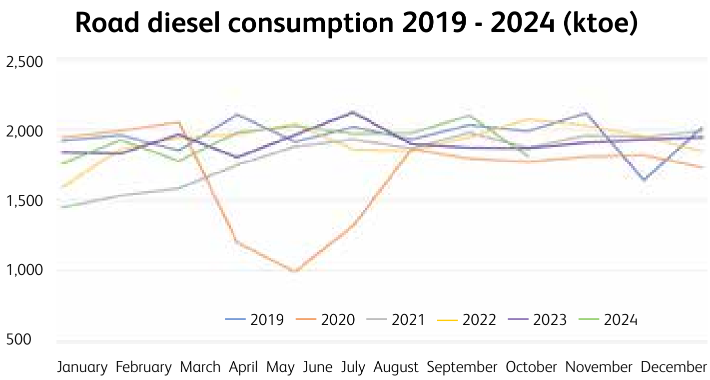
Gas oil consumption (ktoe)

Gasoil consumption in the first nine months of 2024 was similar to 2023.

Derv consumption

Road diesel sales have still not quite recovered from 2019 and are still erratic.





Gas oil and DERV Derv consumption								
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024 vs 2019	2024 vs 2023
January	1,921	1,944	1,449	1,592	1,840	1,756	-9%	-5%
February	1,959	1,991	1,532	1,863	1,831	1,927	-2%	5%
March	1,852	2,052	1,585	1,939	1,965	1,776	-4%	-10%
April	2,107	1,199	1,750	1,967	1,801	1,978	-6%	10%
May	1,913	993	1,878	2,039	1,962	2,024	6%	3%
June	2,017	1,320	1,928	1,860	2,123	1,970	-2%	-7%
July	1,929	1,862	1,867	1,846	1,896	1,973	2%	4%
August	2,031	1,796	1,976	1,948	1,870	2,100	3%	12%
September	1,988	1,770	1,872	2,073	1,869	1,811	-9%	-3%
First half	**17,718**	**14,927**	**15,837**	**17,126**	**17,157**	**17,316**	**-2%**	**1%**
Total year	23,490	20,283	21,728	22,949	22,938			
Year on year change		-14%	7%	6%	0%			
Change from 2019		-14%	-8%	-2%	-2%			

Domestic gas consumption								
GWh	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2024 vs 2019**	**2024 vs 2023**
Q1	117,166	117,391	138,008	114,134	103,353	104,183	-11%	1%
Q2	52,000	45,536	65,271	46,896	40,011	40,868	-21%	2%
Q3	20,033	27,828	22,971	19,856	16,718	22,422	12%	34%
Q4	103,229	109,450	92,547	78,205	77,017			
Total	292,429	300,206	318,796	259,091	237,100			
Year on year change		3%	6%	-19%	-8%			
Change on 2019		3%	9%	-11%	-19%			
First 9 months	189,200	190,756	226,249	180,887	160,083	167,472	-11%	5%

Domestic gas consumption

Domestic gas sales were up 5% compared to 2023 largely as a result of sales being up 34% in the three months to September compared to the same period in the previous year, partly caused by colder temperatures particularly in September. Sales were still 11% below 2019.

Domestic electricity consumption

Domestic electricity sales were up 2% compared to 2023 but still 9% below 2019 levels.

Domestic electricity consumption								
GWh	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2024 vs 2019**	**2024 vs 2023**
Q1	30.18	30.29	32.31	28.66	26.85	27.25	-10%	1%
Q2	22.83	23.27	24.51	21.26	20.23	20.58	-10%	2%
Q3	20.16	21.11	19.84	18.62	18.13	18.56	-8%	2%
Q4	29.25	31.27	28.54	25.01	25.18			
Total	102.42	105.94	105.20	93.54	90.40			
Year on year change		3%	-1%	-11%	-3%			
Change on 2019		3%	3%	-9%	-12%			
First 9 months	73.1703	74.6663	76.6630	68.5291	65.2203	66.3912	-9%	2%

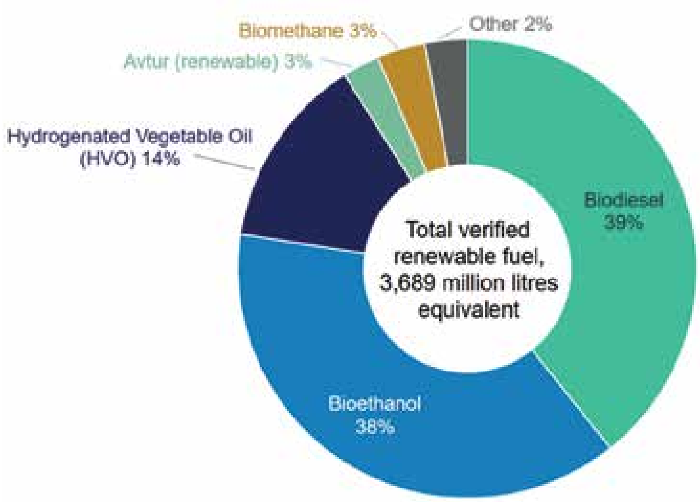
Biofuel consumption

The Department of Transport has recently released the final figures for 2023. Key highlights include:

- 3,700 million litres equivalent (eq.) of renewable fuel have been supplied, which constitutes 7.5% of total road and non-road mobile machinery fuel for the year in the UK. An increase from 6.8% reported in 2022.
- 9% of all verified renewable fuel supplied to the UK in this period was produced from UK-origin feedstocks

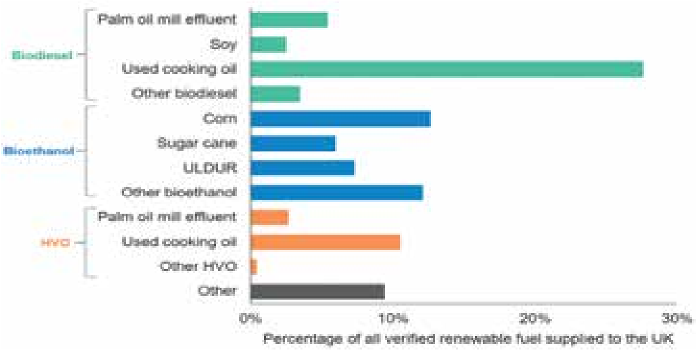
The pie chart shows of the 3,689 million litres eq. of renewable fuel;

- biodiesel made up 39%
- bioethanol made up 38%
- Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) made up 14%
- avtur (renewable) made up 3%
- biomethane made up 3%
- biomethanol made up 1%



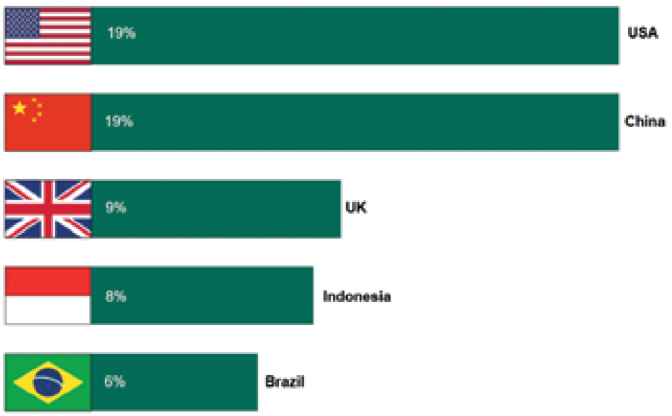
A large portion (41%) of all verified renewable fuel was produced from UCO, which is used in several different types of renewable fuel, such as biodiesel, HVO and sustainable aviation fuel. UCO comprised 70% of biodiesel. For bioethanol, the most common feedstock was corn (33%) which comprised 13% of total verified renewable fuel.

Of the 350 million litres eq. of verified renewable fuel produced from UK-origin feedstock, the most common by feedstock and fuel type



combination was bioethanol from wheat (194.5 million litres, 56 % of renewable fuel from UK origin feedstock). The most common source of biodiesel from UK origin feedstock was UCO (56.1 million litres, 16 % of renewable fuel from UK origin feedstock).

The top 5 feedstock origin countries, United States, China, UK, Indonesia, and Brazil, together account for 62 % of renewable fuel. An increase in the renewable fuel supplied by the United States from 2022 to 2023 saw them become the largest supplier to the UK



Data analysis of biofuel consumption "in year" is difficult as the numbers get revised five times before final publication a year after the event. However, the current data available from DfT in terms of biofuel consumption in 2024 compared to 2023:

Fuel type (million litres)	Total 1 Jan - 14 Oct 2024	Total 1 Jan - 14 Oct 2023
Avtur (renewable)	141	76
Bio Petrol	72	0
Biodiesel ME	610	1204
Bioethanol	1,113	1104
Biomethane (compressed)	78	67
Biomethane (liquified)	37	34
Biopropane	12	10
HVO	476	374
Methanol (bio)	40	35
Off road biodiesel	23	35
Pure bio oil	[low]	3
Total development renewable fuel	43	31
Total renewable fuel	**2,645**	**2,974**

Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS)

The BUS was launched in England and Wales on 1 April 2022 and aims to incentivise and increase the deployment of low carbon heating technologies by providing an upfront capital grant. Grants for ASHPs were increased in October 2023 from £5,000 to £7,500.

The total number of applications in October 2024 across all technology types (3,857) saw a 20 % increase on the previous month (September 2024; 3,223) and 15 % higher than the same month of the previous year (October 2023; 3,355). The regional breakdown for grants paid continued to be broadly similar to previous months.

Of the total 37,417 installations with BUS grants paid up to the end of October 2024, the largest proportion (50 %) replaced gas systems, followed by oil (19 %) and then properties which did not previously have a heating system at all (16 %).

The median cost of an ASHP has been c£13k (including the grant value).

Fuel type displaced	Air source heat pumps May 22 to Oct 24	%
Gas	18,702	49 %
Oil	6,772	20 %
None	5,517	17 %
Direct electric	3,397	10 %
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)	1,063	3 %
Coal	401	1 %
Other	284	1 %
	36,165	100 %

Measure	Air Source Heat Pumps
Mean cost of installation (£)	13,161
Median cost of installation (£)	12,995
Lower quartile cost of installation (£)	**10,700**
Upper quartile cost of installation (£)	**15,500**

NORTH EAST	**3%**
NORTH WEST	**8%**
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	**10%**
EAST MIDLANDS	**10%**
WEST MIDLANDS	**8%**
EAST	**14%**
LONDON	**5%**
SOUTH EAST	**20%**
SOUTH WEST	**18%**
WALES	**5%**

Goals, ambitions and strategies: The expansion of the EET retail network

NARAYAN BHATRA, EET CEO RETAIL, TALKS WITH CLAUDIA WEEKS, FUEL OIL NEWS COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD, ABOUT THE BUSINESS, ITS GOALS AND AMBITIONS AND ITS STRATEGIES FOR EXPANSION OF ITS RETAIL OFFERING.

EET Retail, the retail division of EET Fuels, appointed Narayan Bhatra as Chief Executive Officer earlier this year. Narayan was previously Chief Retail Officer at Nayara Energy, India's second largest oil and gas company and its fastest growing private fuel station network. Narayan has over three decades of experience in the energy sector, including leadership roles with Essar and Reliance Industries across India and Africa.

EET Retail has plans to develop a significant portfolio of Essar-branded fuel retail outlets within three years, as part of its vision to become the UK's "retailer of choice to consumers". The plans include developing a pan-UK presence and a network of outlets across all regions and markets, including identifying acquisition opportunities to accelerate growth.

The stated ambition of EET Retail is to transform its retail businesses with a customer-centric approach of 'Driving Community Convenience' – serving the continuously evolving fuelling and convenience needs of local communities and motorists where their sites are a hub. Narayan explained more about the plans.

What is the ambition for EET Retail?

EET Retail has been formed to add value. We've been in the retail business for over ten years, but as an evolving player, and we have been analysing the right time to impact and scale up on the retail side of the business.

Now, the vision is to grow this network to a sizeable presence. It will take time, but we have the ambition. The vision is to not only add value in the refinery supply chain but to also be ready for future unique opportunities presented by the energy transition.

We will focus on delivering community driven outlets. In the coming years, fuel and convenience will be our strength, and we will incorporate future fuels and energy at an appropriate stage of our business evolution.

Narayan, you joined EET in April 2024, please share your background prior to this.

I am a seasoned business leader in the oil and energy sector, with over thirty years of experience driving strategic retail growth initiatives, developing innovative and market-effective strategies, and managing complex and large-scale retail and institutional businesses.

My career has spanned several areas including project management, handling large projects with refineries and petrochemicals. I've spent time in corporate planning, been an oil trader, worked on the business-to-business side. In my time at Reliance Industries Ltd, I was involved in strategy planning and new product launches. I also had a brief stint in East Africa mandated to grow the company's trading business.

Before joining EET, I was heading up the retail side of one of India's largest private oil and gas networks. We were operating 6,500 outlets, with another 1,500 in the pipeline under various stages of commissioning and construction. I was instrumental in high grading of the network, introduced digitisation and the value proposition to gain market share and SSG with a strong team of 650 plus.

I had been working in retail in India for almost a decade – experience that is beneficial to my new role. EET wants to grow at a fast pace, and I am well placed to support that – albeit the scale, complexities and markets are different. It is what has excited me about taking on this role.

In India's retail landscape, the convenience side of forecourts is still very much in a development phase. I did some pilots that gave us great results in India, and I was then keen to explore a market that was more developed on the convenience side, like the UK. I wanted to see if I could add value to EET using my previous experiences.

Has the role been as you expected?

As the Chief Executive Officer at EET Retail, I lead the enterprise retail business as part of the EET group with a mandate to grow and add significant presence to the UK landscape of Retail, Mobility and Convenience backed by the game changing sustainability agenda at EET Fuels, Stanlow UK.

My mission is to significantly scale up the retail business in the next five years, enhance the market share and effectiveness by more than 10 times and create value by upgrading and enhancing better value propositions for customers, partners, and stakeholders. I also aim to make the current business future-ready by exploring new product and business segments, such as biofuels and EVs, that align with the game changing sustainability goals of EET in the UK.

I am settling well, and I don't feel there have been any surprises with the job – it is as I expected. The present scale is small, it feels almost like working for a start-up. It has taken more time than I thought to establish a structure, but now things are falling in line.

I've spent my first few months reviewing the market, meeting with people and forging a strong team, which was my first job, and a good structure.

We have three vertical teams – a business development team, an operations team and a convenience team along with a strong support system including our Global Capability Centre (GCC). We have ambitious plans for expansion, which will be driven by the business development team, with the operations team focussed on operational excellence. I'm pleased to say that we are already seeing development and progress.

What are the key developments from 2024, and what do you hope to achieve in 2025?

The key plans for 2024, were to strengthen our internal systems and processes. We want a strong connection with the market and our team are spending a lot of time meeting people and understanding what is happening in the industry. In term of operations, we are looking to modernise our systems, bringing in more automation and more technology. Those things have been initiated. We have been working on expanding and have some exciting announcements to make soon.

We have now successfully formed the organisation, established the team expectation, aligned the stakeholders with the vision of what we are trying to achieve, and put all the resources in place ready for 2025.

EET has ambitious plans, how will the retail business develop?

In terms of retail, there are few differences between forecourt brands. When you go to a forecourt, they are all very similar. The value proposition, in terms of customer perception, is what makes the difference. A community feel makes a difference.

On the convenience side we are building long-term partnerships with aligned values. We want to engage three, four or even five partners to support our offering. When we acquire a new retail outlet, we will do a profile of the local demographic to understand the customer profile and behaviour. We want to bring unique value propositions.

We are looking at the right partners to add value to our offerings. We will offer all partners, operators, landlords, collaborators, something that is unique. We are offering a long-term lease model and a sustainable income for the partner. This will help us to grow and is a robust model – it's a win/win for everybody.

Recently, one of our signature outlets won an award for having the best kept toilet in the whole of the UK. I'm highlighting this award because this is something that matters to customers. It's a need of customers who are travelling. Toilets that are broken, unhygienic, unpleasant, are a negative experience for the customer. These things matter to people. We of course also won the best forecourt in Northern England over 4 MLPA category. This establishes the strength of the value proposition we have to take forward as we expand.

Perception of safety, well-stocked convenience, additional services such as a car wash, jet washes, etc all add value to the business and to the customer. We also want to bring biofuels to our network. EET is planning for the expansion of sustainable energy – and we will migrate in that direction.

What are your thoughts on future volumes of traditional fuels as well as the trajectories for renewable liquid fuels, EV charging demand and even hydrogen refuelling?

People tell me I'm biased towards hydrocarbons because I've been in this industry for a long time, but I'm not biased – I'm realistic. We have had many conversations about the future of fuel, the changes ahead and timescales. The consensus is that growth will happen with alternative fuel. We need to know when the government will deliver clear support for these changes. We need to make this happen.

I feel that positive change is happening,

and Stanlow is leading the way. The ban on new diesel and petrol cars has been pushed back to 2035. However, the average age of vehicles in the UK is nine years or so, when we reach 2035, even with no new diesel or petrol cars, there will still be a need for traditional forecourts for another ten years.

The transition will happen on the biofuel side. My view is optimistic; we will still have a need for traditional fuels for years, but we also need to see regulatory and fiscal support for a mobility transition.

The network profile of the UK gives us the opportunity to provide EV chargers in a short timescale too. The challenge, in many countries, is having the space in forecourts for EV charging but, in the UK, because many forecourts offer convenience outlets with designated parking for that purpose, the space is available for the addition of EV outlets.

While we are growing our footprint, we are looking at retail sites whose size will enable us to fit in EV charging at scale. We know that there will be a time when EV is a value proposition for all our customers.

We are currently in the process of adding EV charging to two of our outlets as pilot schemes. Adding EV chargers can be costly and time-consuming and there isn't as much demand as there is for petrol and diesel. We will monitor this closely and will be ready, as a network, to rapidly roll out EV charging.

EET continues to grow – how many people are currently involved within EET Retail?

We currently have a team of 30 people in EET Retail, and plan to add more resources to complete our first phase team formation. That doesn't include all the contractors, and third-party persons.

We see networks in the UK that are operating with over 200 outlets, that don't have a team this large. We have been aggressive with putting in place a large team, the right team, and with that, we plan to grow accordingly. We want to cover the whole of the UK, and there will be four teams in place as part of a regional structure.

How important is the EET Retail brand to the end user?

I feel that this is a journey. In India, I was responsible for a huge number of outlets, and we went through a rebranding process. We converted 3,500 outlets to a new brand. It wasn't just a case of changing the colours, it was changing the value proposition of the outlets.

It was a difficult journey, but an interesting one. Coming from that background, the challenge of EET has been interesting for me. I know that the Essar/EET brand is positively accepted by customers.

Through conversations with industry players, my peers and competitors, I know that EET's retail brand Essar-branded forecourts are liked and well-respected. As we scale, it will increase our visibility and our brand awareness. As we grow, and bring in excellent retail outlets, we need signature forecourts to showcase the best of what we do.

I met someone in London recently, from the fintech space. He had been to our flagship site at Lea Gate, Preston and was incredibly complimentary about it. Once people start seeing the presence of the brand, then the impression of the brand will increase.

We want to create a niche for our brand and our network which will be different from others. We're not 100% sure exactly what this is yet, but we want our forecourts to be clean, to have a high standard of health and safety, to have monthly audits. We believe that monthly, soft, internal audits are extremely important. We want to upgrade the standard across all sites, physical presence, hygiene, etc. and remind our employees that anyone customer facing is a brand ambassador.

Tell us about your drive for sustainability.

We encourage all our outlets to have an awareness of sustainability, to know how much energy they are consuming, what packaging they are using, how much they are recycling, etc. We want to partner with them to ensure that this is happening.

The drive for sustainable processes starts at the refinery and will feed right down to the forecourts. Our partners will have a huge part to play in this, we need partners that have strong sustainable values.

Over the next few years, what do you see as the major challenges to the fuel industry and what are the positives?

This market can be a challenging one and finding the right deals takes time. There are still a lot of unorganised players in the network that can add challenges too. There will be consolidation in the market and there are marginal players in the industry. However, I feel it gives us opportunities, as a large organisation, to support them and partner with them.

What are the things that keep you awake at night?

When we dream something which seems impossible it does create a situation where you lose sleep literally. However, I and my team all aligned to create a paradigm shift in the industry and the excitement to create something unique and sustainable is a great feeling.

On a personal level, the weather has been a huge change and has taken some getting used to! In November, for the first time in my life, I experienced snow! I had snow on my car, and it was amazing – such a novelty!

Overall, I do get a good night's sleep. If you do your work and know where you want to go in life, then you don't lose sleep. When your work becomes your passion, you enjoy doing it.

What do you enjoy most about operating in the retail and fuel industry?

There is never any lack of excitement. It's a very exciting space, it's a consumer facing space, it's competitive, there is a lot going on with pricing, economics, technology.

I must say we are planning lots on the technology front, including using AI. We are doing some pilots on ways to enhance our offerings. It gives me energy.

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

Make things simple and we can achieve the impossible. Believe in yourself and believe in your team! When I took on my role in India, I had no retail experience, but I was keen to learn. In my first few months, people told me that things weren't possible, and I couldn't do it but in those five years, we grew the network 5X – we improved everything.

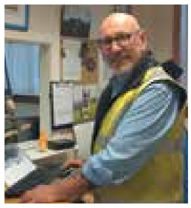
If we believe it, we can do it!

Addressing winter challenges:

Martin Goddard, Depot Manager, Gleaner Ltd Inverness

GLEANER LTD IS A FAMILY-OWNED FUEL DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS; THE DISTRIBUTOR CONTINUES TO PRIDE ITSELF ON ITS STRONG LOCAL TIES AND QUALITY SERVICE. GLEANER HAS NINE DEPOTS SITUATED ACROSS SCOTLAND AND IS A BUSINESS PROUD OF ITS LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND PROUD TO HAVE SERVED ITS LOCAL CUSTOMERS FOR OVER 70 YEARS.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH MARTIN GODDARD, DEPOT MANAGER, TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HIS ROLE AT GLEANER AND THE REALITIES OF OPERATING A FUEL DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND THROUGH THE CHALLENGING WINTER MONTHS.



A career in fuel distribution

Martin gave an insight into his career background: “I have been involved in logistics, mainly in the foodservice industry, for nearly 40 years. In that time, I have worked for some big players in the industry including Kerry Foods and Brakes Scotland.

“I hold an OCR Level 3 Certificate of Professional Competence for Transport Managers (Road Haulage) VRQ which allows me to be aware and appreciate the legalities surrounding our profession.

“I joined the fuel industry in April 2021, as a Distribution Manager with Gleaner at the Inverness site after seeing the post advertised and thinking I was ready for a change. Going from overseeing the delivery of frozen chips to delivering heating oil to potentially frozen customers appealed to me!

“In September 2023, I was asked by my line-manager, Garry, to take on additional responsibility for our Grantown-on-Spey Depot as well as Inverness which I accepted, along with a change of title from Distribution Manager to Depot Manager.

“Grantown-on-Spey is a beautiful village set on the edge of The Cairngorm National Park and is spectacularly beautiful. Our depot there is a small one; we have one driver, Robert, and one sales advisor, Brenda, both of whom have been with the company for many years.”

The depot

“Initially, when I started in Inverness, we had five drivers and six vehicles, one artic unit and trailer, four six-wheel tankers (one spare) and one eight-wheel tanker. Nowadays, thanks to the hard work by our team at Inverness and the foresight and support of my senior managers we have expanded to seven drivers and seven vehicles, increasing our fleet by two six wheelers.

“The current fleet has been augmented by two brand new trucks, one DAF and one Scania, both of which have gone to our two longest serving drivers – Kenny and Craig.

“We always try to keep drivers in their ‘own’ tanker. It promotes an ownership of the vehicle and a sense of pride in their ‘wagon’. Drivers wash their vehicles down daily (unless it is icy conditions whereby only the Haz chem boards, lights and number plates get washed down). The drivers also brush out their cabs every couple of days and polish the interior weekly.”

A typical day

Claudia asked Martin to describe what a typical day is like for him at work: “My day starts at 6:00am along with the drivers. Starting early gives me the opportunity to discuss, albeit briefly, any issues with the team that we think may arise that day or any that came up from the previous day.

“The drivers collect their routes, we serve a huge area, up as far north as Thurso, as far south as Dalwhinnie, east as far as Dalcross and west as far as Fort Augustus/ Isle of Skye and Gairloch areas. In whole it is an area comparable to Belgium in size!

“Most of the drivers like their next day routes given to them the previous evening so they are usually aware beforehand of where they are going. We try, wherever possible, to keep drivers operating in the same areas. It helps build and maintain customer relationships if the customer sees the same happy face regularly!

“After the drivers leave the yard – usually around 6:45am – to load at The Caledonian Terminal, Inverness, I begin by checking my emails and address any queries they may bring. I will take the first of the early morning phone calls from filling station owners, placing orders for delivery the following day. From there I place these orders on our new Codas system, and I will look to see how many orders we have that are due for delivery over the coming days.

“We try to deliver within a timely schedule but are sometimes negatively affected by vehicle breakdowns, weather or by issues out of our control. Any overdue orders are given priority to ensure customers are not let down.

“Typically, we deliver to around 60 customers a day, a mix of domestic, commercial, agricultural, forestry harvesters and of course filling stations. Although that number may seem small, especially considering we have seven drivers, some guys have drives of up to three hours before even reaching their first delivery!”

In the office

“I share the office with two ladies, Kelsie and Kara,” Martin continues. “Both are sales advisors who start work at 8am, so I’ll usually try to have a bowl of granola or porridge and a coffee before they arrive. After that, and a brief catch up with Kelsie and Kara, I complete my previous day’s reports, organise any planned maintenance for the trucks, liaise with our service providers, MAN, Scania and DAF regarding any vehicle repairs, and deal with any queries that come in by phone or emails.

“Our office is always busy, the calls come in at a steady rate and before you know it, lunchtime is here. We break the lunchtimes up between the three of us so there is sufficient cover for phone calls.

“I usually go out for a sandwich and a

coffee. We have a terrific number of great eateries in the area along with some first-class bakeries. A hot pie on a cold day can take some beating!

"Afternoons are taken up, in the main, by planning the routes for the following day and again dealing with phone and email queries. I try to finish work around 4:00pm each day when I will go to see my mother, who lives alone but is only fifteen minutes from the depot. We'll have a cup of tea, a chat and watch a bit of Lingo, Tipping Point or the Chase! Life on the edge!"

Delivering fuel promptly with a smile

"My favourite part of the job is working with the best team in fuel distribution. I am lucky to have such committed colleagues who, like me, want to do the best they can to ensure we do what we say we are going to do – deliver fuel promptly and with a smile.

"The worst part of my job is very easy to identify – letting customers down by not delivering within the estimated times. It does happen unfortunately, not often, but one time is one time too many. The domestic fuel market is very competitive, losing any customer is disappointing, but losing a customer through perceived poor service is a bitter pill to swallow.

"If I could change one thing about my role it would be that I wish I had come into the industry earlier. I'm early 60s now so getting towards the twilight of my career and when it does come to an end, I suspect I will look back on my time in the industry with fondness. I'd also like to 'magic' a perpetual self-cleaning tanker for the team! That way, the fleet would always look in showroom condition whilst out on Highland roads, regardless of the weather!"

A Scottish winter

Delivering fuel in the winter months can be challenging, particularly in the North of Scotland. Claudia asked Martin about the conditions: "The winters we have now are comparatively mild to what the region experienced 20-30 years ago when heavy and persistent snows closed off roads and railways – sometimes for two to three weeks at a time.

"Although nowadays, we still get snow over these months, the temperature is milder, the rains are heavier and more frequent, and the winds are wilder and stronger. Our drivers are all experienced, even the younger drivers like Craig, Adam and David, they are all young men in their 20s and 30s, adept and professional in their approach to driving in challenging conditions.

A huge thank you to Martin for sharing all about his role as a Depot Manager and for his superb tips for driving in winter conditions.

Top tips for driving in the winter months:

Claudia asked Martin for his top three tips for driving in challenging conditions:

1. **Be informed, be prepared. Check the weather forecast and road reports before setting out.**
2. **Drive to the conditions, not to the national speed limit for the road you are travelling on (unless it is safe to do so).**
3. **ALWAYS make safety a priority.**

INTERNATIONAL ENERGY WEEK

Navigating the world's energy transitions

25 - 27 February 2025
QEII Centre, London

Convened by the Energy Institute's sector experts and informed by the ***EI Statistical Review of World Energy***, **International Energy Week 2025** will be the global energy sector's first major meeting of the year. And it takes place for the first time in its new, permanent, prestigious home, the QEII Centre in the heart of London.

Building on the renowned legacy of IP Week, the conference brings together senior figures from across the energy industry, investors, governments, academics, and NGOs. It's where the latest strategic thinking, intelligence, and opportunities are shared, and collaboration happens. From policy and regulation to finance and governance, from energy efficiency and shifting demand to capability, people, and skills.

Over three days of high-profile keynotes, panel discussions, and networking, and culminating in the prestigious ***International Energy Week Dinner*** and awards ceremony, **the week attracts more than 1,000 delegates from around the globe.**

www.ieweek.

energy institute

PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

DECEMBER IN VIEW

THE INCREASING IMPACT OF CHINA'S ECONOMY ON GLOBAL OIL DEMAND.

It would be an understatement to say that global geo-political tensions have been uncomfortably high throughout 2024, what with the ongoing wars in Ukraine, Palestine and Lebanon, missile exchanges between Iran and Israel, ongoing Houthi terrorist attacks on Red Sea shipping and an increasingly bellicose China in its dealings with Taiwan. In previous years, events like these would have sent oil prices sky-rocketing and yet for most of the year, the market has remained fairly stable. Plentiful oil supply has helped of course, but on the demand side, it has been China's faltering economy that has created a more bearish sentiment throughout the year.

"THE CHINESE RECOVERY IN 2022 WAS PATCHY AT BEST."

Getting hold of truly accurate data for the Chinese economy is difficult and what information is available, has often been massaged to paint a favourable picture for the ruling communist party. The headline that is widely agreed is that China will miss its own target of 5.1% GDP growth in 2024 and that growth for the year will be around the 4.6% mark. These broad headlines tend to gloss over the more granular details that tell a more accurate story. Unlike the USA, where pent-up consumerism turbo-charged the economy in the post-covid period, the Chinese recovery in 2022 was patchy at best. In the period following the end of lock-down, China experienced an 18-month decline in retail sales growth and investor confidence has steadily declined in the same period. Last month, the CSI 300 Index (Chinese Stock Market) fell to its lowest point since January 2019, whilst unemployment has also steadily risen. Youth unemployment hit a record 20% in June 2023, before these statistics ceased to be published…

Perhaps the biggest factor behind China's growing economic pains is their faltering

property sector. Prior to covid, property development accounted for a staggering 30% of the Chinese economy, but the drawn-out collapse of Evergrande (once the world's most valuable real estate company) from 2021 onwards has stimulated a nationwide property crisis. Enormous debts exist at both national and local government level and developers increasingly find themselves in a "debt trap", whereby new loans are taken out to repay existing debt, rather than to start new construction projects. Property investment and development activity in China in 2024 are both down by 10% versus the previous year, and the knock-on deflationary effect of declining land values has further dented the ability of local municipalities to raise and spend money.

This doom and gloom can be overplayed of course. The Chinese economy is still growing and from an oil perspective, the country is still on track to overtake the USA as the world's largest oil consumer in the next 5 years. But it is precisely because oil markets have become so reliant on China's seemingly endless growth, that the "jitters" are beginning to develop. In the period 2005-2010 Chinese GDP growth on average was around 11.5% and demand for oil and petrochemical products boomed at the same time that oil supplies struggled to keep up. Even with a slight slowing of growth from 2010 onwards (6-8%), this still meant that China's annual increase in oil demand was averaging 600,000 barrels per day (bpd) – around 65% of the total global increase in oil consumption.

What we are now seeing with regards slowing Chinese demand is more profound and coupled with a slew of new oil fields coming on stream, this has resulted in prices being kept in check. Chinese refinery runs in 2024 have averaged 14.4m bpd, versus 15.5mbpd in 2023 (down by 7.1%) and for four consecutive months this year (Apr 24 – Jul 24), Chinese crude demand contracted by 280,000 bpd. In July, China's total crude imports were 9.97m bpd, which was 12% lower than the previous month (Jun 24 = 11.32m bpd). It is also worth remembering that the wobbles of the Chinese economy have a knock-on effect on neighbouring countries, all of whom are reliant on China one way or another. So a slowdown in Chinese oil demand has a tandem impact in bringing down demand across South-East Asia, which along with China has been the other great driver of oil demand growth over the last 20 years.

"OIL MARKETS HAVE BECOME SO RELIANT ON CHINA'S SEEMINGLY ENDLESS GROWTH."

The slowdown in global oil consumption is largely the result of a decelerating Chinese economy, but it would be remiss to overlook one final point, which is the additional impact of electric vehicles. Over 50% of Chinese car sales are now electric and the country accounts for 60% of global EV sales. As a minimum, this means that 400,000 bpd of oil demand has now been displaced by EV technology in China. Whilst demand for petrochemicals (ie, plastics) looks likely to prop up oil demand growth for a few more years, it is difficult to see anything other than Chinese oil demand peaking around 2030, before a slow and steady decline thereafter.

For more pricing information, see page 38

Portland
www.stabilityfromvolatility.co.uk

PEOPLE MOVES

Kran Bhatti has joined **Mabanaft UK** as UK Sales Manager. With over a decade of experience in the energy sector, Kran brings a wealth of knowledge from both traditional and renewable energy companies.

At Mabanaft, Kran's focus is on ensuring that Mabanaft delivers innovative, sustainable solutions while expanding its market presence.

Announcing the appointment, Mabanaft commented: "His passion for sustainable energy solutions and his deep understanding of the industry's challenges and opportunities make him an incredible asset to our team.

"His commitment to innovation, sustainability, and delivering exceptional value aligns perfectly with our mission to be a leader in the energy distribution sector."

Excited by the opportunity to help to shape the future of energy, Kran commented: "We are dedicated to providing reliable, innovative, and sustainable energy solutions that meet customer needs today and in the future."

Retail Business Manager, **Oliver Mueller**, is leaving **Phillips 66** Limited and returning home to Germany with his family.

During his successful 6-year tenure in the UK, Oliver was in charge of the JET branded business and has been instrumental in an exciting period of growth and evolution for the brand.

"Oliver is a true original and his inimitable approach will be missed," said Rupert Turner, MD UK Marketing, Phillips 66 Limited. " We wish him and his family our very best as they return to Germany."

Following Oliver's departure, February 1st 2025, and prior to a new Retail Business Manager being announced – the role will be covered by Graham Clout, Retail Sales Manager supported by Áine Corkery, Manager, Brand and Rupert Turner.

Commenting on his departure Oliver said: "It's been an adventure and a privilege to work with talented colleagues and great customers. It's all about getting people to fall in love with the brand – and I think we've done a pretty good job. Sad to be leaving – but definitely the right time for us to be returning home to Germany."

Touchstar Technologies Ltd has appointed **Mimi Masinja** as Account Manager, Fuel Division. Mimi will be responsible for developing and nurturing Touchstar's UK and Ireland customers, working closely with Sales Director, Gordon Hyland.

Mimi has over thirteen years of experience in the oil and petroleum sector and will support the company's fuel sector customers.

Gordon Hyland comments: "Mimi has demonstrated a clear commitment to driving customer satisfaction and business growth whilst working in the fuel sector. Her enthusiasm, knowledge and personable nature will be a tremendous asset to both TouchStar and our client base. Mimi will undoubtedly help us continue growing and strengthening our brand."

William Tebbit has joined **Ryze Power**, provider of alternative fuel solutions, as Senior Managing Director.

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY 2024

THIS INDUSTRY IS ONE KNOWN FOR ITS SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND ITS GENEROSITY OF SPIRIT, TIME AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE THAT NEED IT. IT IS NO SURPRISE THEN THAT CHRISTMAS JUMPERS WERE OUT IN FORCE IN SUPPORT OF CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY 2024.

WITH THE CHALLENGES MANY HAVE FACED THROUGH THE YEAR, THE FUNDRAISING FOR SAVE THE CHILDREN IS, ONCE AGAIN, OF HUGE IMPORTANCE

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR WONDERFUL PHOTOS WITH US – CAN YOU SPOT YOURSELVES IN OUR GALLERY?

NWF

Ben Duckworth

Alex Wolfe

New Era

Halso Fuels

Noz Miah, Aim Recruit

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY GALLERY

IFC

MechTronic Office Team

A&D Publishing Team

Mechtronic's Martin Adam

Adrian Mason and family at Christmas

LCM Christmas Do

El Oils

Prince Energy at Christmas

Mectronic's Ian Hepple

Christmas Photo Phil Murray

Your NRG

Halso Xmas

Zowman, Zoe Blackhall BoilerJuice

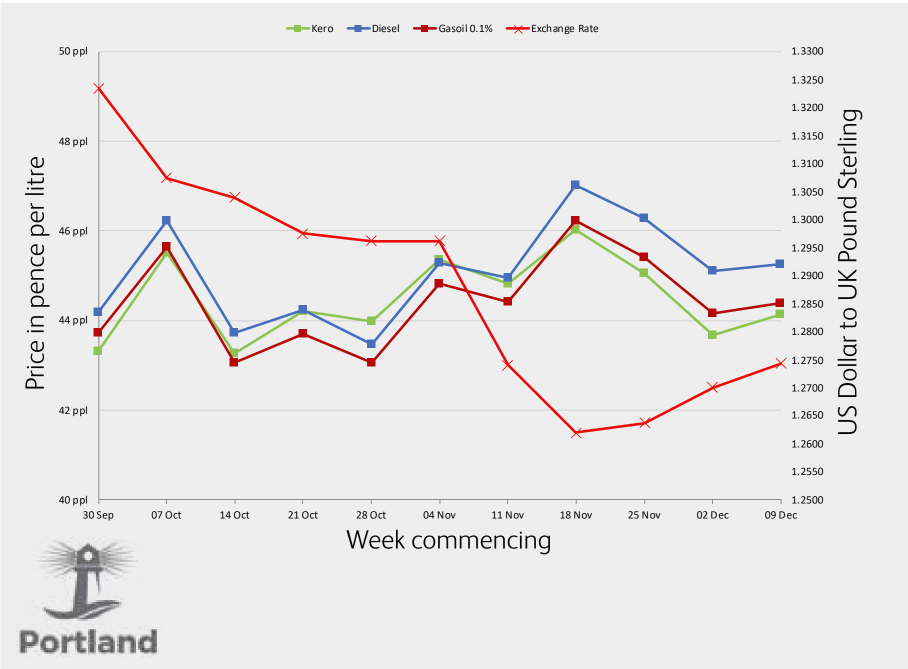
Richard Wallace, LCM

YOU CAN STILL
MAKE A DONATION:
https://jumpers.savethechildren.org.uk/pay

Wholesale Price Movements: 19th November 2024 – 12th December 2024

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1%
Average price	44.68	45.91	45.03
Average daily change	0.63	0.62	0.64
Current duty	0.00	52.95	10.18
Total	44.68	98.86	55.21

All prices in pence per litre



Kerosene

Highest price	Biggest up day
46.78	+0.99
Fri 22 Nov 244	Mon 09 Dec 24
Lowest price	**Biggest down day**
42.50	-1.45
Fri 06 Dec 24	Wed 27 Nov 24

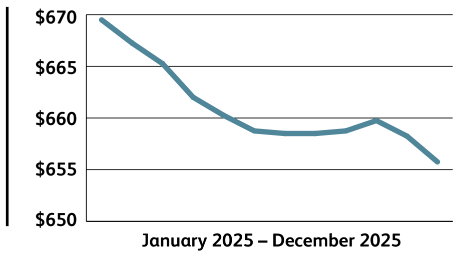
Diesel

Highest price	Biggest up day
48.02	+0.87
Fri 22 Nov 244	Fri 22 Nov 24
Lowest price	**Biggest down day**
43.91	-1.40
Fri 06 Dec 24	Mon 25 Nov 24

Gasoil 0.1%

Highest price	Biggest up day
47.07	+0.78
Fri 22 Nov 244	Mon 09 Dec 24
Lowest price	**Biggest down day**
42.95	-1.34
Fri 06 Dec 24	Mon 25 Nov 24

Gasoil forward price
in US$ per tonne



The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

	Trade average buying prices			Average selling prices		
	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD
Scotland	46.16	57.23	101.24	52.62	61.15	105.20
North East	45.11	55.86	100.32	54.08	59.51	103.23
North West	46.68	58.46	102.71	52.90	61.88	105.32
Midlands	45.18	56.39	100.78	51.24	59.98	103.94
South East	45.28	56.35	100.76	57.79	62.61	103.50
South West	45.63	56.19	100.60	53.71	59.77	103.11
N. Ireland	45.74	57.56	n/a	51.71	61.97	n/a
Republic Of Ireland	59.50	62.99	102.18	65.04	66.72	105.42
Portland	43.49	53.91	97.47			

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 JANUARY'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 **ANDY RUFFELL-WARD**, HEAD OF INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL UK DOWNSTREAM, HARVEST ENERGY LTD.

"ALWAYS BE HONEST, ACT WITH INTEGRITY AND FOLLOW UP ON YOUR PROMISES."

ANDY RUFFELL-WARD

Give your career history in 25 words or fewer.
17 years in the oil industry in various sales, pricing & operations roles – first 13½ with TOTAL and the past 3½ years with Prax.

Describe yourself in 3 words:
Honest. Easy-going. Positive.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?
When I was about 8 years old, I wanted to be an ambulance driver. My sister had just qualified as a nurse and made riding in an ambulance with the blue lights flashing sound so exciting. When I was a little older, I had the entirely unrealistic dream of becoming a professional rugby player.

Describe your dream job (if you weren't doing this?)
Playing rugby for England.

What's the best business advice you've ever received?
People buy from people – always be honest, act with integrity and follow up on your promises.

Share your top tips for business success.
Surround yourself with good people that you trust. Listen more than you talk – you've got two ears and one mouth.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?
Being involved in Prax's acquisition of Lindsey Oil Refinery and the early days post-acquisition, all whilst working remotely during COVID.

Tell us your greatest fear.
I don't tend to have many fears as such, but I'm not great in small spaces – I could never go potholing!

Which is most important – ambition or talent?
Ambition – you can have all the talent in the world, but if you aren't challenged, or don't challenge yourself, it is wasted.

What's the best thing about your job?
The people and relationships built over the years. It's a surprisingly small industry full of great characters!

Which is the quality that you most admire?
Integrity.

What are you most likely to say?
"Every day's a new day!" If today didn't go to plan, there's always tomorrow.

What are you least likely to say?
No – always open to new ideas and challenges.

Describe your perfect day
Beach, family, barbecue, beers and music.

Do you have a favourite sports team?
I enjoy all sports, but support Harlequins (rugby) and Liverpool and Scunthorpe United (football). I used to be a season ticket holder at Scunthorpe for a couple of years when I was younger – and when they were more successful!

What's the biggest challenge of our time?
Climate change.

Cheese or chocolate?
Cheese.

Share your greatest personal achievement
My kids. Keep me on my toes and a handful at times but brilliant fun!

What's your pet hate or biggest irritant?
Laziness and people not doing what they say they would.

If you were on 'Mastermind' what would your specialist subject be?
When I was young, I used to be able to recognise all the flags of the world and the countries they were for. I'm not sure how I'd do nowadays though!

If you were elected to government what would be the first law you'd press for?
Laws and funding to facilitate net zero projects like Prax's carbon capture project at Lindsey Oil Refinery.

If your 20-year-old self saw you now what would they think?
Well done you! Pride in what I have achieved – both personally and professionally.

What is number 1 on your bucket list?
I'd love to see more of the world, and experience different cultures

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?
I should probably say my wife and two kids, but assuming they're stranded with me, a ball, a guitar and a barbecue – almost like my answer for a perfect holiday!

Tell us something about you that people would be very surprised by
Having grown up 2 miles from the Lindsey Refinery, in my 17 years of working for both Total and Prax I've never actually been based at the refinery.

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?
Ayrton Senna – my hero in my early years of watching sport. A legend of the sport from when watching F1 was more interesting and unpredictable.

Products & Services Directory

Fuel Oil News

Founded in 1977 by James Smith
Owner: Nick Smith

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