

# **bbey** MAGAZINE

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**Steve Granite**  
Chief Executive  
Abbey Logistics Group

## Dear colleagues

I am pleased to announce in this edition that Abbey has secured a long-term deal with Tarmac to distribute its bulk cement in the Scottish region, which will grow our business by a further 23 tractor units and 31 tankers, but more importantly, it gives us a base in Scotland and a foot in the construction market.

We will now use this excellent foundation to build our Scottish tanker operation and grow our share of the construction market. The pipeline for new business remains strong and we expect to achieve our target of £10m new business in this current financial year, taking the company to circa £70m income.

It is important that we keep growing but it is equally important to remember to take care of existing customers – these are the loyal people who have kept Abbey in our market-leading position. In order to understand customer perceptions, we are currently undertaking a ‘voice of the customer’ survey that will help guide us in ensuring customers receive the best possible service experience from Abbey.

When I talk about ‘best possible service experience’ I don’t just mean a delivery on time: I am referring to customers’ total experience of dealing with Abbey, such as... did their call get answered promptly and professionally? Did we input their order accurately? Did we deliver on time and in full? Did we keep them well advised on delivery progress? Was the driver courteous and professional? Was the equipment up to standard? Did we invoice them correctly and provide a proof of delivery (POD) within the timescale required? If there was a problem, how well did we respond to it?





## on the road to a *greener* future

'Best possible customer experience' means that every touchpoint with Abbey will be a positive experience. This is where you play such a crucial role! Every time you engage with a customer, remember, you're an important part of the customer's experience - ask yourself, could I have done more, and would I see this as a good customer experience if I were on the receiving end?


Positive customer experiences are what will differentiate us from the competition and keep Abbey growing!

I wrote to all employees recently to update you on company progress and I will keep doing this each month so you get regular business updates. The most recent update advised you of significant investments that the company have made with the backing of our investors Northedge, who have supported Abbey consistently since the management buyout in August 2016.

We have introduced 28 new Volvo tractor units costing £2.8m, committed £1m to refurbish the older tankers in our fleet, ordered 100 liquid flexes and are due to order 12 new liquid tankers, which are the first in a planned replacement cycle. That is an equipment investment of circa £4m.

Significant investments have also been made in the new Head Office, Liverpool vehicle maintenance unit (VMU), Great Howard Street tank cleaning station and offices as we continue to invest in all our depots to ensure they're fit for purpose.

All this investment is about making Abbey a 'best-in-class' tanker company and, with you all playing your role, we will continue to lead in the bulk tanker markets where we operate. I am so pleased that we're back to growing the company again after a year of consolidation and we look forward to updating you on further positive news in the coming months.

A final mention goes to David Batty, our former Fleet Engineer who semi-retired at the end of July. David played an important part in supporting Abbey over recent years and keeping us at the forefront in terms of innovation in Fleet. I would like to thank David for his unwavering dedication and wish him well in the future! 

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# New Four-Bay Vehicle Maintenance Unit Opens in Liverpool

We have opened our new four-bay vehicle maintenance unit (VMU) at our Liverpool site.

The VMU has been designed to accommodate four coupled tractor and trailer units at a time for vehicle maintenance and inspection, and enables Abbey to provide a more efficient service to our fleet of more than 330 tractor units and 500 liquid and powder tanker trailers.

Abbey already operates three other VMUs - in Middlewich, Hull and Bromborough - and this new unit will work alongside Abbey's existing VMU at our Liverpool site, which is due to be refurbished, bringing capacity in Liverpool to seven bays and six pits. The VMU at Brasenose Road, Liverpool will be closed at the end of August.


Construction of the new unit began in January 2018 and included extensive groundworks in preparation for the new

building. Once constructed, Abbey installed five-metre-high roller shutter doors, LED roof lighting and an energy-saving heating system. The VMU also has a roof-mounted four-way fan system that will keep the building cool in summer and warm in winter. The four new 17.5m-long fully integrated pits all feature 20-tonne air-operated jacks and LED lighting as well as mobile walkways and gantries to ensure the safety of technicians working in the unit.

Steve Granite, Abbey Logistics CEO, said: "The investment in the new VMU underlines our commitment to improving standards across our network by giving our teams safe and modern environments to work in.

"In addition, we can ensure the quality of work thanks to our



highly skilled and qualified team of heavy goods vehicle technicians, who will provide all servicing, vehicle safety inspections and defect rectification, as well as planned maintenance, including booking, preparing and presenting vehicles and/or trailers for DVSA testing." 



# Abbey Logistics Begins Liquid Food Drumming for Cargill Starches and Sweeteners

Abbey has successfully commenced food drumming services of glucose for Cargill Starches and Sweeteners, a subsidiary of Cargill PLC, one of the world's largest food and agriculture companies.


Abbey's latest service was developed through a working partnership with Cargill to develop a modern food-grade drumming facility within its warehouse complex in the north-west of England.

As a long-term customer of Abbey Logistics, Cargill looked to the liquid food specialist to provide a solution that streamlined its glucose supply chain while ensuring strict product handling and quality standards.

Under the current arrangement Abbey Logistics provides bulk road tanker transport of glucose from Cargill's manufacturing site in Manchester, which is then drummed into 205-litre drums at Abbey's facility in Cheshire. Filled drums are then bound, labelled and loaded into shipping containers for worldwide distribution.

John Abbott, Abbey Logistics Warehouse Manager, said: "The benefit to our customers is that we are able to manage all transport, packaging and labelling, significantly reducing road mileage and the costs associated with subcontracting the filling operation.

"We now manage every aspect of the supply chain, from point of manufacture to point of loading the drums for onward distribution, which enables us to control the strict standards of hygiene required for transporting food-grade products."

Haf Rahman, Head of Cargill's Starch and Sweeteners UK supply team, said: "After working with Abbey Logistics for many years we were confident in their ability to deliver this project successfully." 





## Abbey focuses on driver comfort, safety, payload and service with new Volvo trucks

Abbey has upgraded its fleet with an investment of £2.5 million in 28 Volvo FH tractors to work across its bulk liquid and powder fleets throughout the UK and Northern Europe.


The tractors have been specified with driver comfort, safety, payload and service as the most important factors. Features of the new vehicles include intelligent driving systems such as lane departure alerts, automatic emergency braking and adaptive cruise control, together with a four-way colour camera system to ensure maximum driver visibility to protect other road users. Driver comfort is addressed with a spacious cab, additional storage, microwave and fridge-freezer, together with improved climate control and driver seating.

Keeping weight to a minimum is vital for the bulk powder and liquid work that Abbey specialises in, so specifying the right discharge equipment is essential. Abbey selected Meller Flow Trans blowers for vehicles going into its powder fleet, and both Meller Flow Trans and Gardner Denver discharge compressors were specified for tractors for its liquid fleet. These high-specification units will

provide the perfect balance of reliability, economy and weight.

The new vehicles will all be fitted with the latest Microlise Fleet Performance telematics system, which provides Abbey Logistics with real-time visibility of its fleet and helps improve driver performance and safety, while reducing fuel costs and environmental impact.

David Batty, Abbey Logistics Fleet Engineer at the time, said: "The feedback we have received from our drivers about the new FH tractors has been fantastic and is one of the key areas we look at when selecting new vehicles.

"The new Volvo FH model combines proven reliability that we saw from an extended trial of the vehicles in 2017, with engineering innovation and a strong focus on having a comfortable working and living space for our drivers, which is key considering the work they will be doing throughout the UK and Northern Europe." 



# Abbey Awarded Cement Distribution Contract by Tarmac

Abbey has been awarded a regional distribution contract by Tarmac for the distribution of bulk cement in Scotland, following a competitive tender process.

Tarmac, the UK's leading sustainable building materials and construction solutions business, is set to restructure the distribution model for its Cement and Lime division to deliver an enhanced service for its customers. Following a comprehensive strategic review of its distribution arrangements, the company decided to move to a more flexible regional model for both bulk and packed cement distribution, which have previously operated on a national basis.

Abbey Logistics has significantly grown its capabilities in bulk powder logistics over recent years, winning important contracts in the polymers, minerals and bulk food powder sectors.

Growth has been supported by Abbey's commitment to investing heavily in equipment

and IT infrastructure, creating a large powder fleet network covering the UK and Europe. Abbey's IT solution provides its customers with full visibility of deliveries at all times, bespoke contract performance metrics, and management information specific to customers' requirements. This is supported by account management dedicated to working in partnership with its customers to identify improvements, savings and efficiency gains throughout the length of the contract.

As part of the Tarmac contract, Abbey will be opening an office in Dunbar, Scotland and will add 23 tractor units and 31 tanks to the bulk powder fleet to operate from this location.

Mike Ellis, Abbey Logistics Business Development Director, said: "We are delighted that

Tarmac selected Abbey to work with them to provide such a business-critical service. Tarmac relies on its supply chain and logistics operations to ensure it maintains its position as the UK's market leader and we look forward to providing them with the enhanced visibility, resilience and flexibility our service delivers."

Mike Eberlin, Managing Director at Tarmac Cement and Lime, said: "With a demanding pipeline of construction and infrastructure projects coming online across the country, now is the perfect time for us to proactively change. Our strengthened network capability means we're able to offer a better, more flexible service to meet customer requirements going forward." 





## SHEQ Support Officers appointed to support Abbey's safety commitment

Former Abbey drivers Ivan Green and Mark Ransley were appointed as SHEQ Support Officers in February of this year and once they completed their IOSH Managing Safety qualifications, they quickly got out and about across the country, visiting Abbey customers' sites.

Ivan's and Mark's expertise as drivers is providing a vital insight into what our drivers face when making deliveries, as they identify hazards and potential dangers that someone who has never experienced working in these environments could not. With new processes in place that make it easier for both our SHEQ (Safety, Health, Environment & Quality) Officers and our drivers to report potential hazards, we are now making real progress and fundamental changes to sites where safety could potentially be compromised.

The work our SHEQ Officers are doing has received very positive feedback from our customers

➡ L - R, SHEQ Support Officers Ivan Green and Mark Ransley

and in many cases they had never had their delivery points assessed by a driver.

Customers are very receptive to our SHEQ Officers' observations and we have already made changes at several sites that

have significantly reduced the risks our drivers face. To further support our safety commitment we encourage all our drivers and support staff to report any near misses at the earliest opportunity, which will help focus our efforts.








## New Head Office Opens in Golborne, Greater Manchester

Abbey Logistics has chosen Golborne as the location for its new head office. It follows two years of tremendous growth that has seen the business acquire bulk liquid transport specialist Armet.

The new head office in Stone Cross Place, Golborne opened in early spring and is home to Abbey's finance, IT, business planning and analysis, HR, and procurement departments.

The offices are a modern, open-plan space that encourages collaboration between the teams and will help support Abbey's focus on delivering quality customer service.

Marcia Findlay, Abbey Logistics Head of HR, said: "Thanks to the company's strong performance and a rapidly expanding team, it was important to consolidate our activities into a central site that met our requirements.

"Our new head office is an ideal space and close to major transport links, making it an ideal location for both our employees and visitors." 





## New SHEQ Reporting System Launched

With a strong focus on incident and near-miss reporting at Abbey, it's vital that we have the tools to both investigate and resolve issues raised by our teams.

AIRSWEB AVA is our new SHEQ reporting system, which allows us to report incidents and near misses and manage and track our safety statistics in one program.

The system is aimed at everyone at Abbey keeping a watchful eye on every area of our business and reporting any unsafe acts, unsafe conditions or near misses. Abbey and AIRSWEB are working on a remote application that will make reporting easier and this will be available soon so, for now, all our teams are encouraged to raise issues in the normal way with their line manager.

The benefit of AIRSWEB is that once an issue is raised, it

is automatically assigned an owner who must investigate and take actions necessary to resolve the issue. This end-to-end process will encourage our teams to report incidents because they know that they will be considered and action taken. In addition, the person who raised the issue will be informed of progress and the result of the investigation.

AIRSWEB's other key feature is the data it gathers; by using this data intelligently we can produce key statistics and information that highlight trends. This analysis will greatly assist our SHEQ teams in focusing their efforts in areas that most need support, and ultimately create a safer working environment for us all.





# Abbey Exhibits at the UK's Largest Food Show

FOODEX, the UK's premier trade event for the food and drink processing, packaging and logistics industries, was held at the NEC in Birmingham in March, and Abbey was there to showcase our capabilities to manufacturers from across the UK and Europe.

The show highlights trends across the food manufacturing sectors: from improving traceability and consumer trust, to transforming productivity and highlighting the latest new ingredients and superfoods to make an impression on the industry.

The show was an interesting mix of large well-known brands and innovative new start-ups. It covered new manufacturing, processing, packaging and logistics and had over 1,500 suppliers exhibiting across its three-day length.

The event is held every two years and was an ideal opportunity for Abbey to get in front of many new and exciting customers. 📍





# Hose Repair Facility Opens in Manchester

One of the most important pieces of kit for any tanker company are the hoses used to deliver products from our tankers into customers' sites. They're tough, hygienic and will pump hundreds of thousands of litres of products during their serviceable life. However, from time to time they do get damaged and repairing them is a highly skilled and technical process.

Until recently, Abbey used specialist companies to repair hoses at considerable cost to the business. We also couldn't guarantee the quality of work or have control over how long repairs would take.

Abbey's retiring Fleet Engineer David Batty put a project in place to create our own hose repair facility that would provide our drivers with a high-quality repair service for hoses used on our liquid fleets. Due to the technical nature of the repair work, Mark Hall, Abbey

Compliance Officer, was involved from the beginning to provide the necessary technical knowledge required.

The result: a brand-new food-grade hose repair workshop based in Trafford, Manchester. Managed and run by Mark Hall, the facility provides supply, service, testing and repair for all hoses used throughout our fleet, and Mark has now also begun providing repair services for pumps and valves. This added in-house capability has significantly reduced Abbey's spend on external contractors and brought a crucial and time-critical service in-house where we can control quality and response time. 🌱



📍 Mark Hall in Abbey's new hose repair facility in Manchester



# New Driver Handheld Devices Rolled Out

Following a successful trial of new handheld devices (HHDs), we are now rolling them out to all drivers over the next two months.


The HHDs have many benefits that we hope will make things easier for our drivers and, at the same time, provide our customers with accurate, live information about their deliveries. Abbey places great emphasis on analysis and the data-driven information we can provide to our customers that helps us plan, resource and forecast in a flexible way, and the new HHDs are essential to the success of this, giving us a significant advantage over our competitors.

The key benefits of the HHDs are that they will modernise communications with our driver team, significantly cut down paperwork, help ensure legal compliance and further assist drivers with easier access to apps such as Microlise, QBIS,

CheckedSafe, SNAP parking, Keyfuels, email and phone. Other positives include improved visibility of jobs in advance for our drivers, and fewer phone calls to and from the cab, together with accurate and timely information and less time spent trying to reach the planning desk at busy times.

Our customers will also see a considerable increase in the visibility of their products, including live track & trace and regular real-time updates on the progress of their deliveries. The HHDs will also provide electronic PODs, further reducing paperwork and potential for errors.

By cutting down the time spent on paperwork and decreasing margins for error, this real-time system will get our drivers back on the road more quickly.

The roll-out has already begun and the lead drivers across our depot network have started training our drivers on how to use the new system. For any questions about the system, please contact our central driver training team. 





## New Tank Wash Treatment System at Great Howard Street

Abbey's three-bay tanker wash station at Great Howard Street, Liverpool is one of the busiest tank washes in the region. The tank wash provides tank cleaning services and livery wash facilities for road tankers, ISO tank containers, intermodal bulk containers (IBCs), refrigerated containers and most other commercial containers.

The food-grade wash bays clean a huge variety of products, from cooking oils and chocolate to syrups and fruit juices. The waste water generated from the wash process is difficult to treat, mostly because the waste water strength and composition regularly changes depending on the mix of tankers being washed that day and the detergents used to ensure sterilisation.

Treating this waste water correctly is essential to avoid any contaminants being released into public waterways. To keep up with the demand for our tank wash, Abbey made a large investment of more than £70,000 in a new state-of-the-art treatment system to ensure both legal compliance and environmental efficiency.

The new treatment process involves separating solid materials, oils and emulsions from the water prior to its release into the water network. This practice has always been in place but our new treatment plant significantly reduces the time and energy required to treat the waste water and, importantly, ensures nothing is wasted. Once treated and the clean water separated, we are left with a sludge. This sludge is collected and used by third-party companies in anaerobic digester facilities that are designed to extract biogas and biofertiliser from the waste.

Every tonne of food waste recycled by anaerobic digestion as an alternative to landfill prevents between 0.5 and 1.0 tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> entering the atmosphere and further reduces the reliance on fossil fuels for fertiliser and energy.



# Abbey Logistics first in the UK to trial new LNG Volvo 6x2 tractor

Abbey has begun trials of Volvo's new LNG-powered FM tractor, the first 6x2 heavy regional and long-haul LNG tractor to be powered by gas in the UK.

Abbey are no strangers to gas power, having already trialed both compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG) fuels on 4x2-axle tractors in back-to-back tests with their diesel equivalents last year. The tests produced some very positive results with reduced fuel costs and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, as well as encouraging driver feedback about the vehicles' drivability and comfort. However, for Abbey to realise the full benefits of gas power, the tractors needed to be able to compete with our regular fleet of 44-tonne units.

Volvo's new LNG FM promises the same fuel efficiency as diesel and the same performance - but with 20% less CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and lower fuel costs. In addition, the new truck only requires the same service intervals as the diesel version.

## Why Natural Gas?

Natural gas has huge potential as a substitute for diesel in trucks. There's a good supply globally and the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are considerably lower in comparison to diesel. Operating range is critical for Abbey and Volvo's LNG technology enables a range comparable to diesel and perfectly suited to long-haul transport, with Volvo claiming up to 1,000km per tank in some configurations.

## The Technology

Volvo's new G13C engine is based on its diesel engine technology but instead uses approximately 90-95% LNG with 5-10% diesel to ignite the LNG. The exact proportions of fuel depend on driving conditions.

## Filling and Access to Fuel

Filling an LNG truck is different to diesel but once users are shown the simple procedure they see it is neither complicated nor time-consuming. Some safety precautions are required due to the need for LNG to be at a very low temperature. Encouragingly, the network of LNG filling stations is constantly growing throughout the UK and Europe and this is supported by an EU initiative to speed up this expansion.

David Batty, Abbey Logistics Fleet Engineer at the time, said: "We are very excited to be the first UK haulier to trial Volvo's new 6x2 tractor. I have been convinced of the potential benefits of gas technology in heavy haulage based on our extensive trials last year, and this new tractor has the potential to be a real game changer for us and the wider industry." 





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