

# Best Practice



Issue 673 | January 2024 | 0121 824 4744 | [www.bestpracticeuk.co.uk](http://www.bestpracticeuk.co.uk)

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January 2024 | issue 673

# Editors Notes

## Liz Dickinson

Senior Editor



Happy New Year and a warm welcome back to all our readers at Best Practice.

We're excited to share with you some wonderful news from across the industry: Christeyns Food Hygiene picked up the 'Training Company of the Year' award at the SOFHT Awards 2023 and Watlow scooped up the 'Highly Commended: Electronics Manufacturer of the Year' award in the Business category at the Electronics Industry Awards 2023.

A huge congratulations to both companies!

We would like to sadly pass on our condolences to the family and colleagues of Hans Koehl at SPIROL, the obituary is on page 24.

Sibor is our New Year Spotlight company on page 13. Read all about their exciting work in the anaerobic digestion renewable energy sector. Sibor will be providing LV power distribution design and installation combined with control and instrumentation design and installation to major renewable energy companies.

CheckedSafe has won a landmark contract with Network Rail, to integrate its app across the 100,000-strong vehicle fleet. Network Rail has one of the largest fleets in the country, so this is no easy task. Find out more about this partnership and fleet safety on page 4.

**Don't forget to send us your latest Industrial news and updates and email us at [sales@bestpracticeuk.co.uk](mailto:sales@bestpracticeuk.co.uk)**

## Cover Story

Lancashire-based software company CheckedSafe has won a significant partnership with Network Rail. Network Rail has integrated the CheckedSafe app across its fleet, meaning more than 44,000 employees now use it across over 10,000 vehicles...

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Download our iOS app and Android app





# Powered by possibility:

## Award-winning thermal loop system



Leading electric manufacturing company: Watlow was one of the decorated winners at this year's glittering Electronics Industry Awards, held at the grade II-listed De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in Covent Garden. Watlow was delighted to receive the 'Highly Commended: Electronics Manufacturer of the Year' award in the Business category.

The 7th edition Electronics Industry Awards proudly celebrates excellence and ingenuity across the electronics sector. It is the leading, calendar event for the industry and a coveted trophy marks a premium seal of approval for industry-leading experts.

The Electronics Manufacturer of the Year category selects finalists who have markedly achieved business success within collaborations, partnerships, investments, new products and innovations and signals Watlow's ongoing commitment to excellence throughout the electronics industry.

Watlow is an international industry technology company, with superlative engineering expertise, advanced thermal systems and manufacturing prowess across its winning portfolio of temperature controllers, power controllers, heating technologies and temperature sensing platforms.

In 2022, Watlow acquired Eurotherm® - a global supplier of machine automation products, applications, systems and services to many diverse applications. This has now allowed Watlow to extend its range of industry-leading products to include: PID temperature controllers, recorders, and data acquisition capabilities, solid state relays and power controllers, software and systems. In conjunction with Eurotherm, Watlow brings a history of expertise to many sectors ranging from: semiconductor, energy and environmental technologies, medical, glass, clinical, analytical and life sciences.

Watlow supplied its first ever heaters on

the second floor of a machine shop in 1922. From these humble beginnings, Watlow has expanded exponentially in product capability, industrial market experience and global reach. With more than 1,000 patents, over 4,200 team members across 13 manufacturing centres and seven advanced technology and development centres in North and South America, Europe and Asia: Watlow's sales and distribution coverage is astonishing, across 95 countries globally.

We spoke to Johann Lainer: Marketing Communications Manager, Europe for more insight,

"Watlow's solutions consist of a wide range of electric resistive heaters, sensors and process controllers and data acquisition devices.

Our advanced thermal technology is found in industries such as semiconductor processing, medical devices, traditional and sustainable energy systems, life sciences and advanced heat-treating systems – wherever thermal is most critical and we cover the whole thermal loop. Our most popular products include: electric resistive heaters, sensors, industrial controllers and data management. The electric resistive heaters include: metal sheath such as cartridge and tubular heaters; flexible heaters made from special rubber and cloth materials and specialty heaters made from advanced ceramics, polyimide films and thermal coatings. The sensors include thermocouples, RTDs, thermistors and fiber optics. Our industrial controllers include temperature, power, multifunction, PLCs and lastly, our data management looks at: data recorders, analysers, PID controllers, SCADA."

Watlow provides premium, decarbonised solutions within the complete thermal system, enabling valued customers to reach company sustainability goals, meet compliance requirements and smart solutions within industry 4.0/ 5.0 frameworks. Johann guides us through the pitfalls of erroneous thermal

system providers and the rewards of choosing award-winning Watlow,

"Thermal systems can be complex and underappreciated. Clients should buy from companies that can draw from a long and enduring history of experience from a broad array of industries and applications. Very often, the underlying technology from one application can be utilised to provide the right solution for another.

For customers planning on upgrading existing solutions, they need to know a little bit about their own application (operating temperatures, thermal cycling, ambient conditions, etc.). They also need to be clear on what it is they are hoping to achieve in terms of their own process outputs (increased capacity, better productivity, energy savings, space reduction, etc.). All these factors go into upgrade decisions.

Watlow has been in the thermal systems business for more than 100 years. If something needs to be heated, there is a good chance that we have seen it or done it before. This experience, and a long-standing reputation for quality, enables customers to place a great deal of trust in their partnership with Watlow. Additionally, our sales force is unique in that all sales representatives are degree engineers qualified to work with customers to design solutions for all their thermal needs."

Watlow is ahead of the curve by offering a vertically integrated approach towards its heater, sensor and controller products, through a next-level Adaptive Thermal Systems® technology architecture.

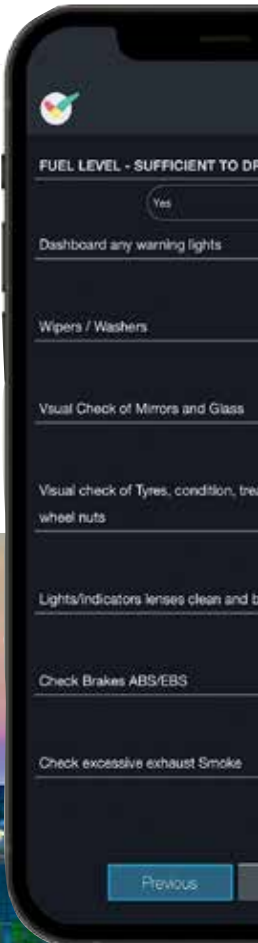
Looking to the future, Watlow is looking forward to introducing new controls products, in conjunction with the Eurotherm® acquisition.

[www.watlow.com](http://www.watlow.com)  
[www.linkedin.com/in/johann-1-49bb29144/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/johann-1-49bb29144/)  
[www.linkedin.com/company/watlow/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/watlow/)





# How CheckedSafe's bespoke software helps Network Rail stay safe



Lancashire-based software company CheckedSafe has won a significant partnership with Network Rail. Network Rail has integrated the CheckedSafe app across its fleet, meaning more than 44,000 employees now use it across over 10,000 vehicles.

This landmark partnership illustrates the increasing demand for fleet operators to comply with stringent safety regulations and compliance measures.

But where compliance once entailed a cumbersome, error-prone process heavily reliant on paperwork, CheckedSafe has transformed it into a digitised, streamlined and efficient operation.

With this partnership, CheckedSafe is not just helping Network Rail adjust to the changing demands of the modern

world - they aim to help them lead the way in fleet safety and sustainability.

### The demand for a monumental partnership

Network Rail, which owns the UK's vast railway infrastructure - and manages over 20,000 miles of track and 30,000 structures like bridges, tunnels and viaducts - has one of the largest fleets in the country.

The logistical nightmare of ensuring that each vehicle met stringent safety standards had previously required a lot of effort. It had relied on an outdated, complex and paper-based process. But thanks to CheckedSafe, this is no longer the case.

After almost four years of meticulous planning, bespoke software development, and negotiations,

the groundbreaking partnership between the two businesses officially commenced in January this year - and marks CheckedSafe's most expansive client relationship yet.

### The importance of compliance and safety

In an era where road safety is getting tighter and tighter, the efforts of Network Rail and CheckedSafe signify a vital step forward in leading the way for fleet management.

Darran Harris from CheckedSafe said: "Effective vehicle compliance is about more than just ticking boxes. It's about actively reducing the risk of accidents and ensuring the well-being of drivers, passengers, and the general public."

"This collaboration isn't just a big project for us; it's an ever-evolving and unique



partnership. Fundamentally, it's about changing driver behaviour to ensure our roads are the safest they can be."

### How does CheckedSafe encourage fleet safety?

The CheckedSafe app effortlessly allows fleet operators to:

#### ▲ Gain insight into their fleet

The CheckedSafe portal acts as a comprehensive dashboard for fleet operators, offering real-time analytics and insights into vehicle performance, usage, and other critical metrics. This feature allows for more informed decision-making, potentially identifying issues before they become significant problems.

#### ▲ Identify vehicle defects in real-time

Real-time defect identification is a cornerstone of proactive safety. This feature enables immediate action to be taken, thus reducing the potential risk of breakdowns or accidents caused by vehicle malfunctions. With real-time notifications, both operators and drivers are instantly alerted, ensuring quick response times.

#### ▲ Schedule vehicle maintenance with ease

Timely maintenance is essential for vehicle safety. CheckedSafe's streamlined scheduling feature allows operators to manage and plan maintenance activities effectively, minimising downtime and ensuring



# CheckedSafe®

that vehicles are in peak condition.

#### ▲ Conduct remote driving licence checks

Verifying the legitimacy and validity of a driver's licence is a critical component of fleet safety. The app's remote driving licence checks add an additional layer of security, ensuring that only qualified and authorised individuals operate the vehicles.

#### ▲ Store all fleet data in secure, tamper-proof CMS

Data integrity is crucial for compliance and audit trails. CheckedSafe offers a secure, tamper-proof Content Management System (CMS) where all fleet data is stored. This level of security protects sensitive information and ensures that the data can be reliably used for compliance reporting.

However, in addition to these classic CheckedSafe features - the Network Rail partnership has also resulted in the creation of numerous custom features and bespoke software development.

These include:

#### ▲ NFC Keyring System

An NFC keyring system has been designed to offer a secure and efficient user identification mechanism for Network Rail's extensive workforce. This allows for seamless access to individual CheckedSafe app profiles across various devices without the need for cumbersome email and password login methods.

#### ▲ Greater fleet segmentation

Meanwhile, CheckedSafe have also created bespoke API software that

provides Network Rail with greater segmentation and insight into their nationwide network of vehicles - as well as numerous other bespoke features.

#### Sustainability

Beyond compliance and safety, this relationship also sets a new benchmark in corporate sustainability. By transitioning from a paper-based compliance system, Network Rail have significantly cut down their carbon footprint, reducing paper usage and providing a blueprint for others to follow.

#### A partnership that defines the future of fleet management...

By entering into this expansive, ever-evolving relationship with CheckedSafe, Network Rail isn't just making a commitment to superior fleet safety and management for its own vast network. It's making a statement about what the future of fleet operation should and could be.

In essence, Network Rail and CheckedSafe are doing more than setting a high standard; they are redefining it. They are showing us not just how to adapt to the future but how to shape it. And that is an endeavour worthy of admiration and, most certainly, worth imitating.

One thing is for sure - It's not just about 'ticking boxes' anymore; it's about setting a standard. A standard that has not just raised the bar but has also envisioned a new landscape for what is possible in fleet management.

[www.checkedsafe.com](http://www.checkedsafe.com)



# QUALITY HINGES FOR OVER 200 YEARS

Gold & Wassall have been manufacturing hinges for over two centuries, so it's safe to say we know what we're doing. Our team of experts can design and manufacture almost any hinge, for any application. We have made upwards of 250,000 unique hinge designs, with more designs being drawn up each day.

SEE MORE AT [GOLDWASSALLHINGES.CO.UK/BESPOKE](http://GOLDWASSALLHINGES.CO.UK/BESPOKE)



**BESPOKE HINGES**



**GOLD & WASSALL**

EST. 1790



# Gold & Wassall Hinges launches brand new website



Gold & Wassall Hinges has established itself at the forefront of the industry since its inception over 200 years ago. With its manufacturing facilities situated in Tamworth in Staffordshire, Gold & Wassall provides an impressive range of services for design, production and manufacture of hinges, all produced in house and distributed throughout the whole of the UK. Boasting an enviable reputation within the industry, the company has positioned itself firmly as the UK's number one manufacturer of hinges.

Gold & Wassall has provided its services to various customers throughout its years in operation and serviced customers from construction to engineering companies. With a proven track record of quality, reliability and durability, Gold & Wassall ensures it maintains complete control over the design and high quality of its goods.

We asked Scott Bareham Sales and Marketing Manager at Gold & Wassall what makes the company stand out and how would he describe its services.

"All our hinges are manufactured in house, in our purpose-built facility in Tamworth, Staffordshire. We have been manufacturing hinges for over 200 years using a mixture of tried and trusted methods along with modern technology. Our offer of a bespoke hinge service enables us to manufacture any hinge for any application, and as we have over 200 years' experience, we are greatly knowledgeable in what we do. Our

services portray the highest quality ensuring each product goes through a rigorous testing procedure and receives the upmost attention to detail. We pride ourselves on our customer service and treat every customer fairly and with respect."

In keeping with the company's goal of providing unrivalled customer service, Gold & Wassall also provides an abundance of finishing options for its customers. The company is dedicated to providing not only durable, high-quality hinges, but also to understanding the importance of an aesthetically pleasing, customised design. In light of this, the company is able to customise colour, add branding and create a smooth premium finish to all products. Gold & Wassall Hinges' array of finishing options are the perfect complement for its hinges to create a smooth premium finished look.

Going into 2024, Gold & Wassall is proud to announce the launch of its brand-new website.

"The new website has been a long-term project. Initially, the website needed updating for technological and security reasons, however we thought it would be a good idea to give everything a freshen up. As well as detailing all of the usual information, we have also now made it possible to download CAD drawings and 3D models of each hinge. Furthermore, we have introduced our new "Hinge Finder" which allows the user to narrow down suitable hinges based on their required dimensions.

This will help customers utilise our full range of hinges, showing hinges that they might not have found or considered previously," added Scott.

On the website you will find their complete range of hinges from continuous/piano hinges, butt and backflap hinges and standard, to heavy duty and bespoke made to order hinges. Using the company's automatic section which contains eight lines of automated machines, Gold & Wassall is able to make hinges quicker and to almost any length. The company also maintains the specialist tooling for these machines which can complete multiple operations in each press.

Please note: Gold & Wassall is the only hinge company whose hinges are UK made and all of Gold & Wassall Hinges' stock is available for immediate dispatch.

As a new year begins, we asked Scott what in store for the company in 2024 and beyond.

"In 2024 we hope to continue to strengthen following the pandemic and period of economic uncertainty. We are also looking to expand on our growing relationships with overseas customers as well as further grow our UK customer base."

For more information, see below.

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[www.goldwassallhinges.co.uk](http://www.goldwassallhinges.co.uk)



# Providing solutions for your measurement applications

## interface

www.interface.uk.com

Interface Force is an internationally recognised brand and decades of experience have gone into making Interface manufactured load cells the benchmark for thousands of users around the world, and Interface Force Measurements was established in 1996 by Neil Johnstone.

Based in Crowthorn, Berkshire, Interface Force distributes to the whole of the UK & Ireland, but also overseas, especially into Turkey, Greece and the Middle East. The company is a primary distributor for Load Cells manufactured by Arizona-based Interface Inc, and it also supplies their Torque Transducers, associated electronics, multi-access Load Cells and the XSensor Pressure Mapping systems.

The global Interface Inc. is represented by a large network of distributors outside of the US, and they have requested products that are designed and manufactured in metric, with the precision and accuracy of all Interface products. These products are designed for an international buyer and user, and all specifications are in metric specs, a global standard for force measurement products.

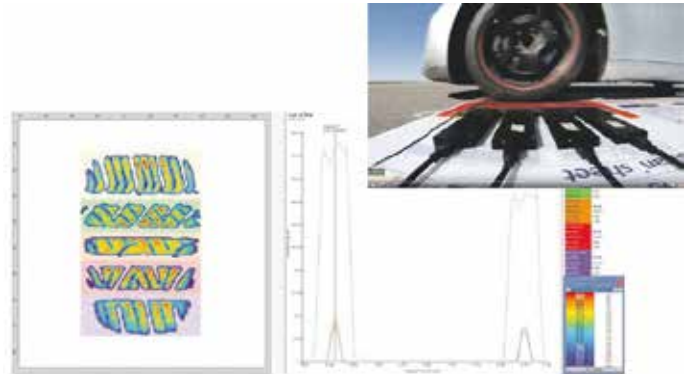
Interface Force work mainly with aerospace, automotive, and motorsport companies, and Business Development Manager, Tony Rokins, told us, "We work closely with companies which are undertaking research into product development, and so this includes universities and also medical companies who need load cells for weighing saline bags – we have a very wide and varied client portfolio."

In this crowded industry, Interface load cells and torque sensors have a hard-won reputation for reliable, accurate and repeatable test results. The range of pressure sensors and pressure mapping systems from industry leaders GP50 & XSensor back this reputation.

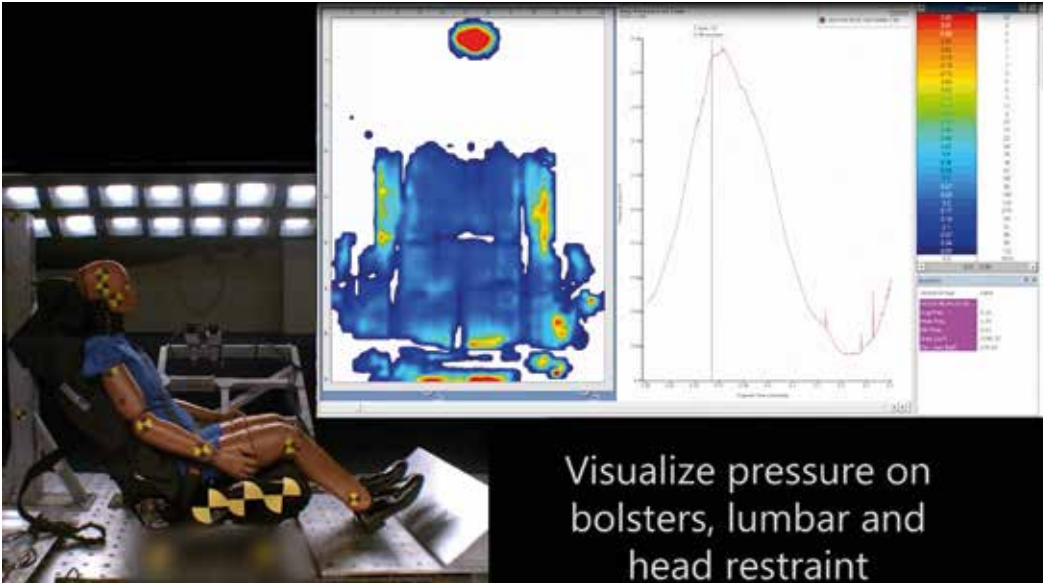
Tony continued, "With regards to force measurement, our load cells are preferred by aerospace companies because they are highly accurate, and the results are very repeatable. Also, the devices themselves are extremely reliable and so they are looked on very favourably by both automotive and aerospace manufacturers in particular."

Interface Force is currently re-launching its XSensor High Speed Pressure Mapping System – the

company offers a range of pressure mapping systems that can be applied to anything from impact testing to pressure testing tires, runways, beds, seats and much more. The XSensor system is the first system design to allow product designers and safety testing engineers to see, record and evaluate the distribution of force from high-speed impacts on safety equipment such as helmets and body armour.



# force or torque



The system is particularly popular with automotive and aerospace seating manufacturers as evaluating the performance of helmets and other protective equipment designed to prevent injury requires detailed understanding of the pressure distribution on the body surface during dynamic impacts. Xsensor's high speed HS Impact system combined with the thin conformable sensors allows customers to accurately measure those pressures and evaluate how different design configurations affect pressure distribution on impact.

In addition to this, the system is also used by manufacturers of office seating, companies that develop seating for the home, and bed manufacturers.

In spite of its success in the industry, Interface Force is very much looking to future development. Tony informed us, "We are building new Applications which are based around renewable energy, and we are also developing Cloud-based, Wifi and Bluetooth data acquisitions by making our devices

wireless. This would mean customers being able to collect data from anywhere in the world via an App."

This ever-growing comprehensive range of indicators, signal amplifiers, data loggers and wireless transmitters has been designed to complement the extensive range of load cells, torque transducers and pressure sensors, and the range has developed to ensure that customers have access to the most accurate, up-to-date, and cost-effective devices available.

Another new development is in the Airport environment, where Interface Force have begun to provide wireless monitoring of equipment on, for example, luggage carousels, and this product among many others have helped Interface Force to have a very successful past 12 months especially.

Interface Force's product reliability is second to none and all of its product lines have to match this standard before ever being recommended to customers. Interface is

the world's trusted leader in technology, design and manufacturing of force measurement solutions. Its clients include a 'who's who' of so many industries, and the company's engineers around the world are empowered to create high-level tools and solutions that deliver consistent, high-quality performance.

**For more information, please see below:**  
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[www.interfaceforce.co.uk](http://www.interfaceforce.co.uk)



AdCo's HD 250 NV is a true standout among industrial-grade hot melt glue guns, and a go-to tool for contractors and tradesmen in many fields of work.

The "NV" stands for "needle valve," an exclusive AdCo design feature which allows the user to lay down precise, uniform glue lines, with perfect cut-offs and no more dripping and stringing!

This exceptional quality tool sports cushion-padded grips, an easy-squeeze trigger, and a removable wire base stand which makes it easy to use in any work environment.

The 225 watt PTC heating system allows for quick heat-up times to its preset temperature of 210°C, and the ability to dispense upto 1.5 kilos of glue per hour.

Patented  
**Dripless**  
Nozzle




**Proflex**  
Shaped Hot Melt

**900**

Full-size  
11/12mm  
Sticks

**3**  
Second  
Set Time

AdCo's ProFlex 900 is the best choice for industrial packaging applications due to its attractive price and impressive 3-second compression set time.

12mm  
15mm  
18mm  
43mm

#### FEATURES & HIGHLIGHTS

- Needle valve nozzle
- Uses 11/12mm glue sticks
- Output per hour: 1.5 kg per hour. (55 x 300mm sticks)
- Operating temp: 210°C
- 225 watt PTC heating system
- 4-minute warm-up
- Lighted ON/OFF switch
- Comfortable 4-finger trigger
- Removable stand
- 6-foot power cord
- UL Certified to ensure safety

Eliminates  
**Stringing**

Output / Hour  
**1.5 kilos**

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**Dripless**  
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## Anua Clean Air: Air pollution control specialist

Anua Clean Air UK Ltd are a specialist Air Pollution Control company with expertise in the field of biological treatment of air and Biogas. Anua are established leaders in the fields of high performance, low-cost emission abatement primarily based on our Patented Biofiltration and Bio scrubbing technologies.

Our Monashell™ and CrumRubber™ use recovered materials as the critical filtration component. The unique properties of these materials enhance capture and treatment which in turn provides multiple environmental benefits in terms of Circular Economy, Carbon Footprint (low water and energy requirement and no consumables) and removal of harmful atmospheric pollutants.

During the past number of years along with its parent Company Anua Clean Air International limited and Italian Sister company Air Clean SRL we have been very active in the UK, Ireland and in overseas markets including Italy, France, the Middle East, China and the US. International Reference projects include Dual Pass Monashell Installations in Riyadh,



Jeddah, Laguna Lake in the Philippine's, Coimbatore in India, and Sindos in Greece. For our new CrumRubber technology we have supplied new installations in the Canary Islands, China, Oman and UK and Ireland. We are also currently working with Air Clean USA on the delivery of a number of new installations for the US market

Anua Clean Air International also specialise in Equipment Health Checks and process optimisation and media replacement services. Over the past number of we have continued to perform System Health Checks and media replacement services on the many hundreds of Worldwide Monashell Installations.

[www.anuacleanair.co.uk](http://www.anuacleanair.co.uk)

## Intelligent ventilation systems

Industrial ventilation systems play a critical role in maintaining a safe and comfortable working environment, protecting workers from exposure to harmful substances, and preventing the buildup of contaminants.

Founded by Mark Ashby (Son) and Bob Ashby (Father) in June 2017, Clean Air Environmental is extremely committed to quality and as such, imports equipment from all over Europe and the UK, to ensure successful solutions are achieved every time.

Clean Air Environmental specialises in the engineering of industrial ventilation systems and provides a comprehensive service consisting of consultancy, design, supply, installation, and commissioning of industrial ventilation systems and services. The systems are engineered to integrate seamlessly into a facility and is predominantly designed for use in industrial manufacturing (automotive, aerospace, food manufacturing etc.), universities, colleges and schools. Offering intelligent designs and creating effective results, Clean Air Environmental systems enhance




air quality, providing healthier clean air for students, workers and operatives.

"Our services are solutions led rather than product led, so we can design the best ventilation systems that will meet our client's exact needs," mentioned Mark.

Clean Air Environmental places meticulous attention to detail in the design and site installations, ensuring that the company only use the best products, equipment and installation engineers.

**For more information, see below.**  
T 07715 432051  
[mashby@cleanairenvironmental.co.uk](mailto:mashby@cleanairenvironmental.co.uk)  
[www.cleanairenvironmental.co.uk](http://www.cleanairenvironmental.co.uk)



**ANUA Clean Air**  
UK



Tel: +44 1450 420017  
[www.anuacleanair.co.uk](http://www.anuacleanair.co.uk)

Leader in Odour Control and Biogas Cleaning Units

### Leader in Odour Control and Biogas Cleaning Units

"Anua Clean Air UK offer proven, patented clean air bio-technologies, which provide best-in-class process performance with the lowest utility and life cycle costs"

Mónashell - Mónafil - CrumRubber - Mónasorb  
- Skid Mounted Odour Control Units -  
Media Replacements - OCU Health Checks



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Clean Air Environmental Ltd. COZICOT, Weeford Road  
Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham B75 5RF

## INDUSTRIAL VENTILATION SYSTEMS

DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALL, TEST AND SERVICE





We engineer industrial ventilation systems that integrate seamlessly into your facility and provide healthy clean air to workers and operatives, along with many other benefits of a clean air environment.

The Directors of Clean Air Environmental Limited have over 60 years' experience in concept design, contract management and installations of the highest quality systems worldwide formed a new company to serve the UK bringing equipment in from all over Europe and the UK to ensure successful solutions are achieved every time. Because we are independent and not tied to one manufacturer we can design the best ventilation systems that will meet our client's exact needs, rather than specifying from one catalogue.

Visit [www.cleanairenvironmental.co.uk](http://www.cleanairenvironmental.co.uk)

Contact Mark Ashby  
[mashby@cleanairenvironmental.co.uk](mailto:mashby@cleanairenvironmental.co.uk)

# Measurably better Chemiluminescence analysers

Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) are chief villains in the battle for climate control; belonging to a family of gases that are formed during the combustion of fossil fuels. When Nitric Oxide (NO) reacts with other gases, for example with Ozone, it forms Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), which is considered highly toxic to human health.

The reaction with Ozone is also an indicator for why Nitric Oxide (NO) is considered a climate active gas, that interacts with Earth's protective Ozone layer. Human exposure to high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), but also Nitric Oxide (NO) can cause airway inflammation, susceptibility to allergens and exacerbate pre-existing lung or heart conditions.

Nitric Oxide (NO) is a biological marker of inflammation and is also produced by cells involved in the inflammation process. It is typically used to diagnose allergic/eosinophilic asthma. Legal ambient air limit value (annual average value for the European Union) for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations is 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Maximum occupational exposure limit is 950µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Indoor air limit value for maximum exposure is 250µg/m<sup>3</sup> but the precautionary value 80µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The WHO defines 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> as precaution limit. ([www.baua.de/EN/Service/](http://www.baua.de/EN/Service/))

## Legislative-texts-and-technical-rules/Rules/TRGS/TRGS.html).

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural affairs (DEFRA) has also reported soil chemistry and biodiversity changes across many UK habitats, through gas (dry deposition) and precipitation (wet deposition.) Anthropogenic Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) influence tropospheric chemistry, which directly cause photochemical smog and concentrated levels of urban ozone.

ECO PHYSICS AG offer world-leading measurements of Nitrogen Oxide (NOx), through trailblazing chemiluminescence analysers. These innovative analytical solutions are unprecedented in speed and sensitivity, with a cutting-edge range of sensitivities from 1% down to 1 ppt (part per trillion). Chemiluminescence Analysers use a unique thermally-stabilised semiconductor photodiode, to measure light intensity produced by reactions between Nitric Oxide (NO) with Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). The light intensity correlates to the proportion of Nitric Oxide (NOx) converted to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) by the reaction.

We caught up with Dr Grischa Peter Feuersänger, Head of Sales & Marketing, to find out



perfected analytical technique in speed and sensitivity. Today we are proud to claim world leadership in the fastest and most sensitive chemiluminescence analysers and the broadest commercially available range."

This Swiss-based innovative company has EN ISO 9001: 2015 quality management and EN ISO 13485: 2016 medical devices-compliance, offering quality assurance to customers across many industries. There is a new range of gas analysers and boxed set gas analysers available: nCLD AL, nCLD AL2, nCLD AL3/8555, nCLD EL and nCLD EL2.

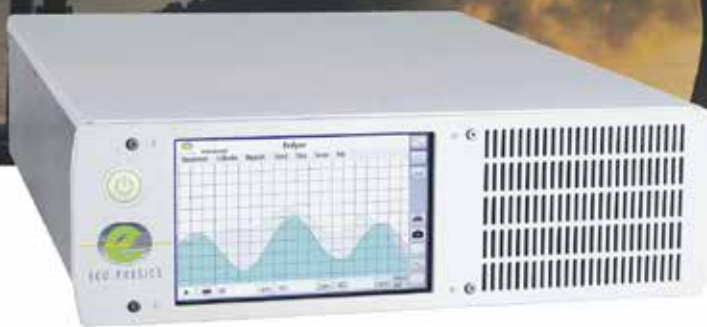
more about ECO PHYSICS, "ECO PHYSICS was founded in 1990 through a management buy-out, by co-founders Dr Matthias Kutter and Dr Werner Moser and we now operate from our base in Duernten, Switzerland. We offer innovative analytical solutions for measurement tasks in the fields of environment, health and process control. With our interdisciplinary research and development team, we are delivering customer-oriented and tailor-made products and services. The initial know-how focus was centred on the principle of the chemiluminescence, thus developing and manufacturing analysers for the ambient pollution and emissions. We have

The nCLD AL3/8555 is a next-generational modular gas analyser, offering state-of-the-art simultaneous measurements of NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, NOx, NH<sub>3</sub> and NOx-Amines. Even lower detection limits can be detected through the newly designed reaction chamber, enhanced gas flow paths, improved pressure and temperature stability. This analyser is adaptable to non-standardised applications, with the unit calibration running smoothly on an automated basis.

To see the whole product range: T +41 55 220 22 22 [info@ecophysics.com](mailto:info@ecophysics.com) [www.ecophysics.com](http://www.ecophysics.com)

## ECO PHYSICS nCLD "Facelift" boxed solutions

### AL, AL<sup>2</sup>, EL S, EL, EL<sup>2</sup>




Measurement of:

**NO • NO<sub>2</sub> • NO<sub>x</sub>**

The one- and two-channel chemiluminescence based NOx analyzers of the nCLD "Facelift" box-solution analyzers detect NO, NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> at concentrations ranging from 5 ppm to 5000 ppm with minimal detection limits averaging from 0.4 ppb to 0.5 ppb. They hereby focus on two main application areas, Ambient Air (AL, <50ppm) and Emission/Process (EL, <500ppm; EL S <5'000ppm) monitoring. The one-channel nCLD AL, EL and EL S feature an external pump, while the two-channel nCLD AL2 and EL2 include an internal pump. The nCLD "Facelift" boxed solutions consist of five, fixed and preconfigured analyzers. The nCLD AL (Ambient Level) and EL S/EL include a standard NO/NO<sub>x</sub> measurement, with an optional NO<sub>2</sub> add-on, while AL2 and EL2 include, due to the two-channel set-up, a standard NO<sub>2</sub> detection. Additionally, all nCLD-models are capable of a remote power down/up including a failsafe feature. nCLD AL2 and EL2 are TÜV approved, qualified according to ISO EN 14211 and 15267 1-3.

- Compact analyzer with external or integrated pump
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# Sibor: committed to engineering excellence since 1992

In this issue of Best Practice, we are delighted to showcase Sibor as our New Year Spotlight company.

Sibor has a long history, spanning over thirty years providing leading process control, engineering and project management expertise. Established in 1992, to originally provide process control systems and industrial automation to many industrial applications, such as large blue-chip companies, the company has been focusing on the energy sector more recently, notably the anaerobic digestion renewable energy sector.

Sibor provides turnkey design and build service solutions across manufacturing and automation control, including the following services:

- ▲ EIC/mechanical design and installation services
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- ▲ Process instrumentation services
- ▲ Atex design and installation services
- ▲ Project management services
- ▲ Software development services
- ▲ Support services

With a vision for providing automated control systems that provide manufacturing benefits and added assurance throughout, Sibor are trusted professionals throughout the project.

From initial requirements analysis, expert software engineers define user-needs from the offset, through to application design and software, component selection and assembly for a successful outcome.

Sibor runs applications as local stand-alone systems or alternatively, as Ethernet/IP networked solutions. Utilising cutting-edge Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), Sibor ensures streamlined services across all customer applications.

We caught up with Managing Director: Rob Mockridge to find out more,

"We have always enjoyed organic growth and over the last 12 months, the company has gone through a major transition and has now been accredited with ISO 9001 and 14001 and we have also been accredited by safe contractor.

We have gone from strength to strength completing many major upgrade projects for the MOD and several renewable energy companies, ranging from replacing old for new to major electrical infrastructure and controls installations.

We have seen a 40% increase in business over the last 12 months- an accolade to our strong team.

We are very excited for the year ahead in



the anaerobic digestion renewable energy sector and are in the process of signing two contracts with major renewable energy companies to provide LV power distribution design and installation combined with control and instrumentation design and installation. With a pipeline of projects to follow, allowing us to keep investing in our staff and business activities.

Our growth in control and automation projects is a tribute to our innovative approach to design and comes from our long history in many industrial sectors."

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## Adhesives & glue guns



AdCo UK is one of the largest manufacturers of shaped hotmelt adhesives and water-based adhesives for use in packaging and product assembly markets for over 21 years, from its Head Office and manufacturing facility in Liphook Hampshire with additional distribution facilities based in Leeds UK and a network of approved distributors based throughout the UK.

As well as supplying adhesives for all requirements, AdCo supplies a wide range of specialist applicators – from ProFlex industrial, heavy duty and professional glue guns to total melt, cartridge and bulk systems, we also manufacture and supply UF resins, PVA Adhesives, PU Adhesives, Tapes and much more

As part of our commitment to

offer our customers the correct solution for their needs AdCo are continually investing in research and development along with new state of the art manufacturing equipment to ensure we continue to meet the ever changing needs of all types of industry.

Thanks to our unrivalled knowledge of adhesives and application techniques, our highly skilled technicians can offer a 'find and supply' service to all our customers. With a combined industry experience of over 120 years, our technicians can ensure that any bonding problem can be solved quickly and efficiently.

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# Beating the plastic tax with LOCK N'POP™

Looking at costs and ways of reducing them in the current economic time has never been more of an imperative. New UK tax legislation, introduced in 2022 focusing on the volumes of plastic packaging used by companies, creates further challenges to the operating costs and profitability of manufacturers in the food and beverage sectors.

Finding innovative solutions to simply retain margin levels has become a constant challenge and has seen companies alter strategy to ensure that whilst focusing on making processes more efficient the big focus needs to be aimed on **doing processes differently**. This is where the big gains are to be realised.

Traditionally the LOCK N'POP™ pallet stabilisation solution allowed companies to save money by removing the costs associated with their palletised goods moving or collapsing in transit to their customers. The focus was on ensuring efficiency in the production process and throughout the subsequent transit journey whether to the supermarket shelf via domestic distribution centres or to international markets via sea, rail and road freight. The necessity to 'do things differently' has seen many companies using the LOCK N'POP™ solution, now, as a means of reducing plastic packaging costs. The key driver for using the solution has shifted from reducing the costs associated to pallet instability to reducing the costs associated with the use of high volumes of plastic packaging within their production facilities.

LOCK N'POP™ provides a solution that can reduce the use of stretch wrap and eliminate the need for layer sheets and corner posts,

sometimes an essential to ensure acceptable stability.

Plastic stretch wrap has a cost and typically a manufacturer could be spending 80p/pallet. If layer sheets are also needed the cost can easily exceed £2.00/pallet. In addition, if corner posts are also needed this additional cost can exceed £1.00/



pallet, simply to ensure goods are delivered securely.



With a typical cost of 20p/pallet for LOCK N'POP™, the cost saving potential is very clear. By simply **reducing wrap by 50%** and applying LOCK N'POP™ a net **saving of 20p/pallet is achieved**. In a production facility producing 100,000 pallets a year this equates to an **annual saving of £20,000**. In today's economic climate, this level of operating cost reduction is too valuable to ignore. With a 200 gramme saving per pallet the associated reduction in plastic volume would be 20 tonnes, a figure that would attract a **taxation burden in the thousands of pounds**. UK companies, large and small, are experiencing these level of savings with two recent customer installations being on target to achieve a **reduction of 17 tonnes and 21 tonnes in annual stretch wrap consumption**.

So how does it work? LOCK N'POP™ pallet stabilisation uses a cold, water based cohesive that is applied inline to the cases, bags, shrink-wrap trays etc. immediately prior to palletisation. The unique cohesive has **high**

**shear strength** characteristics which LOCKS the products together resulting in a stable pallet. However, the magic is that the cohesive combines this high shear strength with a **low tensile strength**, which means that the items can easily be separated. So, stable in transit but easy to separate at distribution centres and end users.

Known as the **Invisible adhesive**, this ability to leave the product unmarked is becoming imperative as more and more customers need to be able to place products straight from **pallet to shelf** in retail ready packaging. As the requirement increases for higher levels of printed artwork on outer case packaging the ability to palletise and transport securely without damaging the presentation of the product is becoming a bigger requirement of food and beverage manufacturers.

**LOCK N'POP™ pallet stabilisation is a different approach. For more information, contact us at Grandsen UK Ltd: [www.locknpop.co.uk](http://www.locknpop.co.uk)**

# Plasma Instead of Chemicals - Using Openair-Plasma to reduce VOC Emissions

Volatile organic compounds (VOC) occur when solvents and solvent-containing products are used, and they are harmful to the environment. Nevertheless, manufacturing in many industries still involves pre-treating surfaces with primers, bonding agents or other chemicals that release VOCs. With its Openair-Plasma process, Plasmatreat UK Ltd offers an environmentally friendly alternative.

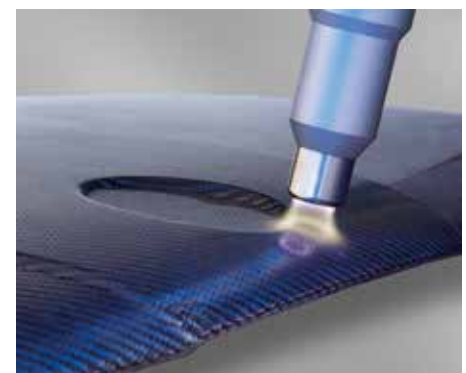


Plasmatreat is an international leader in the development and manufacture of atmospheric plasma systems for the pretreatment of substrate surfaces. Whether plastic, metal, glass,

or paper – the industrial use of plasma technology modifies the properties of the surface in favor of the process requirements.

Openair-Plasma® technology is used in automated and continuous manufacturing processes in almost every industrial sector. Examples include the automotive, electronics, transportation, packaging, consumer goods and textile industry, but the technology, cost and environmental advantages of the plasma technology are used in medical technology and in the renewable energy sector as well.

**For more information, please visit: [www.plasmatreat.co.uk](http://www.plasmatreat.co.uk)**



**Openair-Plasma can be used in the automotive industry to optimise pretreatment processes, e.g., before painting, so that no VOC emissions are generated**



# Jason Petsch, CEO of OUTCO discusses how consumer-style technology is changing winter gritting in the UK

Today, technology and data are changing every sector - and the outdoor estate is no exception. In areas such as Winter Gritting where responsiveness, and above all consistency of service can protect businesses from liability, technology has completely changed the game.

To understand this, just think about the impact of smartphones over the past decade. As smartphone users, we learned that we could ask for anything, anywhere and at any time. With the smartphone app, we learned to expect this to be convenient and easy. Whether CEOs or interns, a whole generation of employees brought these same expectations to work: Mobile technology accelerated a trend known as the "consumerisation of IT", where technologies and models born in the consumer world start changing the way the business world operates. So when users insisted on using their smartphones for work emails, IT departments have been obliged to adapt.

This trend towards greater convenience, immediacy and accessing any service on any device have been further accelerated by Covid-19. While companies like Amazon and Deliveroo saw business boom during the pandemic, the shift towards the use of personal devices in the workplace also increased. Research by Zippia found that use of personal mobiles and computers for work increased by 58% during the pandemic and this change has had a profound impact. Once users started accessing services on their own devices, their expectations shifted to expect greater convenience and integration. Research by Dell revealed that 61% of Gen Y and 50% of 30+ workers believe the tech tools they use in their personal lives are more effective and productive than those used in their work life.

## How these trends are impacting Winter Gritting

As the world shifted towards mobility, this is also driving change in how services in the FM world are being delivered. This includes Winter Gritting which has been transformed by the use of data - and increasingly by the ability to bring that insight to mobile devices. At OUTCO our Winter Gritting business - founded as GRITIT - was built around a technology-first outlook. This included developing a bespoke technology platform - NIMBUS -

that uses an algorithmic decision-making process to automate service delivery in response to weather data. Being able to trigger our activity in this way proved key to delivering critical services at the right time to thousands of sites nationwide within a very tight delivery window - even in the worst weather.

Data and automation have proved a real game changer and NIMBUS has scooped multiple industry awards (including a recent shortlisting for a Property Tech Company of the Year 2023 award).

However, it's no longer enough to keep these advantages in the background. Customers' expectations have shifted here too - perhaps more so, given how critical and time-sensitive decisions can be for businesses facing disruptive weather conditions. If you're deciding if your distribution centre can open the next day, you simply need to know right now. Hence, mobile devices and 24/7 data on demand are now at the heart of winter gritting and snow and ice clearance.

In our own business this need to bring insight to customers in the moment via their mobile devices has been the biggest change to how we use the NIMBUS platform. We developed the PULSE app, which gives customers a live-feed access to NIMBUS and puts live service information in the palm of their hands.

Recently shortlisted as app of the year in the UK Business Tech Awards, PULSE shows the services that are being delivered in a real-time environment. Customers can access service photos and other detailed information including live maps that show where OUTCO operators have been on site at a precise time. The same app also allows customers to contact and communicate directly with the team at the push of a button. In addition to ensuring peace of mind in the moment, this granular data can prove invaluable in the long term: having detailed, precise records helps to provide a powerful legal defence after the event in case trips and falls occur on site. Anyone familiar with tracking a delivery or a takeaway on their phone will find this push-button immediacy immediately recognisable. Indeed, as well as being highly functional, a focus on user experience ensures the app offers the sort of intuitive interaction that one would

expect of a consumer app.

When technology is made simpler and more immediate, it's not only the customers that gain: the integration of mobile and back-end technology powered by a resilient Amazon Web Services cloud infrastructure, ensures that operators on the ground don't have to produce time-consuming paperwork and can focus on the job at hand. The same mobile technology also increases accuracy, thanks to GPS data that helps get teams to precise locations to perform location-specific or time-specific tasks. PULSE also provides alerts to an OUTCO operator if they're working outside of required areas. This becomes even more important at night in frozen or snowy conditions when visibility is limited.

The app also helps to protect operators working in the toughest conditions by building in pre-commencement vehicle checks, Point of Work risk assessments and fitness for work checks via the app workflow. Needless to say, this has proved incredibly important for our own health and safety compliance as well as creating a much more efficient workforce with productivity improvements up by 39% year on year, with millions of jobs delivered at a 98.99% SLA delivery.

Oppenheimer would no doubt agree: When technology changes, it's hard to go back. Once there's a possibility of providing real time service status, that becomes the status quo. When technology lets you provide proven legally defensible data that your sites have been cleared, it's hard to ignore.

**For more information on how OUTCO can support your organisation this winter, contact us on 0800 0432 911 email [enquiries@outco.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@outco.co.uk) or visit [www.outco.co.uk](http://www.outco.co.uk)**



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# The used machinery market in 2023:

## Stable in uncertain economic times

In 2023, the European economy was impacted by high energy prices and inflation. Interest rate hikes by the ECB and general economic uncertainty further dampened investment readiness. Nevertheless, the trade in used machinery remained stable. The reasons for this are manifold.

2023 was the year after the turning point. The war in Ukraine entered its second year and has become a constant factor in global consciousness. Although there are further conflicts worldwide, such as the recent confrontations in Israel and Gaza, it is still the war in Ukraine that affects the economy in Europe. High energy prices and inflation also caused deep uncertainty in the markets this year.

Yet amidst these global challenges, one market segment proved remarkably resilient: the trade in used machinery. "This sector has been particularly booming since the Corona pandemic," says Ghislaine Duijmelings, one of the managing directors at Surplex. "On our platform, we conducted almost 10% more auctions with used machinery compared to the previous year and accordingly sold more machines and equipment. The reasons for this in 2023 were manifold, but above all, our stable prices played a role despite high energy costs and inflation."

### The energy year of 2023

The year 2023 was marked by the energy transition – initially decided upon by the European Green Deal in 2019 and greatly accelerated by the war in Ukraine. At the turn of the year, high energy prices and concerns about energy shortages prevailed. European governments responded with subsidies, tax cuts, and market-stabilising reforms. Thus, the peak of energy prices was already overcome by the end of 2022. The trend of falling prices continued in 2023. However, the high price level remained a challenge for both consumers and the industry. Nevertheless, the forecasts are positive: a significant easing is expected for the year 2024.

"The impact of energy prices was also reflected in our customer surveys," explains Duijmelings. "At the beginning of 2023, almost a third of our customers cited high energy prices as the biggest burden on their businesses. A shift in

priorities became apparent in the summer: in a subsequent survey, high energy prices dropped to third place, while the shortage of skilled workers and inflation were perceived as more pressing issues."

### Stable prices in the used machinery market despite high inflation

Regarding inflation, it appears that the most challenging period has passed, since inflation in 2022/23 was mainly caused by high energy prices. After peaking in October 2022, the inflation rate in the European Union has seen a steady decline, currently at 3.6% (as of October). The Eurozone is faring even better, with an inflation rate of just 2.4% in November.

Duijmelings states, "In 2023, used machines were barely affected by rising costs. On Surplex.com, the average price increase from the previous year was just 0.5%." This modest increase is in stark contrast to the inflation-induced price hikes on many other products. The price of a used machine mainly depends on factors such as its type, manufacturer, age, demand, and availability. In contrast, prices for new machines are primarily influenced by the increased costs of materials and energy.

### The economy in 2023: Growth or recession?

To counteract high inflation, the European Central Bank (ECB) incrementally raised the key interest rate throughout 2023. Elevated capital costs dampened the willingness to invest. Those who still invested did so with a focus on cost efficiency. This trend benefitted the used machinery market, as used machines are more affordable than buying new ones.

Another piece of good news in 2023: the COVID-19 pandemic was officially declared over. On 5 May 2023, the World Health Organisation (WHO) lifted the global health emergency declared on 30 January 2020 – 1,251 days after the first confirmed case of COVID-19. While the pandemic primarily disrupted supply chains, supply shortages are no longer prevalent. The peak was at the end of 2021 when over 80% of companies reported difficulties with materials. Now, only one in six businesses in the manufacturing sector reports delivery issues. Thus, in 2023, companies were able to steadily work through full order books.

However, the combination of limited



**The management team of Surplex, Uli Stalter, Ghislaine Duijmelings, and Michael Werker (from left to right).**  
(© Surplex).

investments and declining order books is having a negative impact on production and turnover. Overall, the EU Commission expects a GDP growth of 0.8% for the Eurozone this year. Germany, possibly the only major industrial nation, is predicted to experience a recession with an economic contraction of 0.4%.

### Outlook for 2024: security boosts the economy

Backed by rising private consumption, increasing wages, and a stable job market, a significant improvement in the economic situation is expected in 2024. This is also reflected in Surplex's customer surveys: At the start of the year, companies showed only tentative willingness to invest in machinery. However, according to the latest survey, they are now more likely to increase their investments in this area. This shift indicates growing confidence in economic stability.

Nevertheless, a slight increase in insolvencies is forecasted for 2024, particularly affecting smaller businesses and the construction industry. However, a surge in insolvencies at an economically concerning level is not anticipated. The current increase is seen more as a normalisation following the end of state aid. Concluding, Ghislaine Duijmelings notes: "More insolvencies in 2024 mean a larger selection of machines and equipment in the used market. This could lead to slightly lower closing prices, offering our customers additional attractive investment opportunities and keeping the market dynamic."

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# Robotics Automation Company Launches

Autrix, a new robotic automation company, launched this month with the mission of making automation accessible for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across the UK. Formed from leaders in the robotics space and talent from automation companies, Autrix aims to enable SMEs to compete globally through increased efficiency, productivity and innovation.

Autrix provides end-to-end automation services, from initial conversations about automation potential to installation and ongoing optimisation of automated systems. With a strong software focus, Autrix offers strategic guidance to help businesses determine how and where to implement automation to best support their growth.

"SMEs are the backbone of the UK economy, yet many struggle to keep up with larger competitors that have already invested heavily in automation," said Joe Daft, Managing Director and Founder of Autrix. "We started Autrix to give these smaller players a fighting chance, with automation solutions tailored to their needs and budgets along with the expertise to help them benefit as much as possible."

The leadership team at Autrix brings decades of experience in delivering solutions within the SME space. By exclusively focusing on SMEs, Autrix

can offer customised and cost-effective automation services that allow these companies to achieve quick wins, foster innovation, and gain a competitive edge.

"Automation is key to the future of manufacturing and business in general, but the resources required have put it out of reach for most SMEs until now," said Ian Shay, Co-Founder of Autrix and Director of L&S Engineers. "With Autrix, SMEs across the UK finally have an automation partner invested in their success".

With locations strategically located throughout the UK, Autrix is well positioned to serve SMEs nationwide. In Birmingham, Autrix operates a live automated warehouse and service centre where technology partners can demonstrate solutions. The Lincoln office focuses on designing custom automation systems and software to meet specific customer needs. Autrix works with best-of-breed technology partners including Hikrobot, VisionNav and ProGlove to provide SMEs with automated mobile robots (AMRs), robotic arms, automated guided vehicles (AGVs), smart gloves and more.

By bundling technologies from multiple vendors, Autrix can provide SMEs with integrated automation systems from single robotic solutions to large deployments of 50+ AMRs tailored to their needs at a



lower cost than purchasing from individual technology providers.

Autrix's dedication to democratising automation for SMEs through their tailored solutions, strategic guidance, and commitment to success positions itself as a valuable partner for SMEs seeking to thrive in an increasingly competitive global market. Autrix is set to empower SMEs with the knowledge, confidence and tools they need to embrace automation and unlock their full potential.

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# BITO Storage Systems

## Edward Hutchison, Managing Director, BITO Storage Systems, answers questions about the company

### How have the past 12 months been for the company?

BITO has maintained a consistent growth trend over the years and this continued during 2023. All of BITO's routes to market are performing well, the bito.com web shop enables customers to order standard items, many from stock. A regionally based team of designers travel the country to understand clients' needs and pain points in order to design a solution that helps improve their business. Finally, a national key accounts team work on the larger scale projects, often with systems integrators. We are seeing growth in a number of sectors including food & beverage, e-commerce, fashion retail, and pharmaceutical.

### What were the biggest challenges the company faced in 2023, and how is the company addressing these challenges going forward?

Many companies today are challenged by increasing order volumes, labour availability and cost pressures. Companies know their business best and often have their own great ideas for solutions to their particular issues. Turning a client's ideas into reality requires a considerable amount of expertise. BITO works with clients on projects to turn their ideas into reality through innovative, high quality and reliable solutions that address these challenges and can also contribute to the increasingly important task of helping companies to demonstrate their sustainability credentials. Many projects involve designing bespoke solutions to successfully overcome a specific operational challenge.



### How has the industry evolved over the past 12 months and how did you adapt?

Consumer expectations for greater choice and shorter lead times are driving the need to store a broader range of SKUs as well as ensure rapid and flexible order fulfilment. We are seeing a particular trend towards lower cost storage and order picking solutions to help meet such requirements.

These might include multi-tier shelving, adapting pallet racking for picking small items, installing live storage flow shelves to give greater pick face density, investing in bins and containers for efficient storage and delivery, and adopting technology that allows staff to spend their time more productively picking orders.



Pallet and carton live storage systems are an efficient means for providing dense storage for rapid, efficient and accurate order picking. Compared with fully automated systems and traditional racking, these 'mechanical' solutions strike the right balance between investment, storage density and speed for fast moving goods picked on a First In, First Out (FIFO) basis. Adding simple automation technologies such as pick-to-light and voice picking can further improve accuracy and throughput speed.

### What are the current goals that the company is focused on, and how is your team working to support hitting said goals in 2024?

To support the growth in clients and revenue, we are increasing the size of our sales and fulfilment teams. Importantly, capacity has also increased with the completion of additional pallet racking manufacturing capability which will enable even better service & lead times.

To ensure growing order volumes are fulfilled, BITO is bringing more full load deliveries into its Nuneaton hub, both for restocking the warehouse and to cross dock customer orders. Crossdocking allows BITO to, for example, send several incoming pallets of plastic containers direct to a customer's site on local transport. In addition to reducing paperwork and speeding delivery, the customer is provided with a more precise delivery slot, making it easier for them to book in their delivery.

Through 2024 and beyond we are likely to see more companies wishing to deal with suppliers that can demonstrate sustainable practices. It is increasingly vital that companies cut their emissions

and demonstrate their environmental credentials. This is particularly important when it comes to complying with the requirements of the procurement departments of customers seeking to minimise their own carbon footprint.

BITO, an industrial company that manufactures durables from raw materials in our plant in Meisenheim, Germany, has demonstrated how manufacturers can take measures to reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and thus actively minimise their environmental impact. We are proud of our quality products, which are designed to last and have positive contribution to sustainability.

### What gets you most excited about the company's future?

It has become more and more clear that an efficient and cost effective logistics strategy is an important part of a company's success. BITO products are an integral part of a logistics strategy, so by helping to enable a client's success also supports our continued success – quite an exciting concept.

### How do you see this company evolving over the next five years?

BITO has been in the UK since 1999 and since then, the company has grown and evolved in terms of capacity and complexity of solution supplied to the market. As client requirements change over the next five years, BITO will continue to evolve to meet those requirements.

We see companies investing in intralogistics systems that help fulfil orders seamlessly. They are seeking systems that are efficient, reliable and have the flexibility to adapt easily to changing business circumstances and to meet peaks in demand.

### Anything else you would like to add?

Clients requiring innovative solutions will need a supplier with experience and expertise. They also need equipment of a quality they can depend on and we pride ourselves that BITO equipment provides that quality. As a company that can design and manufacture racking and shelving as well as compatible bins and containers means that equipment provides storage and picking solutions that ensure the optimal use of space and efficiency of process.

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Through three key components: Business Components, Business Infrastructure and Virtual Business & (FD) services, RLJB can support companies from emerging SMEs to larger corporations.

RLJB Business Consulting was on hand at the 2023 November Business Show to meet new and existing customers. Company Director Roy Brown has considerable prior expertise as Management Accountant, Financial Controller, through to Finance Director and Chair of trustees of Panavision Pension Fund.

One of his success stories is a crash repair company, that struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic but is now working in partnership with Direct Line and recently won 'Best Crash Repair company of the Year.'

"My business model has proven results across the board.

Firstly, I visit the company on-site and see myself what is happening across different departments. Bringing my financial expertise to the forefront, I can very quickly ascertain the root cause of business shortcomings-essentially treating the problem, not the symptoms. Utilising strategic risk management, I can look at the fundamentals of a business and suggest ways to boost income during a scale-up or conversely a scale-down growth period. From accountancy advice, bookkeeping, to long-term business strategy, RLJB Business Consulting is the industry's choice for transforming business outlooks.

The 2023 Business Show was fantastic but the trend towards company posting on LinkedIn and TikTok can be counter-productive: can you deliver from your present manufacturing facility? Marketing is important but it needs be matched by robust manufacturing capability to meet market demand. This is where my holistic financial consultancy approach comes in: looking at everything from HMRC compliance, effective staff structuring, excess spending, to legalities with new planned premises," outlined Roy.

If you're looking to analyse your business model, Roy can offer expert advice and strategic expertise on the following areas: Business Components (taxes, customers to funding), Business infrastructure (cashflow management to Government grants) and Virtual FD Services, to maximise profit areas.

For further information, see the website link below:

T 07741 589633  
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# Compact and flexible: New safety switch with rotating actuator head

Schmersal is set to launch four new electromechanical safety switches with separate actuator: the AZ215/AZ216 and AZ315/AZ316 switches handle safety guard position monitoring of sideways or rotating guard doors. Their stand-out feature is the rotating actuator head made from die-cast zinc, which can be easily rotated in 90° increments before installation. This allows the head to be approached from the side from four different directions, as well as from above. With this versatile approach position and possibility of combination with different actuators, the AZ series offers maximum flexibility in installation, as well as a range of universal usage options to the user. The designer can use the AZ switch both for right-hand and left-hand design on rotating and sliding guard doors.

The plastic or metal switch housing is consistent in design and size with the PS 215/216 and PS 315/316 series position switches, giving the AZ switches an equally compact design and easy integration into the surrounding construction. The small AZ215 and AZ216 switches are consistent with standard EN



50047, while the larger AZ315 and AZ316 switches satisfy standard EN 50041.

In addition to the standard version with M20 cable entry and connection terminals, versions with 4 or 8-pin M12 connector are also available, depending on the number of contacts. With the in-built 8-pin connector, AZ switches can be connected to the SFB Safety Fieldbox.

Device versions with three contacts in a wide range of combinations can also assume a signalling role in addition to their safety function. The connection terminals on the switch elements, which are rotated by 45°, enable quick and easy wiring.

See [www.schmersal.com](http://www.schmersal.com) for more details

## Remembering Hans Koehl

It is with great sorrow that I announce the passing of Hans Koehl. Hans' vision, dedication, and passion led to the transformation of SPIROL from being a small, family-owned business located in Northeast Connecticut into a world-renowned manufacturing company with locations on 4 continents and in 13 countries. Hans retired from active management of SPIROL as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer in 2004 after 45 years of dedicated service, yet remained a steadfast leader as Chairman of the Holding Board of Directors, and as trustee and founding member of the SPIROL Charitable Foundation.



motivated everyone to always do their best. He played a critical role in the professional success and personal happiness of thousands of people. He was kind, exceedingly generous, and gave freely of his time to mentor and enrich the lives of those who knew him by sharing the lessons he learned throughout his storied life and career.

Here is a link to his full obituary: [www.SPIROL.com/Remembering-Hans-Koehl](http://www.SPIROL.com/Remembering-Hans-Koehl)

It is impossible to put into words the unparalleled contributions that Hans made to SPIROL over the last 64 years.

In addition to his lifelong and distinguished achievements, it is his impact on the people in his life that meant the most to him. Hans was a humble and inspirational leader, and

## Relaunch of the tec.nicum website

tec.nicum, the service division of the Schmersal Group, is pleased to announce that its new website has been launched today. The new website features the new, overhauled corporate design of tec.nicum. The website is now characterised by a clearer and more user-friendly structure and can be reached as before at [www.tecnicum.com](http://www.tecnicum.com).



The website provides an overview of all services that tec.nicum provides in terms of machinery safety. tec.nicum's range of services encompasses four pillars, which can be ordered as either individual modules or all-round packages:

- ▲ **tec.nicum academy** – knowledge sharing
- ▲ **tec.nicum consulting** – consulting services
- ▲ **tec.nicum engineering** – conception of safety solutions
- ▲ **tec.nicum integration** – practical implementation

The tec.nicum website includes current information on the comprehensive training and seminar programme of the tec.nicum academy, which also includes the new TÜV-certified

qualification 'Machinery CE Certified Expert'. The seminar calendar provides an at-a-glance overview of all topics and dates, and events can be booked online through the website.

The MRL News magazine, which offers a wealth of well-founded background information on the subject of machinery safety, can also be accessed free of charge via the tec.nicum website, either as an e-paper or as a downloadable PDF.

'Since its foundation seven years ago, tec.nicum has successfully evolved as a service provider. In the meantime, our organisation now operates domestically and at different locations internationally. Our website ensure the best possible accessibility for our services,' explains Siegfried Wolf, Director of tec.nicum.

[www.schmersal.co.uk](http://www.schmersal.co.uk)



# Using Steamers to Control and effectively remove Bed Bugs

Using Steamers to Control and effectively remove Bed Bugs Dry Steam is a highly effective method for killing bed bugs in all stages of their development if applied correctly. When using steam as a treatment, the quality and boiler temperature of the steamer is very important. As a guidance, a commercial steamer with a minimum boiler temperature of 150 degrees Celsius and 6 bar pressure or an even higher pressure should be selected - with a manual or digital steam volume control. It should be noted, however, that in this type of application it is the boiler temperature that is more important than the pressure.



The smaller type of steamer normally used to steam clothing or steamers with a boiler temperature below 150°C, will not be effective for bed bug treatment. Also don't use a carpet cleaning machine as this will virtually have no effect as Carpet cleaning machines do not reach high enough temperatures to kill bed bugs.

The OSPREYDEEPCLEAN Steam & Vac Pro is the ideal machine for this application. Dry Steam Machines work by delivering lethal temperatures to where bed bugs may be hiding. Steam is very effective when bed bugs are on the surface of items such as carpets, mattresses and can be effective up to 3-4" into fabric surfaces. In cracks and crevices, steam will kill bed bugs up to 3-8" into a gap. Use an infrared thermometer to monitor the surface

temperature of the area being treated. To effectively kill bed bugs the surface temperature should be at least 60-70 degrees Celsius (160-180°F) immediately after the steam tool has passed..

Following the manufacturer's directions for using the dry steamer (with the additional precautions) below will help you generate steam safely whilst obtaining maximum control of bed bugs.

## Here are some additional tips to follow:

- ▲ Select a Dry Steam & Vacuum machine with a water filtration to capture the "waste".
- ▲ Attach a nozzle -or on flat surfaces- a carpet upholstery tool to the steam wand.
- ▲ For carpets, the floor nozzle will also work but the operator will have to move the nozzle more slowly to obtain the right temperatures and to increase the steam volume.
- ▲ Surfaces must reach a temperature range of 60-70 degrees Celsius (160-180°F). Below this, bed bugs may survive. An infrared thermometer should be used to measure surface temperatures after the wand has passed over the area being steamed. If the temperature is too low, move the wand more slowly but this may increase the risk of damage to the fabric and other materials. If the temperature is too high, move the wand faster.
- ▲ Fabric may be very slightly damp, afterwards but will quickly dry. Use the steamer on all surfaces where you see bed bugs and areas where you think bed bugs may be hiding. You may have to repeat this procedure a couple of times as this method only provides control of bed bugs that are exposed to the heat, any bed bugs that do not come into contact with the steam will survive.
- ▲ Select the correct steam volume subject to the accessory chosen this should be set at low to medium level. Do not choose full volume as this would only blast the bedbug away but not kill them. Slowly move over the chosen area. Once completed switch on the vacuum at full level and use the steam and vacuum setting to slowly move over the same area again to collect all the "waste".
- ▲ Once the operator has completed 1 area/room safely empty the waste container to drain or into a toilet and fill the waste tank with fresh water which basically is the new filter medium with HEPA filtration like efficacy. For a "Belt and Braces" approach there is the option to spray the surfaces with an approved insecticide for residual efficacy.



**For more information and guidance in choosing the correct machine call OSPREYDEEPCLEAN on 01242 513123 or email [sales@ospreydc.com](mailto:sales@ospreydc.com).**



## SLIMLINE PULL-WIRE SWITCH FOR SAFE MACHINE START-UP: PS216-Q200/Q210

Pull-wire switches are used as signal transmitters to start machines, open electrically driven doors and gates or as light switches in elevator shafts.

The PS216 pull-wire switch comes in two versions, the Q200 has a holding force of 45N and is suitable for wire lengths of up to 50m, while the Q210 has a holding force of 70N and can be used with wires stretching up to 100m. Pulling on the pull wire actuates the switch function in the pull-wire switch.

The high protection class and wide temperature range enable these switches to be used in a variety of applications.

Start your machine the safe way, the Schmersal way.





# Oliver Valves wins order for Major Green Field Project

Oliver Valves has won a significant order to supply a large number of Metal Seated Double Block and Bleed Ball valves to a Major Green Field onshore project located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Territory Manager for the Middle East, Haridas Embanath says "winning the order was the result of strong relationships with our distributor network and end users in the region, but it's really down to the efforts of our engineering and support team that provided the perfect valve solution to meet difficult cost restraints."

Value engineering is second-nature to Oliver's. By working closely with customers and engineering consultants, the scope of work can be understood and project objectives fully realised. Cost is a fundamental consideration for customers, and modelling scenarios using various combinations of materials and designs can help



to find the best valve solutions possible. Value engineering on this project has resulted in valves manufactured with Carbon Steel body and trim, and Inconel Weld Overlay. The estimated additional saving for the customer is around 20% – 30%.

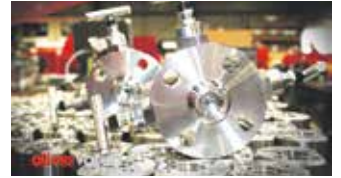
**For more information on how Oliver Valves can supply your project with the very best valve solutions, contact Oliver Valves on +44 (0)1565 632 636 or email [sales@valves.co.uk](mailto:sales@valves.co.uk) | [www.valves.co.uk](http://www.valves.co.uk)**

# Oliver Valves supply world's largest offshore wind farm

Oliver Valves are to supply a range of Modular and Monoflange double block and bleed valves to the Hornsea 3 Wind Farm project located in the UK sector of the North Sea. Hornsea 3 has two platforms, link 1 and link 2. These are unmanned and operated from shore with access to carry out maintenance done by vessel or helicopter.

These High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) offshore converter platforms have a combined capacity to produce 2.852 GW, enough to power the average daily needs of over 3 million UK homes. This makes it the single largest offshore wind project in the world.

Manufactured from 316 Stainless Steel, Super Duplex, and Titanium materials, valves are to be used in cooling systems and firewater applications. Regional Manager for Scotland and Scandinavia, Colin Wood, says, "We're extremely proud as a business to supply valves for operation on large-scale green energy projects, and it's



particularly exciting to be working with a UK-based green project, such as Hornsea 3."

We're committed to supporting a Net Zero Emission future, and have recently launched a range of zero seat leakage valves for hydrogen applications. Our investment in designing new and innovative valve technologies is having an enormous impact and is hugely significant – even a game changer!"

**For more information on how Oliver Valves can support your green energy project with the very best valve solutions, contact us on +44 (0)1565 632 636 or email [sales@valves.co.uk](mailto:sales@valves.co.uk) | [www.valves.co.uk](http://www.valves.co.uk)**

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# Christeyns Food Hygiene wins Training Company of the Year at the SOFHT Awards 2023

Warrington based Christeyns Food Hygiene, part of Christeyns UK, were proud to receive the SOFHT Training Company of the Year Award at the event in London last night.

SOFHT is an independent consortium of food industry specialists set up to keep members advised of the current hygiene and technology issues through the provision of technical support, training and topical information as well as a vital forum for networking and sharing best practice across the entire food chain. The annual awards, now in their 19th year, recognise and celebrate excellence within the food industry and its associated industries.

As well as designing hygiene chemicals and equipment, Christeyns Food Hygiene run an educational platform for the training of hygiene professionals. The Christeyns Academy has evolved since its inception in 2013 to become a valuable

resource for manufacturing companies in the food sector. What started as a requirement to provide chemical safety training has grown into a package of training materials to support all food sector requirements.

Commenting on the award win, Martin Mann, Senior Customer Development Manager, states:

“We are delighted to have been named SOFHT Training Company of the Year 2023. This recognition of our specialist knowledge and training programmes highlights the range of support we can provide to the wider industry to assist them in attaining manufacturing excellence.

Food hygiene is paramount in safeguarding the public, a firm’s reputation and in managing a successful food production business. It underlines all we do, and we are passionate about



ensuring food and drink safety across all sectors of our business.”

Christeyns Food Hygiene provides innovative hygiene solutions and specialised technical support for the food and beverage industry that ensure compliance with procedures, legislation and industry codes of practice.

[www.christeynsfoodhygiene.co.uk](http://www.christeynsfoodhygiene.co.uk)

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For more information on our Core Services see below.  
[www.food-care.co.uk](http://www.food-care.co.uk)

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# Operator-based condition monitoring for Industry 5.0

Applied Maintenance Technology (AMT) is an industry-leading reliability consultant, offering cutting-edge condition monitoring solutions to diverse sectors such as: Aggregates, steel processing, power generation, petrochemical, automotive, mobile plants, through to distilleries and many more.

Established by owner Graham Simpson in 2008, AMT goes beyond generic operator empowered reliability frameworks by offering truly bespoke solutions, as Graham outlines,

"FETCH is our operator-based condition monitoring system, which was initially launched in 2022. It allows the operator to carry out assessments on assets, namely equipment, with potential faults triggering the automated early warning systems.

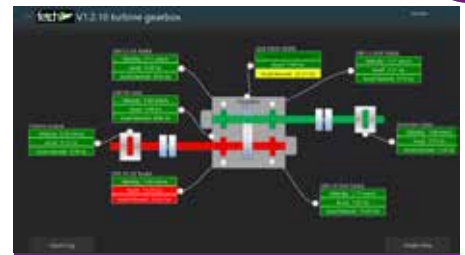
FETCH is our gold-standard multi-variable package solution, across the vibration process, measuring velocity, acceleration and displacement and detecting faults in rotating element machinery, including bearings and electrical defects. The robust lubrication function monitors both rate and quality of the lubricant, optimising the longevity of machinery. What stands FETCH apart is the bespoke measurements that detect potential failures at an early stage, minimising downtime considerably across operations.

Looking ahead to 2024, we will continue perfecting our operator-based condition

monitoring system, expanding our Artificial Intelligence and machine learning capability. With many companies also concerned about cyber-security threats, we are implementing measures to mitigate any potential attacks from external systems and terrorists."

Applied Maintenance Technology is a reliability partner, not a service provider, with FETCH offering an innovative, autonomous monitoring solution, through predictive machinery measurements. The simple interface has an early warning system, which flags up any operation issues. There are numerous benefits including the reduction of time-based maintenance, identifying faults at a much earlier stage, eliminating the risk of equipment failure/breakdown and minimal part repairs. Applied Maintenance Technology has mastered the art of real-time data and predictive analytics, allowing companies to move to a culture of proactive implementation, rather than the more traditional and expensive reactive strategy.

In a time of global recession, it is important that companies have rapid delivery lead-times, to keep up with the competition. Customers still expect streamlined processing of orders and that can only happen if machinery is running at optimal productivity, all year round. By investing in FETCH, operators can futureproof operations and respond to any issues immediately, through the early warning system.



Overview showing alarms

If you're looking to invest in a cutting-edge operator-based condition monitoring system, let FETCH do the work for you. With in-built capability to measure vibration amplitude and frequency, lubrication and process efficiency, this AI system innately understands your vibration intensity, lubrication parameters and performance efficiency, for guaranteed, longevity of equipment functionality.

"Industry 5.0 is chiefly concerned with new technology driving societal values and wellbeing, all wrapped up in sustainability. Using AI is no longer a novel approach across many industries, it is the only way to run machinery in the most sustainable way possible. Our operator-based condition monitoring system assists companies with machinery longevity, therefore wholly contributing to the circular economy," concludes Graham.

**If you're interested in FETCH or any other products, please contact AMT below.**

**T 01925 940566**

**[sales@applied-maintenance-technology.co.uk](mailto:sales@applied-maintenance-technology.co.uk)**  
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# Lanes backs sports participation in football sponsorship deal

National drainage and wastewater specialist Lanes Group plc is delighted to support participation in sport by sponsoring a team at a community football club close to its Aberdeen depot.

The company has agreed a kit sponsorship deal with the Westdyke Community Club 2007s team.

### Sporting pillar

Lanes Scottish Regional Manager, Brian Kerrigan, said: "We're very happy to support a club that does such good work providing sports activity for more than 500 boys, girls, men and women from the age of four upwards.

"Westdyke CC is a pillar of the community. By supporting it, the Lanes Aberdeen depot can also demonstrate our commitment to delivering excellent services to businesses and residents in Aberdeen and across the North East of Scotland."

### Benefits of sport

The focus is on encouraging

participation going further than financial support as Lanes Aberdeen Area Development Manager Mark Morrice has also become a coach at the club.

Once a keen junior footballer, the club sponsored Mark to pass the Scottish FA Level 2 course.

He said: "Having seen the fantastic work Westdyke Community Club does to encourage participation in sport for people of all abilities, I was very pleased Lanes agreed to sponsor one of its teams.

### Drainage excellence

The Lanes Aberdeen depot, in Minto Drive, Altens Industrial Estate, Aberdeen, delivers comprehensive drainage, wastewater and industrial cleaning services for Aberdeen, Dundee and the North East of Scotland.

They include CCTV drainage surveys, drain unblocking, sewer cleaning, sewer excavation and repair, sewer lining, off-mains tank maintenance, repair and



replacement, and industrial pipe and tank cleaning.

### Find out more

For more information about Westdyke Community Club, visit the club's website.

For more information about Lanes Aberdeen services, email mark.morrice@lanesgroup.co.uk or telephone the depot on 01224 709070.

# Five Years of Unblocktober: A 2023 Recap

2023 marked the fifth anniversary of our flagship public awareness campaign, Unblocktober. This initiative, built to spread awareness and cultivate a cultural shift in the nation's attitudes towards drain and sewer misuse, has a powerful impact each year and will continue to do so moving forward.

In honour of half a decade of Fatberg fighting, we'd like to take a look at what the Unblocktober campaign has achieved in the last five years to support drain health around the UK.

### National Support

Launched in 2019 Unblocktober has reached participation rates and growth far wider than the team at Lanes foresaw. From 4,500



participants in its first year, Unblocktober has now aggregated a total of nearly 70,000 participants across both individual and business sign-ups.

Industry Leaders, Influencers and Outlets Unblocktober has had some unprecedented support over the years from the likes of Thames Water, Severn Trent Water, Anglian Water, Southern Water, Yorkshire Water and United Utilities, as well as Water UK, Love Water and the Environment Agency.

Unblocktober has also received some amazing coverage from some of the UK's leading news outlets including the BBC, ITV, the Daily Mail, the Daily Express, and Yahoo as well as the backing of MPs Cheryllyn Mackrory and Fleur Anderson, and support from TalkTalk, the University of Hertfordshire and the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

2022 Manchester Canal Clean-Up On October 25th 2022, the Unblocktober team and supporters took to the canal banks and spent two hours clearing rubbish from the New Islington area of Manchester. In that time, we cleared ten bin bags of litter, including cotton buds, wet wipe, glass, plastic bags and more – all of which would have been carried through the waterways and allowed to damage the environment.

The clean-up initiative was a chance to put into perspective just how widespread the issue of littering and misuse of the drains is

around the UK.

As we continue with Unblocktober, we hope to organise more initiatives like the Manchester clean-up, and can continue to have a tangible impact on the communities Lanes Group support.

### What's Next for Unblocktober?

We are looking to increase our presence at conferences and festivals where we can continue to spread awareness of the importance of mindful drain usage and sensible disposal of food waste and disposables items.

Lanes is also excited to work closely with partners to provide unified, nationwide messaging that reaches the widest possible audience, as well as increase our national presence with pop-ups and road-show events that will help to further get our message to the public.

In the coming years, we want to outgrow our month initiative and make Unblocktober a household name all year round.

The next five have so much potential and we would love you to get involved at home and in your workplace.

You can read more about the Unblocktober campaign for 2023 and previous years here: [unblocktober.org](http://unblocktober.org)

# Lanes Group named as a finalist in the Highways Awards

The company has been recognised in a joint submission with supplier WinCan for its innovative use of highways drainage inspection systems.

Lanes has been shortlisted in the Product of the Year category.

Its teams are using a digital scanning device, CleverScan, supplied by sewer inspection and asset management software specialist WinCan. It eliminates the need for confined space entries to inspect highways drainage chambers.

The highly portable equipment also accelerates the inspection process and provides contractors with richer and more accurate data about the structure and condition of drainage assets.

Data captured by CleverScan and other powerful CCTV drainage surveying systems

is now being sent via the cloud to a new national data processing centre dedicated solely to highways projects.

Lanes Head of Highways Ben Forsyth said:

"This is providing our clients with an unrivalled integrated highways drainage service that provides faster, safer and more sustainable maintenance, replacement and installation of highways drainage systems."

WinCan is a leading provider of embedded, desktop and cloud solutions for data collection, analysis and rehabilitation planning, covering all aspects of pipeline and chamber condition assessment.

WinCan Managing Director Paul Woodhouse said: "WinCan has been partnering with Lanes for 25 years bringing leading technology to the UK's drainage and wastewater sectors.



"CleverScan complements other technologies in the WinCan portfolio that Lanes teams use to add value in the highways sector and many others."

All Lanes drainage engineers are trained and qualified. Many hold the National Highways Passport with common induction.

The company provides a full suite of surveying and inspection services, including CCTV, GPS, full HADDMS and asset conditions surveys, with in-house professional engineering support, if needed.

## Lanes tracks path to road safety and fleet excellence

Innovative use of one of the world's most sophisticated vehicle tracking platforms is building drainage and wastewater specialist Lanes Group plc a global reputation for road safety.

Lanes, the UK's largest independent drainage contractor, has now installed the Samsara digital system in all 3,000 of its vehicles, from articulated lorries to company cars.

Samsara has been so impressed with the smart way Lanes has uses its technology that it invited company representatives to attend its annual conference in Austin Texas, in June 2023, to showcase what is being achieved.

### AI software

The tracking system, which uses artificial intelligent software to monitor the way vehicles are driven and the behaviour of drivers behind the wheel, was first installed in Lanes vehicles operated for Thames Water.

In the last 12 months, it has been rolled out across all other water utility and rail service fleets, and installed in all vehicles based at 22 commercial depots operated by Lanes across the UK.

In that time:

- ▲ Annual insurance claims costs have fallen by £250,000;
- ▲ There has been a big reduction in the severity of insurance claims;
- ▲ Average claim costs have fallen by £1,000;
- ▲ A substantial number of 50-50 blame incidents have switched to non-fault;
- ▲ At least £60,000 has been saved in workflow costs.

### 'Incredible' impact

Tom Earnshaw, Transport Compliance



Controller for the Lanes depot network, described Samsara as a game changer for the company, which operates 800 HGVs, 2,000 vans and 200 cars, all fitted with the system.

### Driver alerts

The platform uses GPS to continuously monitor the location of every vehicle in the Lanes fleet. It also records the speed, acceleration, braking and fuel efficiency of vehicles as they are driven.

A forward facing camera monitors traffic. While a camera facing into the cab continuously checks on the driver and any passengers. AI technology alerts the driver and fleet controllers if the camera records risky behaviour, such as driver inattentiveness.

### High performing

Lanes drivers are in the top 15% for driving standards for all drivers monitored by Samsara globally. Lanes is also in the top 3% of companies for the level of the driving standard

it sets using the system.

This includes a daily work form and wellbeing check and daily vehicle checks and vehicle off road (VoR) forms that require drivers to record the condition of their vehicles, with transport managers bring alerted within 30 minutes if checks are not carried out.

### Cutting costs

These more efficient vehicle checks are expected to improve safety compliance and reduce vehicle downtime, improving fleet utilisation and reducing maintenance costs.

Lanes now uses the Samsara document system to collect 82,000 forms every month, more than any other system user in Europe – creating a rich pool of data for analysing performance.

### Peace of mind

The Samsara app allows drivers to monitor their personal driving performance and styles. It is also used to send out tailored driving alerts and coaching videos and automatically uploads HGV tachograph data.

[www.lanesfordrains.co.uk](http://www.lanesfordrains.co.uk)





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**Simon Turner MARRM MAFP, Campaign Manager, Driving for Better Business**

# Why fleet and driver safety shouldn't be a lottery



Do you play the National Lottery? Millions do and, every week, they buy a ticket in the hope of winning the jackpot. Yet the odds of doing that are a vanishingly small 1 in 45 million! And still millions of people think it might be them.

In Great Britain, there are roughly 20 million vehicles driven on business including company cars, vans, HGVs and private cars used for work journeys – some every day, some only occasionally.

Every year, according to government statistics, around 40,000 people are injured in collisions that involve someone who was driving for work. Plus, these are only the injuries that are reported – many aren't. And there are many more that only involve damage to vehicles or property. This means the odds of being involved in an injury collision while driving for work are just 1 in 500 and yet very few people ever believe it will happen to them. If your drivers and vehicles aren't managed well, then the odds could be even higher.

Anyone who manages company vehicles and their drivers has a legal duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act to take all 'reasonably practicable' steps to minimise the risk to staff, and anyone else who may be affected by the company's operations.

#### In short, this legislation means that:

- ▲ The company mustn't do anything that puts drivers at risk
- ▲ The company's work-related driving activities mustn't endanger any other road users
- ▲ Directors must put appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure that this is so
- ▲ And all employees including drivers, managers and directors must follow those policies and procedures at all times.

**The key to success is understanding how these legal responsibilities are shared across the business at all levels:**

- ▲ Directors and managers have a responsibility to ensure that risks are identified and managed, and that the correct policies and procedures are put in place
- ▲ Your drivers have a responsibility to follow those procedures and behave responsibly at all times, driving safely and following the Highway Code
- ▲ Line managers, work schedulers and others may also have an important role to play in managing the risk, by ensuring that drivers aren't subject to unreasonable demands that might encourage them to speed or increase the risk of fatigue.

#### Is this really how we do things round here?

Culture is vital to improving driver safety. Culture can be defined as 'the way we do things round here.' When new people start working for an organisation, they'll look around them at how things are done and copy the prevailing behaviours. If they see corners being cut, they'll cut corners themselves and, if they see everyone taking care to do things right, then they copy them to fit in.

This is why it's so important to manage your drivers well, ensuring they are clear about the standards expected of them. It means you need to focus on three things: a good driving for work policy that is clearly communicated to all staff, and consistently applied and monitored.

These are the key building blocks of a strong and resilient safety culture. Remember – your existing drivers play a vital role in the successful integration of safe new drivers.

#### Just the cost of doing business?

Running vans can be an expensive business. While poor driving can obviously put your drivers and other road users at risk, it can also cost your organisation huge amounts of money, but often in ways, you may not realise. The most obvious costs are fleet insurance premiums and repairs arising from unnecessary vehicle damage, whether that be serious collisions or just avoidable parking scrapes. However, there are many hidden costs that are also involved such as the increase in admin and management time sorting out claims and repairs, right up to

staff absence and vehicle off road time if the incident was more serious.

Operational costs such as fuel, tyres, routine service and maintenance, insurance and damage repairs are often simply seen as the cost of doing business yet they can be significantly higher than they need to be when drivers and vehicles aren't being managed properly.

You can only control costs if you are measuring and monitoring the right data and linking it to driver behaviour.

If you aren't measuring and you aren't monitoring then you aren't managing – it's as simple as that!

#### Stand up and be counted

It is vitally important that the leaders in charge of the business clearly commit to supporting those responsible for managing driver risk and that they can put into words why driver safety is so important to them personally and to the business as a whole.

Of course, leaders need to make sure their commitment is genuine or it all falls down very quickly. A leader that states how important driver safety is, and then fails to take an interest or provide support when needed or, worse, actively goes against the policy such as failing to abide by a mobile phone policy or failing to pull up employees who don't meet the standards, will quickly lose the support of the workforce and the culture will fail.

Don't allow your driver risk management to become a lottery. Knowledge and careful planning are needed to ensure that you, your drivers, other road users and your business are fully protected, and the free Driving for Better Business programme can help.

**If you'd like to learn more about what you and your organisation should be doing and whether you have any gaps in your driver risk management, join our free programme at: [www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com](http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com). We have a wealth of free online tools and resources to help you understand where your priorities should be to reduce risk, control costs and improve efficiency.**





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