



# bbey

MAGAZINE

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**Steve Granite**  
Chief Executive  
Abbey Logistics Group

## Dear colleagues

It's been a busy few months following the acquisition of Armet Logistics which has partly helped the business grow from £45m turnover in June 2016 to £70m.

This is a large increase in turnover and resource which brings about challenges to ensure we improve our service and efficiency. Our focus in the coming months is on integrating Armet and focussing on driving efficiencies and service levels. We do not anticipate any significant growth in the next 6 months as focus is on settling down the enlarged group.

Through the acquisition, we welcomed more than 100 new colleagues to the Group. I would like to thank you all for your support and the continued positive approach and commitment you give to your roles and our customers.

We have also continued to see an impressive improvement in the Compliance and Health and Safety area of the business in which I believe we can become best in class.

Due to the growth in the business, we are currently looking at several different IT projects including potential new 'Transport Management System', 'Tracking and Telematics system' and a 'Workshop Management System', all aimed at making our business slicker and improving the availability of key data that will allow us to manage the business better and ensure Abbey remains at the cutting edge of Logistics.





## on the road to a *greener* future

I am really pleased that we have been shortlisted for this year's Motor Transport 'Haulier of the Year' award. Having judged these awards myself, I know how difficult it is to be shortlisted, let alone win the award. If successful, Abbey will become the first company to win this award 3 times in its near 30 year history. Even more impressive is that fact we'd have won it 3 times in the past 7 years! You should be proud of your role in this!

There is a lot of change happening in the business right now. Some things are going to plan, some things aren't, but overall I am pleased with how our business is developing.

Our strategy is to grow to £100m by 2021 and to focus mainly on growth in the UK and European tanker markets. Growth will come from larger contracts that add real value to Abbey and play to our strengths as a forward thinking, best in class Logistics business.

I hope you find the magazine informative as we try and keep you up to date with developments and direction at Abbey! 



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## Abbey begin construction of new liquid drumming facility

In February, we began construction of a new liquid food drumming facility at our warehousing and palletised base in Bromborough on the Wirral.

The drumming plant is being built to support a key liquid food customer and will provide a significant added value service to the bulk liquid transport we currently operate on their behalf.

This new development will see Abbey providing bulk tanker movements of finished products to our food grade drumming facility, where tankers will discharge the products into the facility to be packaged in drums. Filled drums will be transported through Abbey's distribution fleet across the UK and Europe.

Although drum filling isn't a core service offering for Abbey, we have experience and capability within the business to deliver this safety and hygiene critical service on our customer's behalf. Our knowledge and expertise in food grade logistics means we have the specialist experience

essential to this service. We hold all the necessary accreditations and management processes to ensure our drumming service is a success for our customer.


Nick Hight, Abbey's Palletised Divisional Manager said: "Before we could offer drumming as a service, we would have to transport products to a subcontracted packaging company to fill the drums from our vehicles. Now we are able to handle all of the filling and logistics from one place.

"The win for our customer is that we have significantly reduced transport mileage and costs associated with subcontracting filling. Our customer can now rely on Abbey to look after every aspect of the supply chain, from point of manufacture to point of delivery of the filled drums which Abbey transports through our distribution fleet. This enables Abbey to control

the strict standards of hygiene required for transporting food grade products.

Dave Coulson, Abbey Logistics' Commercial Director said: "The drumming facility is another example of how Abbey responds to our customers' requirements with innovative and tailored solutions.

"As our customers grow and their requirements change, we have the flexibility and resource needed to grow and adapt to their needs, always providing a service that continuously improves their ability to service their own customers'.

"We have built the drumming facility with growth in mind and are now able to provide food grade packaging to other customers looking for a flexible and reliable full service logistics partner." 

# Are Gas powered vehicles now a realistic alternative?

That's the question Abbey Logistics' fleet Engineer David Batty has been asking for many years, and now with the extended range available with compressed natural gas, is it a realistic alternative to diesel power?

One of my most important roles at Abbey Logistics is to analyse and trial new vehicles and associated technology. Before selecting any vehicles for our fleet, I take a highly-detailed approach to understanding the vehicle's whole life cost, taking into account everything from mpg performance, maintenance costs, curb weight, specialist equipment fitting and aerodynamic drag.



One of the gas tanks on the trial vehicle

Having trialled many gas-powered vehicles in the past, including dual fuel, LPG, LNG, CNG and many more, trials have usually shown the same results, promising technology, ease of maintenance, zero emissions and reduced fuel costs. However, and crucially for a company like Abbey Logistics, who count every penny of its fleet costs, and rely on the flexibility of our network, the vehicles have always been too expensive to buy and their mileage range has always been too low to be a viable alternative to diesel.

That was until now. Innovative new technology from Scania and Iveco means that LNG (liquid natural gas) and CNG (compressed natural gas) can now be used in vehicles that can achieve almost the same miles per tank as their diesel equivalents.

Abbey Logistics is now working with CNG Fuels, the UK's leading operator of CNG, to run trials on new CNG vehicles. The trucks from Iveco and Scania will be put through their paces

in a two-month trial, operating on the same routes, carrying the same loads as their diesel counterparts to give us a clear picture of how they are performing.


One of the key benefits of conducting real world trials of new vehicles especially ones which use new technology, is that our drivers have the opportunity to feedback how they are performing. Are they comfortable? Is safety and compliance impacted in any way? Are there any other concerns that only emerge once the vehicle is out on the road? We conduct in-depth interviews with drivers to get their feedback, which is vital as it is our drivers who will be working with these vehicles every day.

Drivers involved in the trial will be trained to use the new refuelling pumps, which use a traffic light system that tells the driver when fuelling is complete and it takes no longer than filling up a diesel tank. Refuelling is also inherently safe and clean due to zero spillage and the driver doesn't need to

stand next to the vehicle during the process.

Additional benefits are obvious: zero emissions and reduced fuel costs and because the engines themselves are much simpler than modern diesel engines, maintenance costs should be reduced too.

While the latest CNG developments are exciting, we are reserving judgement until a full evaluation of the gas-powered vehicles is complete.

Whilst I've known about the potential benefits of gas power in LGVs for a long time, it is only now through these new engines that there is a real alternative to diesel emerging. I'm excited to understand how these trucks perform in the real world as the potential benefits to the environment and our cost base would be significant. We will test them objectively and if we find that they perform as well or better than our current fleet, that will be a real game changing moment for Abbey and the wider industry. 



# Abbey Logistics secures transport contract with Tata Chemicals and British Salt

Abbey Logistics Group, the UK's largest provider of bulk salt transport services, has been selected by Tata Chemicals Europe to exclusively manage all bulk transport and logistics for all its products, including sister company British Salt, across the UK.

Tata Chemicals Ltd is one of the world's leading producers of sodium carbonate (soda ash) and sodium bicarbonate. Sodium carbonate is a key raw material used in glass, detergent and chemical manufacturing. Applications for sodium bicarbonate range from food to pharmaceuticals to air pollution control. In the UK, Tata Chemicals Europe is the sole producer of Soda Ash (sodium carbonate) and the market-leading producer of sodium bicarbonate.

Sister company British Salt is the UK's leading manufacturer of pure dried vacuum salt products. It supplies over half the UK's pure white salts and other salt products from a self-sufficient, environmentally friendly, and high efficiency manufacturing facility site in Middlewich, Cheshire.

Abbey will provide transport for all products in bulk powder road tankers and distribute them to British Salt and Tata Chemicals Europe customers throughout the UK. Abbey will also take responsibility for transport planning and

all on-site logistics services, and work in partnership with Tata Chemicals Europe and British Salt to develop and improve distribution flexibility and reliability to meet cyclical volume demands of individual products.

Abbey have provided transport services to Tata Chemicals Europe and British Salt for several years as a third-party supplier and during that time the two companies have developed a strong working relationship. Working in partnership, the companies have consistently demonstrated added value initiatives and continuous improvement programmes that maintains Tata and British Salt's world class levels of customer service and satisfaction.

Pauline Sumner – Tata Chemicals Head of Procurement said: "Through working with Abbey for a number of years we have seen first-hand the dedication and commitment they give to their customers. The partnership we have built has improved the service we provide our customers as



we are able to deliver a safe, flexible and scalable transport solution, which is vital in the markets we serve."

Dave Coulson – Abbey Logistics Commercial Director said: "We are delighted that Tata and British Salt have entrusted Abbey with such critical services. We understand the sensitivities of seasonal food manufacture and have a deep knowledge of the complexities involved with sodium bicarbonate distribution, and very much look forward to supporting the continued success of Tata and British Salt and its customers." 





## Abbey is now the UK's no. 1 bulk chocolate logistics company

The effective operation of a chocolate supply chain is a critical success factor for manufacturers in this competitive sector. Supply chains can be complex and flexibility is fundamental, particularly during busy seasonal periods.

When transporting chocolate over long distances, a logistics provider must have the right equipment, be extremely flexible and ready to respond quickly to manufacturers changing schedules.


Abbey has excelled in this sector and in recent years has grown to be one of the leading providers of liquid chocolate transport and logistics solutions. The delicate nature of chocolate means that timely and successful delivery is crucial, whilst also finding a balance between value and speed for customers.

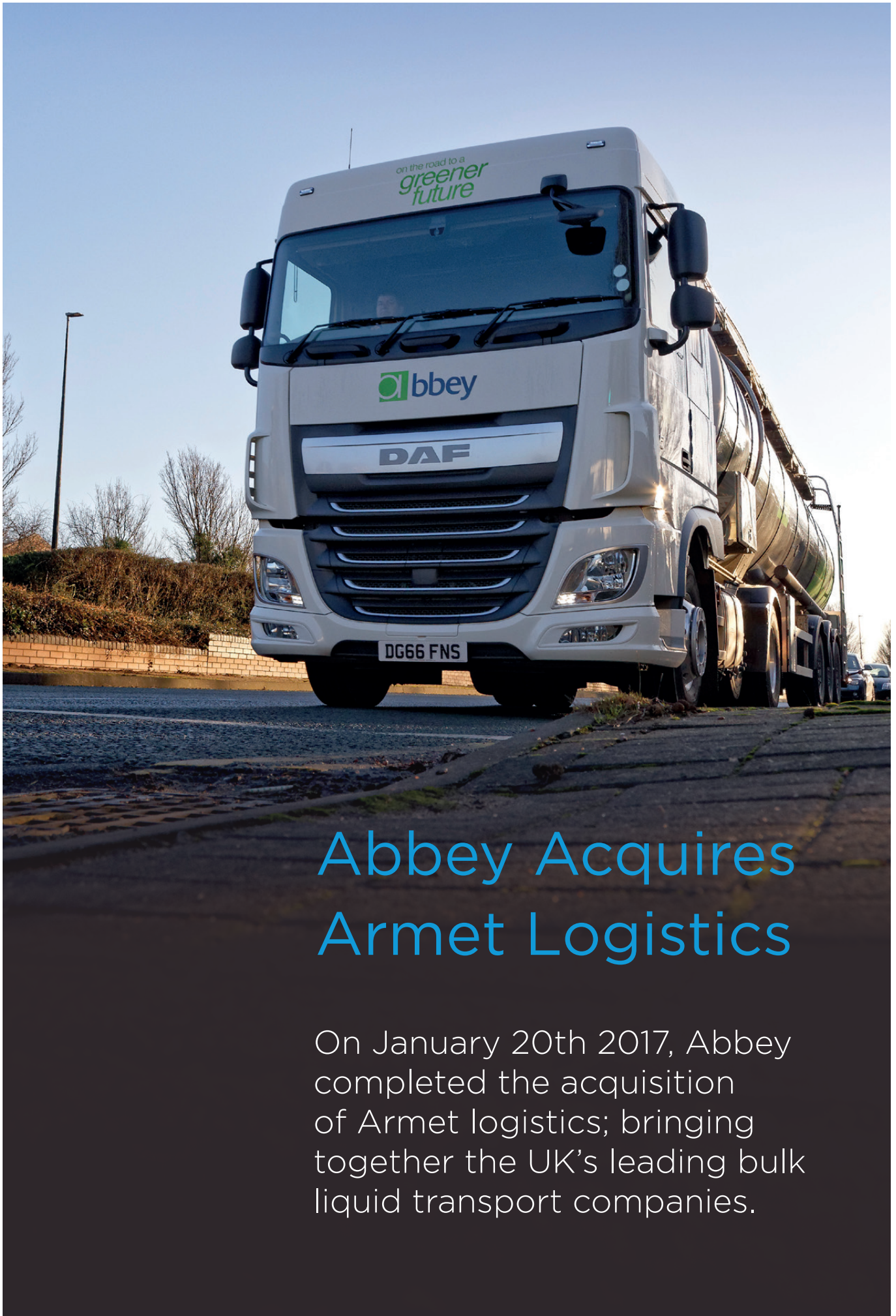
Abbey has successfully created a reputation in this market for finding that balance and giving customers the levels of service and performance that is critical to chocolate manufacturers.

Recent contract wins in the chocolate sector combined with the acquisition of Armet and their chocolate customers means that Abbey is now the largest transporter of liquid chocolate in the UK.

We work with most of the major chocolate manufacturers in the UK and have a dedicated fleet of chocolate tankers equipped with specialist heating systems and insulation that ensures product integrity. This is supported by our team of highly trained and chocolate specialist drivers, qualified to load, transport and unload chocolate to strict hygiene and food safety standards.

In addition, our success also relies upon our planners and management team whose in-depth product knowledge has helped build our chocolate transport and logistics service to the leading position we hold in the market UK market.

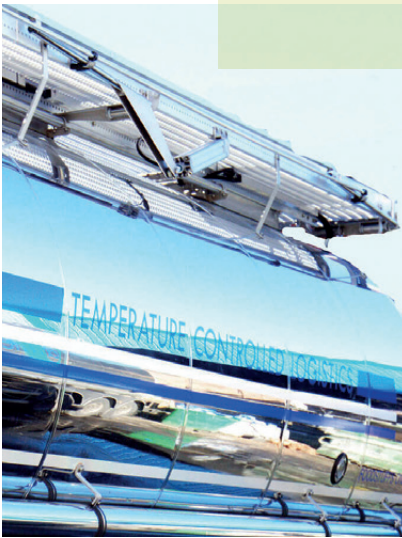
The chocolate market is evolving and we are seeing UK manufacturers exporting chocolate to countries traditionally seen as chocolate specialists such as Belgium and Switzerland. Abbey is in a strong position to capitalise on this and develop the services we provide to an ever-wider customer base. 



# Abbey Acquires Armet Logistics

On January 20th 2017, Abbey completed the acquisition of Armet logistics; bringing together the UK's leading bulk liquid transport companies.





Abbey and Armet share a common capability and passion to develop best-in-class, high quality logistics solutions. Both companies also share the same positive, can-do spirit that has enabled us to grow and develop strong reputations in our sectors. By bringing Armet into Abbey Logistics Group, this culture will be strengthened.

Abbey and Armet share many customers and business partners, and as a result of the acquisition they will have access to an even wider portfolio of services and resources which will enable us to further increase the leading levels of flexibility we already provide.

Immediately after the acquisition Abbey and Armet operated as separate entities. Since then we have taken the time to gain a better understanding of each other's processes, recognise areas where we can enhance our service and identify potential efficiency gains. Most importantly, by taking this time to integrate the two businesses we have ensured zero service disruption during the transition period and beyond.

The Armet business is a successful and well-managed company. Abbey is mindful that Armet's unique abilities and strong customer service are the

reason many of their customers choose them. Our aim is to build on these qualities, embed them within the combined business and not lose any of the culture and spirit that Armet's customer's value and that the company has worked so hard to build.


In terms of bringing the two companies together, our plan is to integrate the two businesses in July 17. Progress towards integration is going well with the full support of all our teams and we are confident the integration will go ahead as planned.

However, if we feel that the integration may impact service in any way we will postpone until we know any changes will be seamless and have no detrimental impact to the service we provide to customers.

Bringing the Abbey and Armet vehicle fleets together gives us an unrivalled capability and the

UK's largest liquid food road tanker fleet. Our increased size allows us to respond faster to changes in our customer's schedules and manufacturing timetables.

To ensure we are utilising our larger fleet, our planners across both businesses need to work closely together, support each other and identify efficiency savings that we can pass on to our customers. For this reason, Abbey moved planners responsible for liquids in to the Armet planning office in Liverpool. The teams are working well together, sharing best practice and maximising the efficiency of our combined liquid fleet, and utilising our increased ability to provide tank cleaning and vehicle and trailer maintenance without having to subcontract work.

The encouraging progress both companies have made since the acquisition will continue and Abbey is well on the way to creating a transport and logistics company that is seen as a high benchmark in our industry. Our goal has always been and will continue to be taking problems away from our customers and delivering a best in class service that simplifies transport solutions and furthers our customers' success. 

## Marcia Findlay Joins Abbey as Group Head of HR

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Marcia Findlay as Group Head of HR.




Marcia brings a wealth of experience to her role gained in a number of fast moving and highly competitive sectors.

Marcia will be responsible for the full range of HR functions, including employee relations, training and development, reward and recognition. Marcia's

appointment will support and strengthen the Group's high calibre management team through a period of rapid growth.

Announcing the appointment, Steve Granite, Abbey Logistic's CEO said: "Abbey's transformation into a recognised National and European transport company will only be achieved through a strong, engaged and highly-motivated workforce. With her successful track record of delivering HR and organisational change across a variety of complex businesses, Marcia has exactly the right experience, vision and energy to help us achieve this."

Marcia joins Abbey from Travelodge where she was the HR Projects Manager. She has significant experience of working in a variety of senior HR roles across a diverse range of businesses including Bibby Distribution and Asda.

Marcia said: "This is an exciting time to be joining Abbey Logistics Group. The company has achieved a great deal in a short space of time and I look forward to working with such a talented group of individuals and continuing to shape Abbey's culture, by placing people and values at the heart of our business." 

## Mike Ellis appointed as Business Development Director

Abbey has appointed Mike Ellis as Business Development Director as the Group looks to further strengthen its commercial team and develop new business in both food and non-food sectors.



Mike will be responsible for the delivery of Abbey's commercial and customer strategy and work with our commercial team to build on the success we have achieved.

Mike joins Abbey with an impressive track record in business development and account management, and an extensive knowledge in logistics and supply chain operations.

Steve Granite, Abbey's CEO said: "Mike's experience and proven ability to lead teams and deliver solutions tailored to individual customers, rather than applying a one size fits all model, is key to the development of our business and an ideal fit with Abbey. "He is a supply chain specialist whose consultative approach supports Abbey's ability to provide customers with the service that is right for them and their business."

On joining the company Mike said: "Abbey is an ambitious business with a dynamic leadership team which I have admired for a long time. They have a rich history and continue to move forward at great pace. In addition to focusing on both new and existing customers and their requirements, I will work closely with our highly experienced and dedicated teams to deliver value adding innovative best in class solutions that cement our position as industry leaders in specialist bulk logistics and supply chain services." 

# Adam Copping Joins Abbey as Group Quality and Operations Development Manager


Adam will lead Abbey's Quality function to ensure management processes and procedures are maintained, together with playing a key role in identifying new and improved processes within our operations team.

Adam will report to Tony Kenny, Operations Director, and his appointment will ensure Abbey is delivering an improving, high quality and best in class service to our customers.

Adam joins Abbey with more than 30 years' experience in food manufacturing and supply chain and has implemented and successfully developed several high-profile quality systems. Prior to joining Abbey, Adam worked for Armet Logistics

putting in place a number of operational improvements that helped the company build its reputation for quality and operational performance. Adam's background also includes holding a number of senior transport and operational management positions at the global food, agriculture and industrial products company, Cargill PLC.

Adam also held the position of Chair of the Seed Crushers

and Oil Seed Processors Association - Haulage Working Group, for nearly ten years until 2016. During that time, he was responsible for introducing an independent auditing process for haulage suppliers to ensure compliance to food safety, and implemented a number of safety policies and guidelines that have significantly improved the working conditions and safety standards within the food industry. 

## New safety equipment trialled on British Sugar trailers

Abbey has begun a trial of new safety alert systems which protects drivers and equipment during trailer loading and unloading.


The new system provides audible warnings and prevents the vehicle from moving until all safety checks are completed. This ensures trailers are securely fitted when coupling or landing legs correctly lowered when uncoupling.

Specifically, when the fifth wheel pin is released for uncoupling, an audible warning reminds the driver to check

vehicle landing legs are in the correct position.

When connecting a trailer, a warning light on the truck dashboard and flashing lights on the driver's side mirror indicate if the jaws have successfully engaged. An audible warning then prompts the driver to do a tug test. The new system takes no longer to complete than on a vehicle

without the safety system and crucially it ensures the driver never forgets any of the stages of this important and safety critical task.

The safety system is currently being trialled on our British Sugar fleet and could be rolled out to the wider Abbey fleet of liquid and powder tankers in the future. 




## Abbey's Achievements Recognised at Corporate Awards

Abbey has been awarded the Large Business – Business Master Award at this year's BusinessDesk.com North West Business Masters Awards.


The annual event organised by the Business Desk is fast becoming one of the key dinners in the region's business calendar. The elite of North West England's business community including professional services companies, leading entrepreneurs, innovators, exporters and large businesses came together to celebrate companies who have all made a difference to business in the North West over the past year.

The black tie awards evening was held at the Midland Hotel in Manchester and was hosted by BBC North West's Political

Editor Nina Warhurst. Steve Granite said: "We are delighted to pick up this award and pleased to see the judges thought that Abbey's achievements over the last year are worthy of recognition.

"As a business we will never become complacent and we will always aim to deliver the highest levels of service to our clients, and this award reassures us that we are on the right track. Our teams across the Group have worked tirelessly to get us where we are today and awards like this are a great way to recognise their commitment." 



 Abbey Logistics Operations Director Tony Kenny (3rd Left), CEO Steve Granite (3rd right) and Commercial Director Dave Coulson (2nd Right) collect BusinessDesk.com Business Masters Award.



## Bromborough Offices get a makeover!

Abbey's Bromborough offices, home to our warehousing and palletised division together with our commercial, SHEQ and compliance teams, has recently had some dramatic wall branding completed, as we look to strengthen our brand identity at key customer facing sites.

Our teams on-site and visitors are greeted with a message as they enter the building which reminds them about the importance of customer service to our brand.

Leading up the stairs are further striking images of our tankers from the liquids and powders divisions and a full wall print showing some of our palletised vehicles.

The boardroom has had floor to ceiling images installed which create a dramatic and memorable room for visitors and has transformed the room into an interesting space to work in.

The images were applied using the latest vinyl from 3M, one of the world's biggest vinyl manufacturers. The vinyl is PVC free and printed with the latest water based latex inks to ensure both durability and an environmentally friendly approach. 





# Abbey launches new Group website

In February, Abbey launched its brand-new website [www.abbeylogisticsgroup.com](http://www.abbeylogisticsgroup.com). The website was developed in partnership with Reech Media, an award winning digital marketing agency based in Shropshire.



The new site offers quick and easy access to essential information and offers a more comprehensive understanding of the Company's specialist products and services.

The website also has a complete overview of Abbey's culture and approach to

customers together with company news, events and corporate details with the option to share information across social networking sites.

The site has been designed to work seamlessly across all platforms and devices and Abbey will continue to add

new features and content to keep information relevant and interesting.

Visitors are encouraged to explore the website and sign up for direct emails which include the Abbey company magazine and all press releases and company developments.

## The Abbey way!

We're pleased to see lots of people being nominated for recognition by their colleagues for going above and beyond what is expected in their roles. It's this attitude that really does set Abbey apart from our competitors and it's what keeps our customers coming back to us.

Our teams are hugely committed and often go out of their way to deliver exceptional service to our customers. In addition, people regularly move mountains to support their colleagues across the business, demonstrating a team spirit that is hugely valuable to the business.

The Abbey Group Board is keen to recognise and reward staff who show initiative, innovation and dedication to their role and hope that all staff will support and participate in the scheme.

### How to nominate a colleague

As mentioned in the last edition of the magazine, if you would like to put forward a colleague, all you need to do is send an email to your line manager with details of who you would like to nominate and why. Your manager will review and pass through to the Group HR team for final approval.

Since December the following people have been recognised for their hard work or initiative:

### Abbey Way Winners

- Brian Hildreth
- Kevin Riley
- Matt Booth
- Marcus Brough
- Darius Rozek
- Anthony Stower
- James Reilly
- Jonathan Hawley Sale
- Ian Moorehouse
- Colin Leech
- Cliff Mitchell
- Gary Turner
- Andy Groves
- Danny Kimber
- Rob Greaves
- Mick Smith
- Terry Hale
- Georgina Seafield
- John Colclough
- Tom Lawrie
- Dave Smith
- Phil Coussens

# Abbey's Ricky Birchall attempts ambitious kayak trip

Ricky Birchall, one of Abbey's Palletised Planners based at our Bromborough depot, together with a group of friends are raising money for the Movember Foundation, a charity committed to improving men's health, with funds raised directed in to specific investment areas including prostate and testicular cancer research, and suicide prevention.

The Group are called Disco's Boys and came together in 2015 when they lost their friend Dave Court; or Disco as he was nicknamed, to suicide. The Group is fundraising in his name and have already completed a mammoth cross-country run from Grimsby to Liverpool, and in 2017 set themselves an even bigger challenge; to kayak 127 miles from Leeds to Liverpool.

On March 25th the group arrived in Leeds to start their trip, the weather was dry but frosty and with two men per kayak, they weren't going to stay dry for long. Sure enough, it wasn't long before a number

of the boys ended up in the water! Battling frequent canal locks, low bridges and some very angry swans, the group reached Burnley in the early hours of the 26th nearly 20 hours after they began.


With temperatures plummeting to well below freezing and ice forming in the kayaks, together with a very wet and tired group, they had to take the tough decision to abandon the trip. Long stretches of the canal where in pitch darkness and due to the large number of people in the group and freezing conditions, it wasn't safe or sensible to continue. Despite Disco's Boys incredible achievement of kayaking for nearly 20 hours and covering

more than 50 miles, the group were massively disappointed to not complete their journey.

In the following days and determined not to be beaten, they decided to return to the canal and make a second attempt, but this time on bikes. Two weeks later and with the weather warming up, the boys completed the 127 mile journey unscathed.

The Boys managed to raise an impressive amount for the Movember Foundation and are already making plans for their next ambitious challenge. If you would like to support them and their important cause go to [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/discosboys](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/discosboys) 



 Disco's Boys begin their challenge!

If you have a story for the Abbey Magazine, please send details to [michael.fox@abbeylogisticsgroup.com](mailto:michael.fox@abbeylogisticsgroup.com)



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*greener*  
 future



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