

SERVICE DEALER

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

JAN / FEB 2020

Company profile

With Campey Turf Care Systems

Highlights from
Agritechnica

New machines and technology on display, due at dealerships in 2020

A PROFITABLE CONFERENCE

Dealers come together to hear from experts on how to make sure the business turns a profit

SALTEX 2019 review

Battery and robotics to the fore



DEALER OF THE YEAR WINNERS

SUCCESSFUL DEALERSHIPS CELEBRATED AT CEREMONY

SHAPING THE FUTURE



COPYRIGHT © 2020 HUSQVARNA AB (PUBL). ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

LEADING THE WAY IN ROBOTICS SINCE 1995

Husqvarna has a history of innovation and has adapted and evolved for 330 years. Legislation, battery technology, robotics and digitalisation are bringing about rapid change in our industry. As a company we are driving change, having invested in future technologies for over 20 years, positioning us as technical leaders and innovators. Investing in partnerships with our authorised dealer network allows us to meet the challenges and demands of an ever-changing industry.

To find out more and to enquire about opening an account please contact us at [HUSQVARNA.COM/UK](https://www.husqvarna.com/uk)



CONTENTS

- 4 NEWS**
- 12 KRAMP CEREMONY**
Major building work almost complete
- 14 SERVICE DEALER CONFERENCE & AWARDS**
Including details of all the winning dealerships plus a full report on the day's events
- 26 HIGHLIGHTS FROM AGRITECHNICA**
New machines and technology on display, due at dealerships in 2020
- 30 CAMPEY PROFILE**
Richard Campey of Campey Turf Care Systems
- 34 BUSINESS MONITOR**
Business Prospects 2020 dealer survey results
- 36 SALTEX 2019 REVIEW**
Report from the IOG's show plus a new product round-up
- 44 TRAINING & EDUCATION**
News on new graduates and apprentices
- 46 SME DIGEST**
Latest news for small businesses
- 50 VIEW FROM ACROSS THE POND**
Sara Hey offers advice from a US perspective
- 51 DIARY OF A SEASON**
With Strathbogie
- 52 NEW PRODUCTS**
- 56 EVENTS**
- 57 IN MY VIEW**
With Chris Biddle
- 58 JIM GREEN**

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to January/February 2020's edition of *Service Dealer* magazine. As the first edition of the new decade, let's start off with a bit of positivity, shall we? In this issue we're unashamedly looking back on November's *Service Dealer* Conference & Awards – which from a personal point of view, I felt was the best ever.

Packed with dealers attending from across the country, there were representatives of businesses large and small, multi-branched and single premises – plus retailers of garden, professional turfcare and agricultural machinery. I feel confident that all these groups whom *Service Dealer* is here to serve would have left the conference enriched and enlightened by what they had heard across the day.

Chatting to people afterwards, the consensus appeared to be that the mix of speakers and the format of the day was bang on. It delivered on content and as a perfect vehicle for the industry to congregate and benefit from spending time in each other's company.

In these testing and uncertain times, it was delightful to be part of such a positive atmosphere with a real sense of a community of fellow professionals coming together to share ideas and knowledge – something which this journal aims to do every edition and every Friday with the *Weekly Update*.

As such we have new, yet familiar, faces joining the magazine this month. Pete and Emma McArthur from Strathbogie, have kindly agreed to provide the *Diary of a Season* for us throughout 2020, so thanks and welcome to them. And, of course, heartfelt thanks to Chris and Rebecca from Briants, who so wonderfully kept us informed last year with their *Diary*.



www.servicedealer.co.uk

OUR PEOPLE

PUBLISHER
DUNCAN MURRAY-CLARKE

EDITOR
STEVE GIBBS
steve@servicedealer.co.uk

AGRICULTURAL EDITOR
MARTIN RICKATSON
jmr.agriculture@gmail.com

SME DIGEST EDITOR
ADAM BERNSTEIN
adam@adambernstein.co.uk

CONTRIBUTOR
LAURENCE GALE
laurence.gale@btinternet.com

PRODUCED BY
THE AD PLAIN LTD
Pipe House, Lupton Road, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 9BS, UK
01491 837 117
www.theadplain.com
Service Dealer is produced by The Ad Plain on behalf of Land Power Publications LLP

DESIGN & LAYOUT
IAIN ROBINSON

ADVERTISING SALES
NIKKI HARRISON
nikki@theadplain.com
01491 837 117

The acceptance and publication of advertising in *Service Dealer* magazine implies no representation or warranty on the part of *Service Dealer* or The Ad Plain Ltd (TAP) as to the reputation or standing of advertisers' products or services. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form whatsoever without the written permission of *Service Dealer* and TAP. The information contained in this publication is published in good faith and every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy. The publishers can accept no responsibility for any error or misrepresentation. All liability for loss, disappointment, negligence or other damage caused by reliance on information contained in this publication or in the event of any bankruptcy or liquidation or cessation of the trade in any company, individual or firm mentioned is hereby excluded.



INDUSTRY

GARDEN TRADER TO LAUNCH IN THE STATES

Beginning this spring



Announced at the Dealer Of The Year Awards ceremony (see report on page 14), Garden Trader, the website that puts independent retailers in front of consumers at the purchase decision making stage, is to launch in America in 2020 under the title of MyMower Specialist.

Owner of Garden Trader, Duncan Murray-Clarke, who also owns *Service Dealer*, said at the Awards, "Garden Trader had a fantastic 2019. As of this week, in total, all our subscribed UK dealers have collectively appeared over one million times in searches on the Garden Trader site.

"Most visitors to the site are in the process of investigating a purchase, so the majority of leads should very much be considered as potential customers.

"Don't forget, all subscribed dealers

can check the interest in their individual dealer pages.

"It's been a tough couple of years for the industry, especially with the pressures that are coming from large online retailers, therefore I'm delighted that the site is performing so well for dealers."

Duncan added that, after a successful three years, the website will launch as MyMowerSpecialist.com in the US in the spring.

"After seeing the enthusiasm for the concept from both dealers and manufacturers over in the US, which is the largest groundcare market in the world, we have decided to launch a US version. It is tremendously exciting to be going to the US with a new concept for their industry – and all without negotiating a trade deal!"

INDUSTRY



SULKY UK TO MOVE TO NEW SITE

2020 sees location and team changes

Sulky UK, a subsidiary of Sulky Burel, the French family-owned company known for its range of fertiliser spreaders, seed drills and cultivation equipment, is moving to new premises and restructuring its team in 2020, as a result, it says, of continued growth in the UK market.

Sulky UK is due to move from its previous premises in Bourne, Lincolnshire to a new, sole occupancy site in Cambridgeshire. The cooperation agreement with Gregoire Besson ceased at the end of 2019.

The company also announced that the premises move will coincide with a revision to the UK team.

Robert Thurkettle, Sulky UK Managing Director said, "Since it launched in 2015, Sulky UK has seen fantastic growth, thanks to our well-established and dedicated dealer network. 2020 will mark an exciting change and further development for the business.

"In addition, we're looking to expand the Sulky dealer network in some regions. Interested machinery dealers should contact the office to discuss.

"We look forward to talking to our dealers about these opportunities in more detail, at LAMMA, on 7-8 January."



UK IS HOME TO FIRST EURO-BUILT ZERO TURN

Rolls off the production line in Oxfordshire

In positive news for the industry in the UK, the first zero-turn mower to be manufactured in Europe has been produced at the AriensCo factory in Great Haseley, Oxfordshire.

In what has to be seen as a coup for the grounds care sector in this country, the decision by the US-owned company to build in Britain follows industry analysis which showed exceptional growth in demand for zero-turn mowers in the UK and Europe in recent years. Until now, zero-turns have mainly been imported from the US.

Choosing to build the machines in Great Haseley has meant significant investment going into the Oxfordshire factory, resulting in the new zero-turn production line, fixtures and tooling. A number of CE zero-turn models will be produced for European markets and close collaboration with the US will be maintained.

Also great news from the move is that a number of new jobs have been created for the area.

“Sales of zero-turns in Europe have experienced outstanding growth over the past three years,” explained Darren Spencer, AriensCo Vice President – EMEA and Asia.

Darren went on to say that the industry analysis that the company has undertaken points to “many opportunities” which could be met by producing zero-turns at the Great Haseley plant. “We currently sell into 10 different countries within Europe and aim to increase our European footprint in 2020,” he said.

AriensCo says future growth is predicted to accelerate as the benefits of zero-turn mowers are understood by potential customers.

With the machines now being produced in the UK the company believes it will see some significant advantages, including allowing for rapid delivery and improved availability throughout the year. It also says there is the potential for zero-turns to be adapted with features and benefits to meet local market needs.

DEALERS

CLAYDON APPOINTS RICKERBY

Latest dealers

Rickerby Limited has been appointed to sell and service the full range of Opti-Till crop establishment products manufactured by Claydon Drills.

Established in 1880, Rickerby has eight agricultural machinery depots covering Lancashire, Cumbria, Northumberland, Durham, the Scottish Borders and part of Dumfries. All will provide sales and aftersales support for the full Claydon Opti-Till range.

Colin Potts, East Coast Sales Director at Rickerby said of the Claydon products, "We believe that the range offers significant potential, not only in areas where Claydon already has a strong presence but also in the West of our business area. Lancashire, for example, has a lot of very good soils and the Claydon range will fit well at the new



Colin Potts of Rickerby Ltd with the company's new 4m Claydon Hybrid T4 demonstrator

branch which we are currently building in Ormskirk.

"Taking on the new franchise represents a big investment for our company, both financially and in terms of staff training, but we're prepared to make that commitment because we believe the Claydon brand will be a key part of our future. Already, we have invested in a 4m Claydon Hybrid T4 drill, together with a 7.5m straw harrow, for our demonstration fleet."

Rob Dunk, Claydon Drills' Sales Manager for the UK and Ireland, added, "This is an exciting development and we are delighted to be working with such a prominent, long-established and well-respected dealer group. The appointment further supports our strategy to develop our dealer coverage throughout the UK."

DEALERS



L-R: Mark Lowe (Russells), Mark Willerton (Russells), Lewis Calvert (Overton UK)

RUSSELL TAKES ON MEAN GREEN

Dealer for Yorkshire counties

Overton (UK) has announced that Russell Groundcare has become the Mean Green electric mowers dealer for the Yorkshire counties.

After a successful demonstration to the groundcare sales team, Mark Lowe and Mark Willerton, Russell Groundcare Managers, decided to progress as they believe it is the direction that the groundcare market is moving.

Mark commented that now the mowers have been available in the UK for the past four years and manufactured in the US for 10 years, it gave them confidence to

take on the machines.

He said, "The mowers are well built and having walk-behind, stand-on and zero-turn models in the range allows us to sell the mowers into different market segments.

"The low noise, HAVs and WBVs are a big step forward and with mowing time up to seven hours, no fuel or servicing, low weight and a quality cut, the Mean Green mowers have a lot to offer operators, while the zero emissions and zero carcinogenic fumes have a lot to offer the environment."

NEW

Workwear that fits.

**Introducing
Kramp Clothing**

Years of experience, combined with the latest fashion trends and strong fabrics are combined into 4 brand new collections. Tailored fit for the job you and your customers need to do.

Discover our range on kramp.com/clothing

ORIGINAL
KRAMP

TECHNICAL
KRAMP

PROTECT
KRAMP

ACTIVE
KRAMP

KRAMP

It's that easy.

JOHN DEERE COOPERATES ON HEAVY-LIFT DRONE TECH

With specialists Volocopter

John Deere and Volocopter have announced their cooperation on cargo drone technology and presented the first large drone adapted for agricultural use at the recent Agritechnica show.

A demonstrator model of the VoloDrone equipped with a John Deere crop sprayer, which is ready for its first field flight, was displayed in the Future Technology Zone. Featuring a potential payload of 200kg, the companies said the VoloDrone is able to cover an enormous area, especially under difficult operating conditions.

This first large agricultural drone is the result of a collaboration between John Deere, which says it brings knowledge of farmers' needs, and the Urban Air Mobility pioneer Volocopter, whose flying taxis form the technological basis of the VoloDrone.

Both companies say they see great potential for the VoloDrone's use in agriculture, with capabilities ranging from difficult topography to increased efficiency in the use of crop protection agents, sowing seeds or frost control. The development of this demonstrator is a first step towards bringing this technology closer to commercial application after full testing in the field.

The VoloDrone is powered by 18 rotors with an overall diameter of 9.2m and features a fully-electric drive using replaceable lithium-ion batteries. One battery charge allows a flight time of up to 30 minutes, and the VoloDrone can be operated remotely or automatically on a pre programmed route.

The drone frame is equipped with a flexible standardised payload attachment system. This means that different devices can be mounted on the frame depending on the application. For crop protection, the drone is equipped with two liquid tanks, a pump and a spray bar.

Due to the drone's low altitude in flight, very large area coverage of up to 6ha/hr can be achieved and spray management improved. This, say the companies, would make the VoloDrone a sustainable, precise and cost-effective alternative to helicopters. Due to the system's high flexibility and GPS control, more selective area-specific treatments are also possible.

Appropriate flight and application tests will be carried out with the demonstrator VoloDrone sprayer over the next growing season.



OBITUARY

ANDY PASKELL

Passing of STIHL Product Manager

It was with extreme sadness that STIHL GB announced that following a long and brave battle with cancer, Andy Paskell, STIHL GB Product Manager, passed away on Wednesday 2 October 2019.

Andy joined the STIHL team in 2008 and over the course of his distinguished career, worked across several departments including Sales, Learning and Development, Technical and latterly Marketing.

Robin Lennie, STIHL GB MD remarked, "Andy will be sorely missed by all his colleagues at STIHL GB as well as customers and the many professional contacts he worked with.

"He will be remembered for his passion and commitment to the company, his optimistic outlook and most of all his excellent sense of humour."

Andy's family have established a charity page for anyone wishing to make a donation to Cancer Research in his memory, at the time of writing this page it stood at just below a remarkable £14,000.

To contribute to the cause, at the *Service Dealer Awards* evening, a charity raffle was held. STIHL donated a signed Liverpool FC shirt and goalkeeper gloves as the prize to be won. A fantastic £1,365 was raised on the night, with a further £500 pledged in donations.



Andy Paskell, who won STIHL GB's company Timbersports challenge in 2015

Contributions to Andy's fund can still be made by visiting [fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/for-our-andy](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/page/for-our-andy)

DEALERS



Kuhn Farm Machinery has appointed the agricultural machinery and farming supplies business Alexander Mills as a dealer for Northern Ireland.

The appointment confirms the Benburb based company as an official stockist and service support dealer for the manufacturer's full range of agricultural machinery. Alexander Mills will complement the dealership arrangement that Kuhn has with Ballymena based D S Logan.

"Alexander Mills is a highly respected business and has the resources and capacity to work across our broad range of livestock and arable equipment," said Sian Pritchard, Managing Director of Kuhn UK. "We're delighted to welcome the Alexander Mills team as an official Kuhn dealer and look forward to a long and successful partnership."

KUHN APPOINTS NEW DEALER

For Northern Ireland

Commenting on the appointment, Managing Director Alexander Mills said it marked another important milestone in the company's history.

"We already have strong relationships with Case IH tractors and a number of other leading farm machinery brands," he said, "and we see this latest development as a great opportunity to bring another superb product range to our customers, whilst also being well placed to service existing Kuhn customers.

"We have previous history of working with the KUHN brand, selling mowers, tedders and power harrows, so we are excited about this opportunity to work across what is now a far more comprehensive range of equipment."

DEALERS

DEALER'S ASM WINS VENTRAC AWARD

For Dealer Sales Achievement



Tom Bailey, Area Sales Manager for RT Machinery

Tom Bailey, Area Sales Manager at RT Machinery, recently won Price Turfcare's Dealer Sales Achievement award and was presented with £300 worth of store vouchers in appreciation of his efforts.

Rupert Price, Managing Director of Price Turfcare, the UK distributor of Ventrac said, "As a young company we are heavily dependent on our dealer network and the enthusiasm of their sales teams. RT Machinery has readily accepted the challenge of promoting Ventrac and Tom, in particular, has excelled with some serious sales in his territory. He fully understands the attributes of the machine and its accessories and has targeted large estate owners in his area, with outstanding success.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank not only Tom, but all of our dealers and their sales staff for their fantastic commitment to Ventrac since we launched the business just under three years ago. We have certainly arrived in the UK groundscape market and it is thanks to their combined efforts."

Tom joined RT Machinery in June 2015 as a Trainee Area Sales Manager from the estate management team at SAS UK. He then completed three years of RTM training and has progressed to be one of the company's highly skilled and dedicated ASMs.

INDUSTRY

REESINK TAKES ON UK DISTRIBUTION OF BIRAL

Lightning detection system

Reesink Turfcare has expanded its range to include the BTD-200 lightning warning system from meteorological equipment specialist Biral.

In Britain, lightning strikes the ground about 300,000 times and between 30 and 60 people a year, according to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Most at risk are people who spend a lot of time outdoors in unsheltered locations, such as golfers.

Robert Jackson, Irrigation Sales Manager for distributor Reesink, says, "It is of the utmost importance for golf clubs to keep their members safe and Biral's BTD-200, with its accurate detection range of 22 miles, warns of the most dangerous lightning risk before the first lightning strike. This can give course managers and

greenkeepers up to 20 minutes to alert members."

The company says the server software package of the system detects cloud-to-ground, intra-cloud and cloud-to-cloud lightning, charged precipitation and strong atmospheric electric fields, displaying the lightning distance in real-time on a map of the local area and the current lightning alarm level.

Robert continues, "All companies have a duty of care to make their customers aware of any possible dangers. This early warning detection system allows golf clubs to do just that, helping to protect people and equipment from the dangers of a lightning strike by providing enough advanced warning of a storm's



approach to alert staff, members, teams and the public to the risks of remaining outdoors.

"It's a system tried and tested in the aviation industry and we're delighted to bring it to the UK's golf clubs and sporting venues as the brand's sole distributor in the UK and Ireland.

"When you consider the chance of being struck by lightning is higher than getting a hole in one, it brings home how important having adequate warning is!"

WHEN CHOOSING BETWEEN A, B, OR C, MAY WE SUGGEST D?

$$P = \frac{F \times D}{T}$$

56V
1568Wh

VIBRATION
1.7m/s²
NOISE
LpA 80dB(A)



1014m³/h
AIR VOLUME

AIR SPEED: 212km/h

FORCE: 19.2N

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	BOOST
350mins	210mins	140mins	100mins	70mins

Times have changed. So have tools. And our new commercial range is all the proof you need. Take the EGO Power+ blower. It's powered by the most technologically advanced, petrol-matching, Lithium-ion battery system out there. It's built tough to withstand all-day use in any weather. Its impressive airflow beats every other handheld blower on the market, and while it packs all the power of petrol, it's significantly quieter, vibrates less and gives off zero fumes. So don't stick to what you know. Switch to the power of EGO.

**THE NEW EGO 56V COMMERCIAL RANGE.
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE LIKE IT.**

#powerreimagined



If you're interested in becoming an EGO dealer call Henton & Chattell on 0115 986 2161.

Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm

EGO
POWER BEYOND BELIEF™

TOPPING OUT CEREMONY HELD BY KRAMP UK & IRELAND

Kramp UK recently celebrated the near completion of its new building – the event saw the final piece of metal, which had been signed by company representatives, lifted into place



Recently Kramp UK and Ireland celebrated with a topping out ceremony at the location of its new building in Biggleswade.

The event saw the entire UK team travelling five minutes around the corner from their current base, to celebrate the final piece of metal framework being added to the new building, which is due to be ready in early 2020.

The final piece of metal, which the team watched being lifted into place, held ceremonial significance as it had been signed by a group of company representatives, specially chosen by Kramp.

Names featured on the piece included those of members of the UK and Ireland Management team, Des Boyd, UK Sales Director, along with Darren Parnell and Lydie Thacker. Also included were Kramp Groep COO, Tom Wolterinck and Jason Dyball, UK Assistant Logistics Operations Manager.

Alongside the management team were the names of some long-serving employees, who were included in the ceremony as a thank you to their long time in the business. These comprised Tim Imbrich – who, as the longest serving UK member of staff at 43 years, has seen four warehouse moves during his time with the company – plus Helen King, Mike Lindsey, William Grimshaw, and Claire Richardson.



Kramp UK's new building in Bigglesworth

Attendees at the event heard a series of speeches by key figures involved in the project, including one by James Atkinson of developer Gazeley. Kramp says Gazeley is a leading developer and investor of European logistics warehouses which, along with lead contractor VolkerFitzpatrick (one of the leading engineering and construction companies in the UK), are running the project at Gazeley's G-park Biggleswade site. They are currently working with sub-contractors to finish the building internally.

Also addressing the assembled guests on the day were Kramp's Tom Wolterinck and Des Boyd.

Confidence shown in UK market

Des welcomed everyone to the ceremony to mark the highest part of the structure being fixed. He made mention of how they were honoured to have their COO from Kramp Groep, Tom Wolterinck in attendance alongside representatives from Gazeley, the main contractor, VolkerFitzpatrick, also some key members of the professional team who had supported them in the project including architects, engineers, planners and cost consultants.

He spoke about the development of the new building and the

relationship between the different companies involved.

He also gave special thanks to all those at Kramp who had been involved in the undertaking, for all their hard work to bring the project this far.

"It is significant that Kramp Groep has decided to invest in this new building and in the UK at this uncertain time," said Des. "This shows we have confidence in the UK market and what we at Kramp UK and Ireland are doing and have achieved over the last few years.

"We have had consistent growth due to the hard work and commitment from our employees in Logistics, Sales, Finance Purchasing, IT, HR and Data and Product management, so a massive thank you to you all."

Des continued, saying, "We are also committed to staying in

Biggleswade. This is because we want to retain the knowledge and skills of our employees here.

"Kramp's USP is that we have the widest range of agricultural parts and accessories in Europe – this sets us apart from our competitors. Our new building allows us to stock double the number of products that we previously could and ensures better delivery to our customers."

Des went on to explain how partnerships with manufacturers have a huge impact on the business and how they will continue to work with partners and suppliers to increase their offering.

Des concluded, "Our route to market and the dynamics of the agricultural industry are changing all the time. We need to be better, faster and more flexible to ensure our continued prosperity."



Members of the Kramp team whose names feature on the final piece of metal to be lifted into place



DEALER OF THE YEAR WINNERS HONoured

Accolades presented at ceremony following on from 2019's Service Dealer Conference

In a glittering ceremony at the Double Tree by Hilton Oxford Belfry on 21 November, following on from the Service Dealer Conference, dealers from across the UK came together to honour their peers who had been selected as recipients of 2019's Dealer of the Year titles.

The Awards, organised by the team behind *Service Dealer* magazine and hosted by comedian and actor Charlie Baker, are in their 16th year and recognise outstanding sales, service advice and support by dealers in the garden machinery, professional turfcare machinery, farm machinery, forestry equipment and ATV/quad industry.

The awards were judged by an expert panel who were greatly aided in their Herculean task of separating the

extremely high standard of entries by both nominations from manufacturers and suppliers as well as via extensive customer feedback – which for the 2019 edition of the competition had absolutely flooded in.

Steve Gibbs, Editor of *Service Dealer* magazine, said, "Each of our winning dealerships this year, across the product categories, have represented the finest examples of trusted, local businesses serving their communities. In these times of uncertainty, it's reassuring that there are still independent, specialist companies out there, such as our Dealer Of The Year winners, who can be relied upon to provide exemplary levels of customer service."

The awards presented to dealerships and individuals on the night were:

GARDEN MACHINERY DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Husqvarna.
Presented by: Kevin Ashmore,
Husqvarna Professional UK Manager*

**WINNER: Winchester Garden Machinery, Liss,
Sunningdale & Winchester**

Winchester Garden Machinery Ltd, the garden machinery and service business based in Liss, Sunningdale and Winchester, won the 2019 Garden Machinery Dealer of the Year Award.

The judges said, "In a very competitive category that had four finalists, this well-established dealership had demonstrated a determination to keep focussing ahead whilst making some tough decisions on the way."

High praise received from customers included: "Exceptionally friendly staff with excellent product knowledge. I cannot fault the service, advice and the knowledgeable staff encountered. I have recommended other people to this store, all of whom have received the same treatment. Undoubtedly a store that has got it right."



Jason Nettle with Kevin Ashmore plus Service Dealer owner Duncan Murray-Clarke and comedian host, Charlie Baker

FINALISTS:
Cutting Edge Machinery Ltd, Bromsgrove;
F G Adamson & Son, East Riding of Yorkshire;
Revill Mowers, Coleford, Gloucestershire

FARM MACHINERY DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Kramp.
Presented by: Neil Benbow,
Kramp Field Sales Manager*

**WINNER: Lister Wilder,
eight branches across
Southern England**

Lister Wilder, an agricultural machinery dealer and service business based across eight branches in the South of England, won the 2019 Farm Machinery Dealer of the Year Award.

The judges said, "A highly thought of business established in 1947. Over the last few years it has been growing the dealership demonstrating a commitment to invest in training and



Colin Puffett, Ian Nutt and Alan Haines with Neil Benbow plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

innovation. The judges felt that it had also shown consistency in tough trading conditions by improving internal efficiencies and is now looking ahead more than ever."

Customer feedback for Lister Wilder included: "From purchasing new equipment, to having existing machinery serviced and repaired, we always receive a first-class and

efficient service from Lister Wilder – most importantly at competitive prices."

FINALISTS:
Arwel's Agri Services Ltd, Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire; Ripon Farm Services, Ripon; Turney Fieldforce, Bicester and Princes Risborough

FORESTRY EQUIPMENT DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Ibcos Ltd.
Presented by: Adam Giles,
Account Manager*

WINNER: Buxtons Limited, Stafford

Buxtons Limited, a forestry machinery dealer and service business based in Penkridge, Staffordshire, won the 2019 Forestry Machinery Dealer of the Year Award.

The judges said, "This dealer shows diversity as well as a specialism in arboriculture as it was a finalist in the garden machinery category last year. The judges liked the digital approach,



Neale Hopley with Adam Giles plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

putting customers' feedback and members of staff foremost. Customer feedback submitted was outstanding."

Praise from customers included: "As a female in this industry it can be daunting entering a shop. Buxtons has been fantastic at making me feel comfortable and not treating me any differently. Their expert knowledge

helped me find the best machine to suit my needs."

FINALISTS:

Gayways Ltd, Harrow, North London;
Winchester Garden Machinery (Forest & Arb), Liss, Sunningdale & Winchester;
Revill Mowers, Coleford, Gloucestershire

PROFESSIONAL TURFCARE DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Etesia.
Presented by: Les Malin,
Managing Director*

WINNER: Gibson's Garden Machinery, Colne, Lancashire

Gibson's Garden Machinery professional turfcare machinery and service business, based in Colne, Lancashire, won the 2019 Professional Turfcare Machinery Dealer of the Year Award.

The judges said, "This excellent dealership has a real focus on customer satisfaction with a genuine customer first approach.

"Its commercial clients are quick to praise their extensive product knowledge, their desire to make sure customers have the right kit for the right job and importantly, their speedy responses to make sure downtimes are minimised."

Customer comments in favour of Gibson's included: "Very knowledgeable staff who cover the full professional product range. Excellent follow-up with



Andrew Melville, Scott Grieve and Mark Lewin with Les Malin, plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

quotations and other information promptly supplied as requested. Great after service carried out with the utmost efficiency and professionalism. I cannot recommend them highly enough."

FINALISTS: Double A Trading Company Ltd, Cupar; Sharrocks Ltd, Wrightington, Lancashire



CHIPPERS FOR A LIFETIME

Exclusively available in the UK & Ireland from Henton & Chattell, Hansa garden chippers are great for processing all your unwanted branch and organic material into mulch of a fine, even texture – ideal for composting or mulching.

Hansa chippers are high-performance petrol & electric chipper shredders, built tough to suit your domestic and commercial needs. Useful all year round as you do your winter pruning, spring clean-up or trimming back in summer. A Hansa chipper will offer you a much faster, more efficient and more user-friendly operation. Visit: www.hansaproducts.com for details.



TO BECOME A HANSA DEALER TODAY PLEASE CALL ANDY MARVIN: 07771 581 296

ATV/QUAD DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Honda Power Equipment.
Presented by: Andrew Parr, Sales Operations Department Manager*

WINNER: MKM Agriculture Ltd, Bedford & Suffolk

MKM Agriculture, an ATV/UTV dealer and service business based in Marston Moreteyne, Bedfordshire and Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, won the 2019 ATV/Quad Machinery Dealer of the Year Award.

The judges said, "This ATV dealer really stood out through its amazing customer feedback submitted and multiple nominations from manufacturers and logistics suppliers. It is expanding and has come a long way since three friends started the business in 1987."

Customer feedback for the company included: "I have been using MKM for several years and return to them for all my machinery, parts and service needs. They



Anthony Deacon with Andrew Parr plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

continually offer expert and knowledgeable advice and will always deliver precisely what is agreed. A highly professional family business."

FINALISTS: Hayes Machinery, South Molton; Turney Group, Bicester & Princes Risborough

STAR OF THE DEALERSHIP

*Sponsored by: Catalyst Computer Systems.
Presented by: Mike Cameron, System Sales Manager*

WINNER: John Rowland, Engineer, Turney Groundforce, Bicester & Princes Risborough

John Rowland, an engineer at Turney Groundforce with branches in Bicester and Princes Risborough won the 2019 Star Of The Dealership Award.

Simon Chadbone, Group Service Manager at Turney Group, said of John, "John is exceptional in his area of expertise with a real attention to detail. He delivers great workmanship and is a champion of what Turney aims to deliver. He is always looking to provide a fix to the customers' problems and can quite often be found on site until the early hours to rectify any problems that may present themselves."

The judges said: "After 40 years, this year's winner is still



John Rowland with Mike Cameron plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

dedicated to the dealership and service department. He picked up a Master Technician award in May this year and continues to show dedication through his work and work ethic. Despite this he is always ready to help others as he is the 'go to' person in the dealership."

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR



Ifan Davies and Martin Tyler plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

*Sponsored by: Kubota UK.
Presented by: Martin Tyler,
Business Development Manager*

**WINNER: Ifan Davies, Arwel's Agri Services,
Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire**

Ifan Davies, an apprentice at Arwel's Agri Services based in Llanwrda, Carmarthenshire, won the 2019 Apprentice of the Year Award.

Dealer Principal at Arwel's Agri Services, Georgina Cornock-Evans, said of Ifan, "Ifan has been with us for a year and as a company we can't get over how quickly he has progressed in the business. Ifan was familiar with the forestry machinery and when he joined us he went straight to college to study his apprenticeship. A year later he is able to fix and service nearly all machinery. He has learnt so much through the apprenticeship scheme."

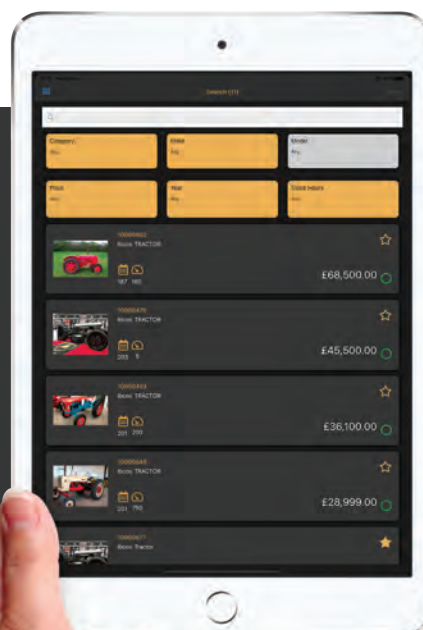
The judges said, "This year's Apprentice of the Year has progressed extremely quickly over the last 12 months and is already being let loose on bigger ag equipment such as forage harvesters. He works at an evolving dealership that believes in progressing several apprentices at once, despite being located remotely."

ibcos | a Constellation Software Company

Access Wholegood Inventory Anytime, Anywhere



Eliminate paper.
Go mobile with **Ibcos Gold Sales**.



BOOK A DEMO NOW!

Call us at: +44 (0) 1202 714200

www.ibcos.co.uk

OVERALL DEALER OF THE YEAR

*Sponsored by: Kramp UK.
Presenting by: Des Boyd,
Sales Director*

WINNER: Winchester Garden Machinery



Jason Nettle and Des Boyd, with Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker, celebrating their Overall Dealer of the Year win

The title of Overall Dealer of the Year was awarded to Winchester Garden Machinery.

The judging panel considered all the entries and finalists on a range of qualities with particular emphasis placed on customer testimonials, online presence, and supplier endorsements.

In being judged worthy of this Overall accolade, Winchester Garden Machinery scored very highly and

stood out to the panel as a deserving champion.

The judges said: "This year's Overall winner is an established name in our dealer community.

"The next generation are managing the company forward and have recently made some big decisions in regards to direction and strategy as well as utilising the traditional ways alongside modern routes to market."

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Sponsored and presented by: Service Dealer founders Chris and Trish Biddle

WINNER: Brian Sangster, recently retired BAGMA President



Chris and Trish Biddle with Brian Sangster (centre) plus Duncan Murray-Clarke and Charlie Baker

The Service Dealer Outstanding Contribution Award was presented to Brian Sangster who has recently retired as BAGMA President.

Chris Biddle said, "This industry depends on those who embrace the whole fabric of our sector, those who go the 'extra mile' for the benefit of the whole industry – and that is certainly the case with the recipient of tonight's winner.

"Brian Sangster went from High School in Cupar to Elmwood Agricultural College. He started his working career in 1972 as a Lecturer in Agricultural Machinery at Galashiels College of Further Education. In 1978 he joined dealer Reekie at Stirling, becoming Group Service and Warranty Manager. He was with Reekie for 37 years, retiring (with a small R) in 2015.

"An active member of BAGMA, he was appointed National President in May 2015, a post which he held for four years instead of the usual two-year term, before handing over to Peter Arrand at this year's Royal Highland Show.

"But that has not meant he has put his feet up. Brian is now a STEM Ambassador; a judge of the Innovation Awards at the Royal Highland; Chairs the BAGMA Scottish group; is Chairman of the LE-TEC Management Group; and is BAGMA representative on the BIRA Board of Management."

Chris also quoted BAGMA MD Keith Christian, who said, "Brian has been the busiest and most involved President I have known during my time at BAGMA. He is modest, hardworking and a wonderful ambassador for dealers in particular and the industry as a whole. A real unsung hero."



TURNING A PROFIT

You may know some of the characteristics that define the generation of which you are part. Perhaps you are a post-war 'baby boomer' proud of your home and garden, or a member of 'generation X', born from 1966-80 and having been influenced by the rise of personal computing and the internet. But how well do you know the generations your customers come from? Or your employees? And do you understand how this might affect their behaviours?

Those were some of the questions raised by keynote speaker Dr Eliza Filby at the 2019 *Service Dealer Conference* back in November. A specialist in generational intelligence who helps companies understand generational shifts and how they change society behaviours, she gave the audience much food for thought in terms of how dealers can enhance the way they connect with everyone from staff to customers, recognising that they may come from very different generations.

KNOW THE GENERATIONS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS

"Those various generations respond differently to different forms of communication," suggested Dr Filby.

"The baby boomers, born from 1942-65, tend to be regarded as the privileged generation, having experienced the significant post-war economic boom. Typified by the man mowing his lawn, they were the first generation to be encouraged to save money, invest in property and start pensions. And as they are living longer, they are redefining what it means to

From staff management to business efficiency and customer retention to communication, the theme of November's annual Service Dealer Conference brought together speakers from within and outside the industry to exchange ideas and advice. Martin Rickatson summarises the proceedings



Dr Eliza Filby speaking on the main stage

be old, doing more in retirement than previous generations.

"Conversely, those described as 'generation X', born from 1966-80, have seen the biggest decline in their assets and wealth of recent generations. However, they are really the first true 'technology generation' – the first to grow up with computers and, later, the internet.

"It's the next generation, the 'millennials' born from 1981-96, that are becoming particularly influential consumers, but are tending to prioritise spending on technology, eating out and travel over savings and house deposits. More millennials have passports than driving licences, and they tend to be more interested in buying 'experiences' than products. With half having a degree, they are the best educated of recent generations – although that's perhaps not the same as being the most intelligent. But they are also more loyal to themselves and their plans, rather than loyal to their employers as previous generations were."

Millennial traits are being adopted by others in society, she suggested, creating millennial characteristics in more of us, with people older than

millennials increasingly adopting similar traits.

"Millennials will be your most important demographic in the next few decades," she suggested to dealers seeking customers and staff for garden, grounds care and agricultural products.

"Boomers wanted to buy, keep, maintain and sustain. Millennials place more emphasis on experiences, but when needing certain goods are often prepared to share. They have fewer practical skills – they have learnt less from their parents, and rely on them more for advice and recommendations – and it's notable that DIY firms, for example, are struggling to capture this market. They are also increasingly eco-conscious in the way they buy and behave, and are maintaining the ethics and convenience of what they expected before they were consumers."

But while millennials are often talked about in today's press, it's members of generation Z, born from 1997-2010, who are rapidly coming of age and becoming important consumers and employees, Dr Filby emphasised.

“While millennials grew up in the longest boom period in recent history, generation Z has had it very different. They are more financially astute than millennials, and the internet has made them more entrepreneurial, but also sceptical, particularly of advertising and marketing, and they are consequently difficult to engage with. Many don’t simply use social media to make statements, but also broadcast messages. Fewer are on Facebook – that is seen as social media for older users – or social media generally, but may use shorter forms. They are a more serious, more savvy generation than millennials. Many millennial and generation Z people, though, are reconnecting with the countryside, she suggested.

“The newer generations of parents are seeing the outdoors as an ‘antidote’ to the problems of digital dominance in society, which could help bolster the declining popularity of pastimes such as gardening. While they are influenced by the computer-calculated algorithm targeting used by those who sell via the internet to up-sell and cross-sell products, there is also a backlash for greater human interaction. This is what luxury now is – things made and delivered by humans rather than algorithms and robots, and increasingly things that are invested in and intended to last.

“All this also means it’s becoming increasingly important to know how and when to communicate with your customers. Email isn’t always the best way as it’s easily ignored or deleted. Social media gives people a say, and the ability to easily feed back on your products and service. Today’s market is about six Cs – customisation, co-creation, convenience, conscience, certification and community. If you don’t address these you will be on the wrong side of history. The community of social media means the way your consumers advertise you, talking to each other online about experiences with your products and services, is more important than the way you advertise yourself. Always be aware of what’s happening here.”

MAKING MORE MONEY FROM SERVICE

Under the title *Turning your service department into a cash-producing machine*, making more money from servicing customers and equipment was the focus of the talk given by Sara Hey and Bob Clements, of US-based dealership training business Bob Clements International. Examining a dealership’s procedures and processes and how they are adhered to can often help identify areas for improvement, suggested Sara.

“A lack of processes can be masked on a small scale, but the more work you have the more apparent it becomes,” she pointed out.

“If things are chaotic, technicians don’t work well and aren’t productive, so processes are important. It’s always worth examining the steps involved in a service/repair job, and calculating cost



not approved, while it may have been necessary the customer does not have to pay for it. A lot of dealer software has texting capability built into it, so it pays to investigate using it fully.

“The second part of the process is creating a staging area for the job, tagging the item is to show where the service/repair process is at. Thirdly is

“IF THINGS ARE CHAOTIC, TECHNICIANS DON’T WORK WELL”

per job not just on labour rates/hour but on how much the whole process will cost, including non-technician tasks.

“For example, the first of these steps is obviously job creation, recording the customer’s details and machine issues. Speed of communication can be as much of an issue as anything, and it’s worth a fresh look at how information is communicated. The average person responds to a text message in three minutes, and texts can be a game-changer in the service department. That’s because, unlike a phone call, they provide written proof of a dealer query and a customer response. Always communicate with the customer throughout the job, especially on high cost ones. In the US, if you do work the customer has

the triage process, where the service coordinator sets up the equipment for examination and provides extra hands during the service/repair process. Add more time to a job based on equipment condition at triage assessment time. The service co-ordinator role is crucial in keeping technicians as close as possible to 100% efficient – they cannot be so if they are doing things that don’t require their skills. Technicians are the surgeons in your operating rooms, and need to be kept happy and engaged to retain them. A co-ordinator to clean, prepare and open up equipment can help with steps one and two, and longer term can perhaps be trained up to engineer status. And the simple task of cleaning and preparation will

mean your engineers not only save time, but by not bringing dirt into the workshop you won't waste time taking dirt out again, and will create a better work environment.

"Service departments buy time from their technicians and sell it to their customers, so aim to minimise time that can't be charged out. For outdoor power equipment, triage time should take 6-12 minutes, and for compact equipment 15-30 minutes. Large ag equipment may obviously take longer, and be based on clock-on time from work order initiation."

Once triaged and costed, she suggested dealers also train staff to look for up-selling opportunities in a job, checking for other issues and bringing these up with the customer when contacted ahead of service/repair work commencing.

"Think like a hotel offering levels of room service. Probably half of customers will say 'go ahead' if given a time and price estimate for additional work for which a need has been identified.

"The co-ordinator can then communicate parts requirements to the parts department and create a work order. A parts co-ordinator can also be invaluable here, performing a similar role to the service co-ordinator by calculating which parts will be from stock and which will require an order, and sourcing/placing them for the technicians. Again, this role is good for a part-timer who can potentially be trained up to be a parts manager."



Sara Hey on stage

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

Eliza Filby returned to speak at the two break-out sessions later in the conference day, examining the influences behind recruitment, retention and engagement of both customers and employees. Identifying issues such as restricted career options, poaching, pay, perks, home pressures, working conditions/hours and company culture as all influencing employee retention, she also noted the shift away from a culture of long-term commitment to one employer.

"For employees it's increasingly not about who you work for but what you do. Around 80% of an employee's training takes place before age 25, and if this just stops it can be a problem. Constant training and business involvement helps here, as it's easy to lose that investment if you don't keep employees engaged. As people live and work longer they need to learn new skills, and just as older employee mentors teaching skills to younger staff is invaluable, it's also worth considering what younger staff can teach older members, in terms of new technologies and skills.

"Training throughout a person's career is increasingly a part of employer attraction, but it has to be bespoke. Newer generations used to social media have more of a voice and are more entrepreneurial, and democratic participation in the business, giving them a chance to say how their career and the business as a whole goes forward, can help channel this."

She acknowledged audience members' concerns over issues such as lack of work ethic and career preparedness among young employees in particular.

"Young people today have grown up in a choice-rich culture. It's very easy to apply for a job online – so you need to make it like that too. Use existing young staff to help, through the making of online media such as YouTube videos to promote your



Dr Eliza Filby from the breakout sessions

company. These people want to see what others like them are doing, and once you have picked likely candidates from applications, conduct interviews that tease out their values and keep talking to them and all your employees throughout their careers. That's how to get them – and keep them – excited about the job and the company.

"Once you have recruited good young staff, aim to keep both them and older existing staff happy by bringing the diversity of age and experience together to bridge the generations, swap skill knowledge and help them understand each other. While older members can train hard skills, newer, young ones may be more adept at, for example, phone and internet skills. Use two-way mentoring to help older staff educate younger and vice-versa.

"Ensure all staff understand how they can continue to develop skills, and show them a career path, salary plans, the pay scales and responsibilities that come with commitment and progression. Create loyalty and reasons to stay and supplement pay with other rewards.

"As dealers get larger, personal contact becomes more important. Use get-togethers in and out of work to help employees get to know others in the company. And ensure parts and service staff benefit from rewards and targets similar to those for sales staff. Ensure also that they understand each other's roles and perhaps give them experience of what others do."



A PROFITABLE CONFERENCE

There were sessions throughout the day, concentrating on the theme of the event. Editor Steve Gibbs rounds them up

The Panel. L-R: Bob Clements, Keith Christian, Jason Nettle, Pete Harding, Hannah Robinson and Duncan Murray-Clarke



Duncan Murray-Clarke,
Service Dealer owner



Bob Clement's breakout session

In these testing and uncertain times, it was delightful to be part of such a positive atmosphere back in November, with a real sense of a community of fellow professionals coming together to share ideas and knowledge. All geared towards delivering best practice – and therefore, a profitable business.

The theme of Turning A Profit undoubtedly pervaded the discourse throughout the event. Other sessions which took place included –

Duncan Murray-Clarke, Service Dealer owner, kicked things off by welcoming delegates and sponsors alike and set the agenda, saying, “Our theme this year is Turning A Profit which, as you know, isn’t as easy as it sounds – especially in today’s challenging conditions. I’m a small business owner myself and it isn’t always easy. If and when you do crack it, you then have to deal with all the issues that growth throws at you.

“We’re in an industry that relies on the volatile weather, a workforce that is hard to attract (and then

retain), and there are, of course, mounting challenges from digital communications.”

Bob Clements also delivered the “industry education” talk, telling the delegates there is a “ton of money” to be made in this industry as long as dealers are focused on the elements of their business which they could control. He argued that whole goods sales are mostly out of the control of the dealership as they are dictated by the weather and the economy, therefore tremendous focus should be placed upon making sure your parts and service departments are acting profitably.

Bob explained that as companies, “Our business is to create processes to eliminate chaos”. He was also very keen to emphasise that the idea of working harder to add profitability to a company isn’t quite right – moreover it’s the concept of working differently, he said. Just think a little differently, try new approaches and if they don’t work, move on and try something else.



Sara Hey returned with Pete Harding to present another of their UK vs USA sessions

Sara Hey returned with Pete Harding to present another of their UK vs USA sessions – this year on the subject of recruitment issues and best practices in hiring for the dealer industry.

Once again a winning formula, Pete and Sara discussed a range of issues around the subject of when a company feels they should hire, how they might go about this and then what they might do to ensure they retain these recruits.

Pete pointed out how everyone is “fishing for candidates in the same pool”, therefore they should be thinking outside the box in terms of how they try to appeal to these potential new recruits, possibly via social media. It was also interesting to hear them talk about how damaging for a small company keeping the wrong person in the business can be. These toxic elements need to be removed as soon as possible, they both agreed, with Sara suggesting that the cost of keeping a bad apple in the company for just six months would end up

costing an owner two-and-a-half times that person’s annual salary.

The day wrapped up with a panel debate and Q&A session. On the panel were Bob and Pete who were joined on stage by Keith Christian of BAGMA and representing the dealer community, Jason Nettle from Winchester Garden Machinery and Hannah Robinson from Brian Robertson Machinery.

Split into two halves, first the panellists were asked their thoughts on what they heard during the course of the day, specifically relating to the theme of turning a profit. This was followed by a series of questions gathered from delegates. It was fascinating to hear some other perspectives on the day’s events as well some real-world knowledge from the front lines. Topics covered in the questions put to the panel included how will dealers cope with an increasingly battery product future, the role of women in the industry and what they felt was the common barrier to profitability.



WHAT THE DEALERS SAID...

Quotes from 2019 attendees

“ As a company, we have gained so many ideas from Bob Clements that we have a meeting scheduled next week with our service department to implement these immediately. We also very much enjoyed Dr Eliza’s presentation on generational changes. It certainly helped us understand the “youth of today” and consider how we could meet them in the middle without taking drastic measures. ”

Rebecca Briant,
Briants Of Risborough Ltd

“ This was our fifth year of attending the Service Dealer Conference and every year we find something to take away which benefits us as a business. Each year I try to bring four or five of our key staff members. ”

Phil Gregg
Ripon Farm Services

“ The conference gives us a chance to network with colleges. The way that the attendees engage with each other is very high. ”

Richard Taylor,
RT Machinery

LOOKING BACK AT AGRITECHNICA

November's Agritechnica exhibition in Hannover, Germany, provided dealers with a glimpse of what key suppliers have in store for them for the 2020 season – and in some cases what they have in development for release further into the future. MARTIN RICKATSON was there



Finnish firm Sampo Rosenlew, whose agreement to build John Deere W300/400 series combines has come to an end, showed its first rotary



Belarus-based combine manufacturer Gomselmash has launched the industry's first methane/natural gas-powered combine

With a large proportion of the 2,820 exhibitors from 53 countries showing off something new and using Agritechnica 2019 as a launchpad for their latest products, the 450,000 visitors passing through the exhibition's 23 vast Hannover exhibition complex halls had plenty to peruse, and there was no shortage of new opportunities for dealers seeking out inspiration to stir up their sales campaigns during 2020. But among the exhibits from both major and more minor names, there was a notable further emphasis on emerging technologies that dealers may be selling in the near future.

TRACTORS

The trend towards track alternatives to wheels for high-horsepower tractors continues with the launch by Claas of an all-round system for its Xerion flagship. Designated the Xerion Trac TS, the option is available on the Xerion 5000 (530hp) and 4500 (490hp) models, and unlike the in-house 'flat-track' system used on Claas's Lexion combine, forage harvester and Axion 900 tractor models, it's sourced from Dutch manufacturer Zuidberg. Using large drive sprockets, it features 762mm (30in) Camso tracks, which boost footprint by 25% compared with the largest single-tyre alternative. A pendular suspension system is standard. Machine width is less than 3.0m. Meanwhile, Claas has also boosted the spec of the smallest model, with the Xerion 4000 becoming the 462hp (max) Xerion 4200. Service intervals in all Xerions have been doubled to 1,000hrs, while operators now get the same armrest, CMotion joystick and touch screen CEBIS terminal as Axion and Arion tractors.

Prototypes were a big theme among the tractors at Agritechnica, with a number of manufacturers unveiling concept designs pointing to future development direction. Massey Ferguson's NEXT tractor showed its design thinking in terms of joystick steering, touchscreen controls, sensor technology and the ability to be

operated fully or partially autonomously. Meanwhile Steyr, behind which CNH Industrial is placing increased emphasis, took the wraps off its Konzept diesel-electric hybrid, which uses a conventional 4.5-litre FPT engine to power an electric generator and transfer power to individual motors, with full battery power suited to an hour's operation at full-load working. A further electric motor drives the PTO and main hydraulic pump. Of more immediate concern, New Holland announced that its methane-powered T6.180 would be going into production in 2020, while Case IH showed off its new AFS Connect Magnum tractors and facelifted Puma models.

Belarusian tractor maker Belarus, for which Browns of Liversedge is the UK importer, supplying a network of around 20 dealers, showed its future intent by not only revealing a new livery across its line, but also the first model in what may be a fully redesigned range. The 75hp Stage V Caterpillar-powered 742.7 features a conventional 12x12 transmission and a new cabin design.

COMBINES

Whilst it unveiled an all-new flagship X9 combine, John Deere was staying fairly tight-lipped about what is inside its new range-topper, which was being shown as a pre-production machine rather than a full ready-for-sale model. To this end, there was little data to be had, and there was no information board alongside it or brochure

given out. What was divulged was that it has Deere's first twin-rotor threshing and separation system, and is claimed to have the widest body in the industry – but with a transport width below 3.5m on wheels or tracks, plus improved crop flow, an increase in active threshing and separation areas and a larger cleaning shoe. The new design is also said to have improved comfort, convenience and lighting features in the cab, which uses displays and controls similar to those used across the broader John Deere product range to aid operator familiarity in John Deere fleet businesses.

A new draper header design was also shown on the machine, incorporating a hinged frame and the widest available wing range. A deep belt with a specially designed grain saving surface is said to help minimise losses at the header. The new draper will be compatible with current S-Series combines, which will all continue to be available. A limited number of X9 machines will be demonstrated during harvest 2020.

Other machines on show included the new Lexion series from Claas, with a larger 755mm-diameter drum and additional 600mm feeder drum in the largest 8000 range models, plus up to 790hp from MAN engines. More unusual machines included the first rotary from Finnish maker Sampo Rosenlew, which is ending its agreement to make smaller W300/400 combine for John Deere and is looking for new import arrangements in



Masport

NEW
21" Contractor BBC

£ 1,049.00
inc. VAT

- Blade Brake Clutch
- 3-speed commercial grade transmission
- 2-year pro warranty
- B&S 850EX
- Quadcut® 4 Blade Disc
- 21" cutting width

Distributed by FGM Claymore
01 789 490177
info@fgmclaymore.co.uk

FGM
Claymore



Fendt surprised the show with the unveiling of its first telehandler, sourced from recycling/construction machinery specialist Sennebogen

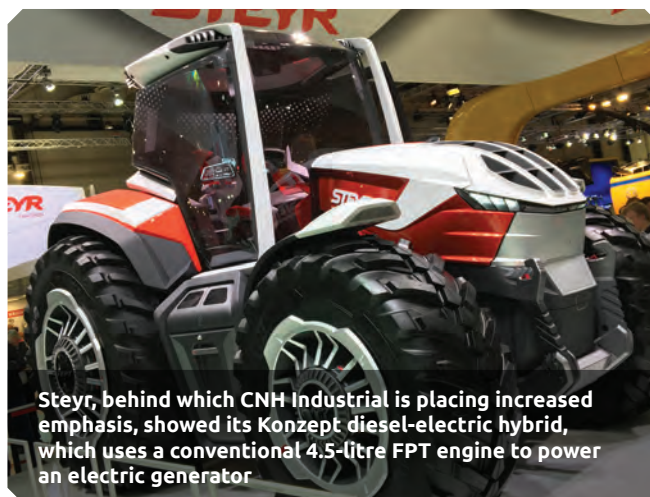
certain markets. Gomselmash, which is based in Belarus, also showed the industry's first compressed natural gas/methane-powered combine, which uses a 350hp Cummins engine. Featuring five straw walkers, it has a grain tank capacity of 9,000 litres.

MATERIALS HANDLERS

One of the biggest surprises of the show was the unveiling of the entry of AGCO's Fendt business into the telehandler sector. While sister brand Massey Ferguson has had a long-running supply deal with Doosan/Bobcat, its German sibling has chosen to go down a very different route, tying up with compatriot Sennebogen, which specialises in handling equipment for the construction, waste handling and recycling sectors. As such, the new Fendt Cargo T955 benefits from a feature reckoned to be unique in ag handling, a cab which elevates with the boom up to 4.25m to provide improved vision at/into the load placement area. Sennebogen sells the 355 E via its own dealer network primarily in the recycling, port, sawmill and municipal sectors. Powered by a 167hp Cummins engine, and driving through a hydrostatic transmission, the Cargo T955 has a maximum lift capacity of 5.5t and maximum lift height of 8.5m.

SPRAYERS

Lemken dealers will have a self-propelled model to add to their sprayer offering for 2020, with the launch at Agritechnica of the Nova. Available with 4,800- or 7,200-litre tank sizes, and boom widths from 24 to



Steyr, behind which CNH Industrial is placing increased emphasis, showed its Konzept diesel-electric hybrid, which uses a conventional 4.5-litre FPT engine to power an electric generator

39 metres, sprayer control is via Lemken's MegaSpray software through either CCI 800 or CCI 1200 terminals, with functions including section and application rate controls, GPS track guidance and job management. Lemken is part of the new DKE Agrirouter cross-vendor data exchange platform. Standard cab fitments include joystick control with configurable buttons and an air-suspended seat, while among the options is Category 4 three-stage air filtration. Telescopic axles allow track widths to be adjusted between 1.8m and 2.3m, with hydraulic adjustment optional. Ground clearance on standard rowcrop wheels is 1.20m, with an optional hydraulic lift system raising this to up to 1.60m. Independent hydro-pneumatic wheel suspension provides both operator ride and boom cushioning benefits, says the firm.

PRECISION AND FUTURE TECHNOLOGIES

A number of major manufacturers made bold displays of their intent in the field of future technologies at Agritechnica.

John Deere in particular devoted a whole area of its stand to what it called a Future Technology Zone, showcasing nine different product developments and research projects in the fields of electrification, autonomy through automation and artificial intelligence, designed, according to Deere, to show where sustainable and productive agriculture could be headed.

At the display's centre was a John Deere 1 series-based electric zero emission compact/utility tractor. A focus on efficient PTO power is reckoned to mean the machine is capable of allowing over 10,000 sq m of lawn to be mowed on one 4.5hr battery charge. The company sees potential applications mainly where low noise levels and emission free operation are required.

Also on show was eAutoPowr, promoted as the first continuously-variable transmission with an electro-mechanical power split. Greater drive efficiency and reduced wear are said to be key advantages over conventional CVTs, while the provision of up to 100kW of



Lemken dealers now have a self-propelled model to add to their sprayer offering for 2020, with the launch of the 4,800/7,200-litre 24-39m Nova

electrical power for external consumption has enabled Deere and Belgian firm Joskin to develop the only Agritechnica/DLG gold medal winner, a slurry tanker with twin electric-drive axles, boosting tractive power transmission efficiency and said to potentially reduce slurry incorporation costs by up to 25%.

Further exhibits included Deere's new autonomous tractor concept, a compact 500kW electric drive unit with wheels or tracks on a single axle, plus integrated implement. When equipped with an integrated sprayer using a built-in camera, the machine can be operated semi-autonomously in row crops such as trees, suggests the firm.

Deere also showed an autonomous drone sprayer, equipped with a weed scanner and crop spraying unit, allowing weeds to be scanned from the air and then specifically controlled. The 10.6-litre tank is filled fully automatically at a field boundary station, where the automatic battery charge also takes place. Flight time with a fully charged battery is 30 minutes.

Also on show was an autonomous ground-based sprayer with a 560-litre tank, 1.9m ground clearance and four-track steering, and camera-based spot-spraying technology from Deere's recent acquisition of Blue River Technology.

Meanwhile, although CNH Industrial showed its core New Holland, Case IH, Steyr and Kongskilde brands in one hall for the first time, it devoted a whole separate stand to its new AgXtend brand, under which precision technology for all its key ag brands will be offered.

Items on show included the Xpower electrical weed control unit, SoilXplorer scanner, which can be linked to a cultivator for variable depth working, and a new version of the CropXplorer plant greenness/nitrogen requirement sensor.

CNH Industrial dealers are being offered the chance to sell and support the full range of AgXtend precision farming tools, which CNH Industrial sources through a select group of relatively small-scale developers and provides its marketing and support clout to support them.



Supplying leading brands for the outdoor power industry

Benefit from access to our largest ever range of parts from the biggest brands, with great offers on tools and accessories to help your business through the seasons – with 24/7 order placement



Quality, reliable and competitively priced products; an alternative to expensive OEM replacement parts.



Honda engines are perfect for lawn and garden, hire and rental plus industrial applications.



The UK's no.1 professional spark plugs providing better performance, clean combustion & reliable starting.



Extensive range of Oregon® guide bars, saw chain loops and reels now available.



High quality yet affordable pedestrian and ride-on mowers plus hand held power tools with full parts back up.



An extensive range of parts for professional mowers, competitively priced alternatives to OEM parts.



Appointed parts dealer supplying genuine Stihl parts including saw chain and bars, plus essential protection.



Industrial quality aerosol lubricants designed for workshop and maintenance applications.



Call: 01202 882000 • Email: sales@centralspares.co.uk

...for easy online ordering, simply visit:

[facebook.com/central-spares](https://www.facebook.com/central-spares) | twitter.com/central_spares

www.centralspares.co.uk

PASSING THE BATON

Richard Campey is a well-known figure in the professional grounds care machinery industry. Having introduced several key machines in the groundsman's arsenal to the UK during his career, he is now stepping back to the role of Chairman of Campey Turf Care Systems, with his daughter Julia taking over the MD role. Service Dealer's Laurence Gale Msc, MBPR caught up with him recently



Campey Turf Care Systems is one of Europe's largest independent grounds care machinery suppliers.

Richard Campey has been instrumental in bringing to market a large number of innovative machinery products from all parts of the globe. The list is extensive – machines such as the Koro Fieldtopmaker, Koro Recycling Dresser, Dakota Turf Tenders, Vredo seeders, Imants and Raycam decompactors/sand injectors and a range of aerators and other turf maintenance and care products.

This equipment, in the right hands, has transformed the quality of playing surfaces at every level, and no more so than at the top Premier League football level where the Koro Fieldtopmaker has revolutionised the way groundsman can renovate their pitches, removing Poa Annuua and providing them with a brand new ryegrass surface each year.

Richard began his career working in farming, before taking a career change to join ICI in 1976. As a 22-year-old, he then took a job with SISIS, working under the redoubtable Eric Staniforth, founder of the company. It was under his stewardship that Richard began learning about complexities of managing turf.

In 1986 Richard decided that it was time for a change; he set up his own company, Professional Turf Care, to carry out a sports turf contracting service in and around the Manchester and Cheshire areas. It was not long before he saw the potential to supply second-hand machinery to many of his customers.

In 1988 he moved to his current location, just outside Macclesfield, where he began his journey of selling unique, innovative and bespoke products. His regular dealings with customers in the second-hand market led to him fulfilling local demand and eventually taking on new machinery dealerships and stock.

Richard was always keen to attend equipment shows, both at home and abroad, and it was when he was in Holland in 1996 that he first saw the Koro Fieldtopmaker in action. He was very impressed and immediately saw the potential of this revolutionary machine. It wasn't long before the unit was being used in professional football clubs, and the rest, as they say, is history.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Next to catch his eye was the Dakota range of topdressers and in 2001 a distribution deal was agreed, but this time with European rights included. In addition, Campey added to its own Raycam range of products, with the Hi-lift trailer, Striegel harrows and Speedresser large-capacity drop spreaders.

What initially started out as a business offering sports turf maintenance work within the North-West of the United Kingdom, has now grown to be one of the UK's leading independent distributors, with machinery available throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and the US.

Now, after 30-plus years of building up the business, Richard has appointed his daughter, Julia Campey, to the role of Managing Director, with himself becoming

Chairman of the company.

As part of the company restructure, John Campey and Lee Morgado have been appointed directors and Neil Armstrong, who joined Campey in 2010 as Accounts Manager, takes up the position as Company Secretary.

Julia has been a key figure at Campey since 2004 and has been the Sales and Marketing Coordinator for the last 10 years. In this role, she has developed the corporate presence of the company throughout the UK, Europe and other parts of the globe, including the US, Australia and Asia. She has organised exhibitions as well as educational tours for overseas visitors and provided invaluable support to the sales team in the pursuit of excellence in product development, sales and back-up services.

Richard is stepping aside from his previous role and handing over the day-to-day activities to his daughter, but he remains an integral part of the company and he will still be involved in many sales and educational events.

I recently had the opportunity to catch up with Richard and asked him about his time in the industry and where he sees the current state of the professional turfcare machinery market.

Service Dealer: What is your current role within the company?

Richard Campey: I'm the Chairman of Campey Turf Care Systems having spent 33-years as Managing Director until this year. I've gone from being in complete control to allowing others to take responsibility, which is a good feeling. I'm now concentrating on long-term strategy, the planning and logistics of expansion, re-development and other matters – which has been made easier for me with fewer routine, day-to-day activities to take care of.

SD: What were some of the first products you decided to bring to market?

RC: The Koro Fieldtopmaker was one of the first in 1997 and has gone on to become a very important machine in this industry. When I first saw it in Holland, I knew there was nothing else like it in the UK, and now Koro-ing is an industry recognised term because it has transformed turf renovation.

SD: What would you say are the most popular products you deal in?

RC: The Koro FTM is still one of the most popular machines, and we're



The team get together at one of the company's demonstration events

always looking at ways to improve it, be it with the Universe rotor or making smaller size models for different sports.

The Air 2G2 Air Inject has also been very popular since it was introduced to market, because again, it addressed an issue that a lot of turf professionals were having. The Dakota Turf Tenders and Vredo Overseeders are also very popular as well as the UniRake and Imants ShockWave.

SD: Who are buying these machines?

RC: We have customers in every major sport at every level from grassroots football clubs to Real Madrid CF. The important thing is that they all get the same level of advice and customer service – we want to help people make their surfaces better. We also have for many years sold a plethora of products to the contracting sector along with supplying many public local authorities up and down the country.

SD: How important is the demo-ing of these machines to customers?

RC: Demonstrating machines is a massive part of what we do as a company. Often, like with the Koro FTM and Air2G2, we're bringing new concepts to market and people need to see them to believe them.

You also get customers who want to make sure the machine they're looking at will work on their surface, and that's understandable given the investment.

We also annually promote a number of UK roadshows at various venues up and down the country and invite many overseas customers to come and see the machinery working first-hand. We also reciprocate this, carrying out a number of demonstrations abroad.

SD: What methods do you use to market and promote your business?

RC: We advertise and use social media like most businesses, but we also publish a number of case studies throughout the year to demonstrate how the machines work for our customers in their own circumstances. I think that's important because often people

can have the same issues but might not have thought of using one of our machines as a solution. We have a very active website, that provides all our product information. Our customers can download working videos, leaflets and brochures and we also offer access to artwork and content to support our dealers.

SD: What training are you providing your staff with?

RC: All of our staff have excellent turf knowledge because they need to know their products to advise others. That's why we call them Product Specialists. They're all fully trained on the machines we sell, and when we get the chance, like this year when we went to the Dakota factory, we'll arrange visits to manufacturers. We extend this training to our dealers too.

SD: Do you see value in our trade shows and exhibitions?

RC: In 2019 we exhibited at a number of shows in the UK, Europe and America including BTME,



Koro FTM demo at Newcastle Town FC

National Grasdag in Belgium, the Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) Summer Convention and Field Day.

We think it's important to support these shows. They're a great way for us to meet a wide range of customers in a short space of time while gaining some important leads and potential new customers.

SD: Which new technologies do you see having a significant impact on the professional grounds care industry?

RC: I think battery technology will have a big impact. Already there are examples in Europe of councils desiring zero emissions in cities. We recently added the AllTrec Tool Carrier to our range, which is a machine that has multiple functions, all of which are achieved without producing any emissions during operation.

It's been very successful in Holland, and can be used to mow, cut hedges and remove weeds in a very quiet and environmentally friendly way. I believe it will be with technologies such as this, where the focus of the future shall lay.

SD: What are your thoughts regarding online selling?

RC: Our online sales presence comes from Tines Direct. It's a key component of our business. Customers know that they will receive quality replacement tines overnight. It's an essential part of our aftersales service.

SD: How do you foresee the future for your business?

RC: I don't have a different vision for the next decade, rather a continuation of how we are now. We're always looking to develop new markets and introduce new products that follow the same principle of best practice for natural turf maintenance.

SD: Thank you.



A busy stand at BTME



Service Dealer's Laurence Gale on a new AllTrec Tool Carrier at the recent SALTEX exhibition



Richard presenting at a demo day in Staffordshire

BUSINESS MONITOR

SPONSORED BY CATALYST COMPUTER SYSTEMS



BUSINESS PROSPECTS 2020

Steady as she goes is the message from dealers

Due to publishing deadlines we had to go out with our *Business Prospects 2020* survey a couple of weeks ahead of the December general election – which at the time of this magazine going to press, was still a few days away.

As such there still seemed to be a lot of uncertainty among the dealers who responded – and certainly a fair degree of caution when considering how 2020 might pan out for their businesses.

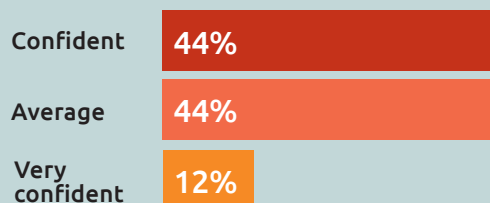
In terms of the general level of business confidence felt for this coming year, the most popular response was split between a decent 'confident' level and a fair 'average' level.

When responding to how they felt the various aspects of their business would fare in 2020 compared with 2019, there was an overwhelming sense among those who answered the survey that this year would be one of consolidation and staying the same. A fair majority believed that machinery sales, the workshop as well as parts and accessories, would all stay fairly constant to their 2019 levels in 2020.

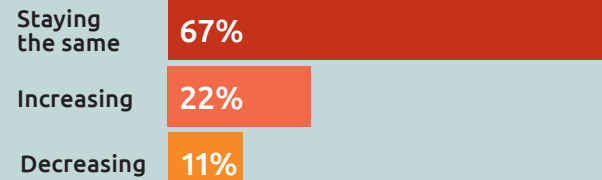
In terms of taking more people on in their dealerships, be it new employees or new apprentices, there was a fairly lukewarm reception to this idea among responders. It seems that many still are not in a confident enough position to take on this extra financial burden.

Finally, the main threat to the potential business this coming year was cited to be, as ever, the weather. The political situation, inevitably tied to Brexit, followed up.

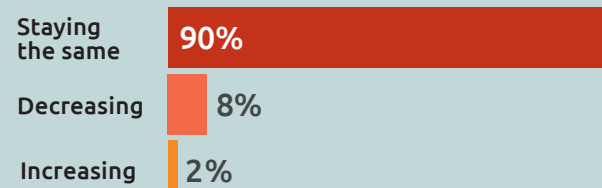
In general, how confident for your business do you feel going into 2020?



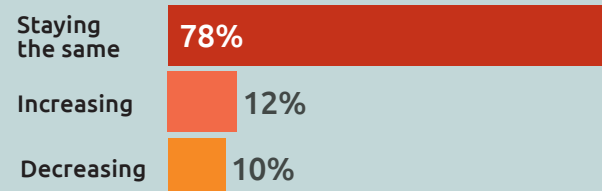
Do you see your machinery sales for 2020



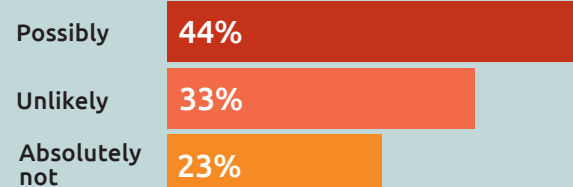
Do you see your parts & accessories sales for 2020



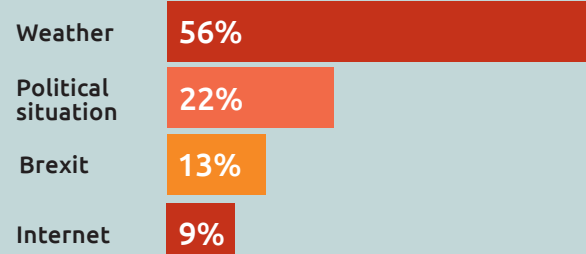
Do you see your service work for 2020



Do you anticipate having to take on more staff in 2020



What do you anticipate as being the biggest challenges to your business in 2020?



YOUR SAY

We asked you what was giving you cause for concern, or making you feel optimistic going into 2020

- If you are not optimistic you will not succeed in attracting more customers. After over 40 years in the trade, I have seen it all before and survived, and while the last two years have been difficult, grass still grows and people need machines and repairs. Let's get the election and Brexit done, and then all we have to worry about is the weather!
- Being a garden machinery retailer on the high street of a large local village for five years, we have decided to move out of the village to a unit in the countryside that has showroom and workshop space, parking and comes with a yard. Lots of factors prompted the move, one of which was the rates/rent and the local council's parking restrictions were getting worse. We doubted the move but, to be honest, customers will find us as the majority of the time your manufacturers will highlight your location on their websites (as long as you notify them). Plus most people are using the internet now to find products and dealers. We have also taken on a manufacturer of well-known pressure washers and indoor and outdoor cleaning equipment to aid sales when the weather turns against the grass mowing machinery side.
- It is strange times to be in the garden machinery industry. With the long, hot, dry summer last year followed by the extremely wet one this year, both made any sort of forward planning very difficult – and now a general election thrown into the mix where both main parties are at polar opposites, promising wildly different future outlooks for business. The gradual slide towards battery tech means more units will be boxed, shifted online – which will no doubt lead to the usual race to be the lowest possible price. This, plus the inevitable reduction in servicing work long-term, means profitability will likely be hit further in the future. Hopefully, once the election is completed and Brexit resolved one way or another, we can get back to some sense of stability – or perhaps if Jeremy wins he might nationalise garden machinery and solve all our problems!
- 2020 will be an average year for garden machinery dealers. Internet sales will probably increase. With regards to who ends up running the country, the grass will still need to be cut!
- Concerns my business hold include, doing unprofitable warranty work for online purchased machines; increasing pressure from major suppliers; loss of small dealer independence and being forced into unrealistic winter stock quantities.
- The issues are the political situation brought about by Brexit. Another bloody election! At least it's at a quiet time of year. In my 10 of years of retailing and over 20 years in the industry, my observation has been that elections slow sales!
- We have had a good year so I should be more optimistic but I am concerned for the future of the dealership in the longer term with the move towards cordless battery products.
- If the sun shines and the rain falls we will have a good year. Simple as.

Award Winning Dealer Management Software

Reliable, robust and comprehensive management of all areas of your dealership.

Desktop • Tablet • Smartphone

The Better Solution For Your Business

CATALYST
COMPUTER SYSTEMS

0116 230 1500 • sales@catalyst-uk.com • www.catalyst-uk.com

AN ELECTRIC SALTEX

The IOG's Turfcare show proved a buoyant couple of days at the NEC, says Editor STEVE GIBBS, with battery and robotic offerings truly in the ascendency

October saw another cracking two days at the NEC for the IOG's SALTEX exhibition. As I've felt for the past few years, the show has really found its feet in Birmingham, and if anything, this past edition certainly had the feel to me as the best one yet.

In an official statement released after the show, organisers described 2019 as "record breaking", saying there were over 500 brands on display and 9,104 visitors in attendance. Walking the aisles, the halls certainly felt packed and buzzing each day during the peak hours of 10-2.30ish. Several exhibitors commented to me during day two that on the first day they hadn't even had a chance to look at their watches before 3pm and at certain times several mentioned how they were concerned that visitors to their stands were having to hang around before being able to grab someone to talk to. This is despite the stands being well manned.

My impression was certainly that most stand holders were pleased with the numbers, and more importantly, the quality of the people coming through the doors.

These visitors clearly included key personnel from commercial businesses, be they sporting facilities, amenity workers or contractors. Alongside this there did appear to be plenty of dealers in attendance too.

Many stand holders actually remarked on how pleased they had been to see so many dealers coming on to their stands. Some they already knew, but also a good number of those they didn't, making enquiries about possibly taking on new franchises, which is an encouraging sign that business might be looking up for some and therefore new avenues are being sought.

Also from *Service Dealer's* point of view, it was fantastic to meet so many of our readers who popped by the stand or whom we bumped into walking around the show floor. Thanks to everyone who took the time for a chat. It really was heartening to receive such positive feedback about this magazine, the *Update* and our Conference. Like any business, direct responses from the people you're serving is invaluable to make sure you're on the right track and delivering what's required.





Husqvarna's Product Category Manager, Jonathan Snowball (centre) talks *Service Dealer* Editor Steve Gibbs and owner Duncan Murray-Clarke, through their battery-only stand



STIHL's RMA 765V gained a lot of attention

BATTERY & ROBOTICS TO THE FORE

Walking around the halls, clearly what many manufacturers believe is required for their commercial customers is a strong battery and robotic offering. Similar to what we saw at GIE+EXPO in the States (see our special report next issue), these technologies were in abundance around the halls.

What seemed like a bold statement and possibly even a watershed moment, was that Husqvarna's stand only featured cordless and robotic machines – not one single petrol item was on show. Kevin Ashmore, UK Commercial Landscape & Groundcare Manager, told me this was of course a conscious decision. This year they were very much wanting to show their confidence in their new technologies, by concentrating on battery, robot and fleet management offerings only. It was a move that appeared to pay off with a busy stand across the two days.

STIHL had a mixture of battery and traditional products on show, but the company's Business Development Manager, Steven Greenup, was keen to point out just what attention their new RMA 765V professional battery walk-behind mower was receiving from visitors. He said the time was clearly right for a machine such as this to hit the commercial sector. Indeed, everytime I passed the stand, there were always lots of people surrounding the machine, asking questions and giving it a thorough inspection. It did genuinely appear to be gaining a lot of traction.

Ego, of course, only deals in battery products. Steve Roskell, Director of Marketing (EMEA), told me what a great show they'd had, so different from four years ago when they first attended. Back then the commercial users had a certain cynicism about battery products in general, he said. Now these pro users are seeking out Ego to see what's new. Steve, as well as a couple of other stand holders dealing in cordless, remarked that the

professional users are now not asking themselves if they want battery machines at all, but rather which battery brand should they commit their budget to?

Lewis Anderson from Rochfords told us about the great interest they experienced with the lithium-ion, rear-collect garden tractor they had on their stand. He said this was actually the first rear-collect rider of its kind in the UK market – a product designed by Stewart Anderson of Rochfords and Weibang specifically for the home territory. Lewis said they had dealers come on to their very busy stand who hadn't made it to their recent dealer events, but had heard about the model and placed orders for it. He said they also gained many solid, end user leads which they were passing on to their dealer network.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Reflecting this trend for battery, the organisers had added a new feature this year, the Eco Village. A section placed to one side of the show hall, it was a large area which allowed companies to present and demonstrate their latest cordless technologies. I felt this worked really well. During the peak hours the companies presenting gained some good exposure, with large crowds listening and watching. I guess because it was slightly less formal than the regular lecture theatres, where people had to go in, find a seat and put on headphones, the Eco Village allowed people to simply pause on their way past – hence creating quite large groups on occasion. I would imagine the companies who chose to demonstrate here, including Husqvarna, STIHL, Fleet, Infinicut, TP, Allett, Avant and Mean Green, would have been pleased with the attention they received.

That's not to denigrate the lecture theatres, mind you. They performed an excellent role, offering plenty of valuable educational opportunities for the turf professionals in attendance. Sessions which I observed



Ego demonstrated its new 45cm cordless chainsaw in a special demo cube



Rochford's rear-collect garden tractor generated dealer interest

dealers listening in to, included talks from BAGMA's Keith Christian and Sara Hey from Bob Clements International.

Keith gave a very interesting talk on recruiting for the future. He said there were many things which the industry needed to do in order to encourage more people to join the industry and then, vitally, to retain them. Fundamental to this, was everyone working together as one to raise the profile of the industry. There were no simple solutions, but it is ever so important to be able to demonstrate to potential candidates just what an interesting, varied and profitable career path the landbased industry can offer.

Sara Hey, meanwhile, presented on the subject of motivating employees. She spoke about how, in order to keep staff engaged, it was most important that business owners need to lead with clarity. Sara said that leaders need to ask good questions of their employees and listen carefully to the answers if they want to keep staff motivated. Three questions she suggested owners could ask of their employees were: 'What was the most exciting part of your work this past month?'; 'What could make work more enjoyable?'; and 'Are there any discussions or meetings that you feel you could be a part of, but you aren't?'

Elsewhere around the show, there was plenty to interest the many dealers who made the trip to Birmingham. Handy was talking to people regarding the Cramer range of garden machinery which it is now promoting. Paul Chandler from Magic Distribution, which distributes the Ambrogio robotic mowers, told me that many dealers have been asking about the new small model which is ideal for the lawns on new-build homes, whilst David Hart from Kubota said they'd seen plenty of dealers come onto the stand who the company had been talking to about opportunities to perhaps deal in other ranges the company offers, such as ag or construction, which they might not yet be in to.

Of course, any report such as this can only ever be a snapshot of what was taking place around the halls. I really felt that there was a vibrant, upbeat atmosphere pervading, with a sense of real business and valuable networking being done.

I feel congratulations are due to the IOG for once again organising such a valuable and worthwhile show and I'm sure exhibitors and visitors alike will be looking forward to 2020's edition.



SEEN AT THE SHOW

There were plenty of new launches at SALTEX to interest specialist dealers in both battery technology and traditional power sources

ALLETT'S ELECTRIC AVENUE

82v li-ion battery-powered stadium rotary mower launched

Allett launched the new Uplift 86E at the show. An 82v li-ion battery-powered stadium rotary mower, it is designed for debris collection after matches and built on the experience gained with previous models. It features twin contra rotating blades for a high-lift cut and vacuum for

increased efficiency, while a full-width rear roller produces striping.

The cutting width is 86cm (34") and there is a single point height of cut adjustment between 20mm to 50mm. The company says a wide grass chute allows unimpeded grass collection and the moulded deck is constructed to optimise airflow.

The mower's power source is an 82v battery system which features four quick-change battery docking stations and the unit can use any number of batteries from one to four. Batteries can be charged in 1.5 hours and they are inter-changeable with the C34E in the Allett range. The batteries connect

to a phone app via Bluetooth enabling the operator to check battery life, battery temperature and the batteries' location. There are three brushless motors for maximum efficiency and reliability, two powering the blades and one powering the rear roller.



FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE BRUSHCUTTER LAUNCH

Etesia unveils new Attila 98X

Etesia UK officially unveiled the new Attila 98X four-wheel-drive ride-on Brushcutter, ahead of the 2020 season.

The company says the new machine has been designed to work in the toughest of conditions. It boasts that the unit effectively deals with clearing vegetation from a wide variety of sites including long grass, weeds, bracken and brambles on woodland paths, orchards, verges and embankments.

Powered by the new Kawasaki FS691V 24HP electric start engine, the Attila 98X has a strengthened welded tubular



Etesia Attila 98X

chassis providing a better driving position for operators.

With a low centre of gravity, four-wheel-drive plus heavy-treaded tyres and differential lock, the new ride-on brushcutter to join the Attila family provides greater stability on slopes up to 30°.

Swing or fixed-tip blades with a 98cm cutting height adjusted by a centralised lever with eight working positions from 50mm-120mm plus transport mode enable this machine to cut through dense growth of up to 4.5cm diameter.

FIRST COMMERCIAL BATTERY MOWER FROM JOHN DEERE

PRO 43B carries two rechargeable lithium-ion batteries

John Deere launched its first commercial electric battery powered walk-behind rotary mower at the NEC.

The company says the new PRO 43B not only produces zero emissions but also offers intuitive handling, fast charging and a high level of operator comfort. It is designed to enable professional users to easily cut smaller grass areas and clean up edges in public spaces, without the disturbance and nuisance caused by noise and fumes.

Built around an aluminium mower deck with steel reinforcement and alloy wheels, the 36v mower's new Powerhead carries two rechargeable lithium-ion batteries and switches automatically to the second battery when the first one is empty. Charging capacity is 6Ah as standard, with a full electric charge taking two hours 20 minutes and providing up to 500m² of mowing capacity. A spring-loaded battery release system adds to the ease of operation.

Cutting width of the new machine is 43cm and there is a choice of seven cutting heights from 22 to 80mm, set by a central lever. The mower comes with a 45-litre capacity grass bagger that features a TurboStar 'bag full' indicator flag, and a height adjustable handlebar that can be folded for storage. Overall weight with an empty bagger is 32kg. The new PRO 43B commercial battery mower will be sold with a two-year warranty (one year on the batteries) and will be available from UK and Irish dealers in 2020.



PROTOTYPE GREEN WASTE SHREDDER FROM ELIET

Prof 6 on PSD Groundcare's stand



PSD Groundcare hailed 2019's SALTEX a "huge success", reporting more visitors to the stand than ever before.

Taking centre stage at the show was the launch of the new Prof 6 Green Waste Shredder from Belgium manufacturer Eliet. A prototype was unveiled of the new tracked model which will be available in the spring, and there will also be self-propelled (wheeled) and towed models.

This new shredder is the successor to the Prof 5 and PSD described it as a welcomed addition to the Eliet range of green waste shredders. It offers a solution for material up to 16cm diameter and makes light work of leafy, wet green material.

Chris Gibson, Managing Director of PSD Groundcare said, "We were absolutely delighted with SALTEX. The stand was busy at all times and we took more enquiries than ever before. It was the perfect place for the unveiling of the new Prof 6 Green Waste Shredder."

gardencare
your pathway to a beautiful garden

CHAINSAWS
BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE

Find out more at...
cyriljohnstontrade.co.uk

LST65558 LOGSPLITTER

Central
Distributed by
Central Spares
throughout
mainland UK

SAFETY CAGE INCLUDED
5T SPLITTING FORCE
2200W ENGINE
45KG WEIGHT



CS3800
37.2CC ENGINE
4.7KG DRY WEIGHT
35CM CUT LENGTH
EASYSTART RECOIL

CS4100
40.1CC ENGINE
4.7KG DRY WEIGHT
40CM CUT LENGTH
EASYSTART RECOIL

CS5000
49.3CC ENGINE
5.4KG DRY WEIGHT
45CM CUT LENGTH
EASYSTART RECOIL

CS5600
56CC ENGINE
5.2KG DRY WEIGHT
50CM CUT LENGTH
EASYSTART RECOIL

Wide range of handheld
machinery including
hedgcutters, grass
trimmers & more



EVOPOS.com
business software
holding you back?

MTD
Compliant

01202 795900
sales@evopos.co.uk

WE'RE GROWING
WANT TO BE PART OF IT?

our partners of choice

NFU
BASC

**BECOME A CAN-AM
DEALER NOW!**

<http://www.brp.com/en/become-a-dealer.html>
Paul Wood - paul.wood@brp.com - 077 7054 4576

can-am

- Competitive range of ATVs & UTVs
- Excellent range of accessories
- Good profit margins



©2019 Bombardier Recreational Products Inc (BRP). All rights reserved. ®, TM and the BRP logo are registered trademarks of BRP or its affiliates.

RANGE ENHANCEMENTS FOR HARRIER

Hayter shows updates to both the domestic and Pro models for 2020

Hayter announced a series of updates to its Harrier range across both the Domestic and Pro models for 2020.

One of the key updates includes a brand-new cutter blade which has been added to the Harrier 48 and 56 mowers across both the Domestic and Pro models. The company says the new cutter blade provides a revised profile to ensure increased airflow pressure and improved performance. Besides being on the new 2020 models, these blades can also be retrofitted to any 2019 Harrier 48 and 56 models.

Other changes to the domestic range include a revised speed range on Harrier 41 models fitted with a variable speed transmission

matching that of the Harrier 48, with a new minimum speed of 1.8mph up to a maximum of 3.3mph.

Additional updates have also been applied to the Pro series. The Harrier 41 Pro has transitioned to the new model number CODE379B and features a new steel, two-piece rear roller and new Honda GCVX145 engine with Auto Choke. The transmission speed of the Harrier 41 Pro has also been reduced to 3.0mph to improve manoeuvrability in smaller gardens.

The Harrier 48 Pro also benefits from a reduction of transmission speed to 3.0mph, in keeping with the Harrier 41 Pro, as well as various other changes to the model. The Harrier 48 Pro will



now transition to model number CODE479B and features the new Honda GCVX170 engine, providing a 22% increase in torque vs the outgoing Honda GCV160.

Both the Harrier 48 and 56 Pro models will also receive a new rear roller bearing mounting support for added durability in professional environments.



WORLD'S ONLY 6" TURNTABLE CHIPPER

New A530L from Jensen

What is believed to be the world's first 6" turntable woodchipper was launched by Jensen at the exhibition.

With the ability to turn the turntable up to 270°, the company says users can load the new A530L from a range of angles around the machine and directly from

the verge, not only saving time and effort, but ensuring improved safety for both the operators and members of the public in the vicinity.

The 270° rotating chute also means that users can fully configure the input and output directions for maximum efficiency and safety.

Available as a road-towable woodchipper, the new A530L turntable can be towed behind the operator's vehicle and its galvanised steel chassis guarantees reduced maintenance, resistance to damage, corrosion and wear, and an extended life expectancy.

Jensen also claims the 35hp petrol engine offers less pollution and nitrogen oxide emissions, contributing to a cleaner environment. This is also recognised as a benefit for those working in Clean Air Zones and Low-Emission towns and cities or tendering for large-scale projects where diesel machinery is unfavourable.

Offering the same power and performance as the standard A530L, the company's most popular model, the A530L turntable can process up to 15m³/h of timber and brush, with additional benefits including electronic safety sensors fitted as standard, comprehensive toolkit fitted to the machine, built-in control box to record hours and servicing intervals, and incorporated storage box.



Professional and Domestic Chainsaws



GS650



GSH560



GS451



England
- Dan Walton - 07836679229

Wales and South West England
- Mark Jenkins - 07568539303

The North of England and Scotland
- Steve Barnfather - 07384214468

Call your Area Sales Rep
to hear the benefits of
becoming an
Authorised Stockist



+ OFFER YOUR CUSTOMERS A GREAT DEAL
WITH THE NEW FARMTRAC TRACTOR RANGE



WANTED
DEALERS
UK WIDE

Become a UK Farmtrac partner today by adding this competitive new tractor range to your showroom.

Reliable 22hp to 113hp engines with a range of complementary tractor mounted attachments.

Great Choice . Great Performance . Great Value . Great Support

Call 01480 226800
to become a Farmtrac dealer

Reesink Agriculture is the sole UK distributor of Farmtrac. Member of Royal Reesink ((1))



CLAAS WELCOMES NEW APPRENTICES

And sees graduates complete training

Twenty-one students recently made their first step towards a career in agricultural machinery service and support, at Induction Days held at Reaseheath College in Cheshire and SRUC Barony near Dumfries, having been offered the opportunity to join the Claas Agricultural Apprenticeship scheme.

The new intake of students come from Claas dealerships throughout the UK and Ireland. Of the new intake, 20 of the students will be training to be machinery service technicians, with one joining the Claas Parts Apprenticeship.

For over 10 years Claas has offered apprenticeship courses in both England and Scotland. Of the new intake, six students from dealerships in Scotland and Ireland will study at SRUC Barony with the remainder training at Reaseheath College near Nantwich.

For the 20 students joining the Landbased Service Engineering Apprenticeship courses at Reaseheath and Barony, their time will be split between blocks at college, where they will receive comprehensive technical training, and working for their sponsoring dealership gaining

experience in the field. Apprentices will also attend additional Claas Product training which will be delivered across the whole four years at the Claas Academy in Saxham.

Also based at Reaseheath, the Claas Parts Sales & Marketing Apprenticeship is a three-year course, again with the student's time split between formal block training at the college, balanced with practical time back at their supporting dealership. Upon completion of the course, successful students will be awarded a Level 3 Diploma in Vehicle Parts Operations, which is the equivalent of three A Levels.

For all the students, the completion of their apprenticeship is just the start of their training with Claas. Following graduation, working with their dealership and Claas UK, they will have access to ongoing training and development, with the opportunity to move into more senior management roles within their dealerships should they so wish.

Graduates

Also recently, 16 apprentices have commenced their careers with Claas dealerships throughout the UK and Ireland having graduated from the

manufacturer's Apprenticeship Scheme.

Of these, 15 have spent the last four years studying for the Claas Agricultural Technician apprenticeship. During that time they have split their time between formal training blocks at either Reaseheath College or SRUC Barony, combined with time spent gaining practical experience with their supporting dealer, resulting in them receiving an IMI National Diploma in Agricultural Engineering, which is the equivalent of three A Levels.

The final student has been studying for the three-year Claas Parts Sales & Marketing apprenticeship, also based at Reaseheath College, working towards a Level 3 Diploma in Vehicle Parts Operations, which again is the equivalent of three A Levels.

Following their graduation, all the apprentices were invited to attend the Apprentice Graduation Celebration Trip. Over the course of four days they travelled through France and Germany, visiting the Claas Tractor factory at Le Mans, the worldwide parts centre at Hamm and the Group headquarters at Harsewinkel, so as to gain more insight about Claas as a global company.



The Reaseheath apprentice intake

REESINK ADDS REFRESHER TRAINING COURSES FOR 2020

Reesink Turfcare has added 12 practical refresher courses to its machinery and equipment training offering for 2020



These one-day operational and service courses are described by the company as being for those who need the latest knowledge or have previously completed the relevant two-day course, but need to refresh their skills to ensure they remain fully up to date, as well as learning about any new developments that are related to the job they do.

There are 12 refresher courses in total. Six are provided by LANTRA, the body for land-based and environmental training, and relate to operational aspects of turfcare machinery maintenance, such as equipment installation training, the safe use of ride-on mowers, compact tractor driving, the safe use of pesticides and the sprayers and hand-held applicators used in administering these chemicals.

Then, there are another six manufacturer-backed training days from Reesink and Toro in relation to Toro diagnostics and info centre training, plus training on the customer's choice of any greens, fairway, rotary, cylinder or flail mower or utility vehicle.

Neil Adams, Head of Turfcare Training at Reesink, says, "We've introduced these refresher courses based on what our customers are telling us they want – a reminder of the key points and a skill set update. They are incredibly good value, being done on either a one-to-one basis or as a group

if there's more than one operative requiring the course. All the courses are delivered by nationally quality-assured trainers and assessors and include a mixture of practical and theory work."

These new refresher courses join the 11 already offered by Reesink and bring the full range to a total of 23.

"We're incredibly proud of the extensive range we offer our customers, it makes us stand out from the crowd by being able to offer so much more value.

"Our range of training courses demonstrates our belief in continuously improving standards in the industry. We aim to make training convenient, with some courses delivered at the trainees' working premises, too, using familiar equipment in a familiar environment. This set-up means it could not be easier for customers to develop and invest in their employees."

Further information such as dates and details of how to book, plus all the other courses available which range from air-cooled engines and basic electrics and hydraulics, can be found at: reesinkturfcare.co.uk.



Edited by Adam Bernstein

FINANCE BILL

A CROWNING MOMENT FOR HMRC?

It stings when firms fail leaving financially-hurt creditors, writes SME Digest Editor, Adam Bernstein. But when the taxman steams in, taking preference over other creditors, it can leave a nasty taste in the mouth. Known as Crown preference, this was abolished in 2002. However, it's about to be reinstated through the Finance Bill.

There are broadly two different types of security, a fixed charge over immovable or larger assets, and a floating charge over moveable items or assets such as stock and debtors. In an enforcement scenario, the amount a secured creditor receives from the proceeds of a secured asset differs depending on whether the secured asset is subject to a fixed or floating charge. A receiver, administrator or liquidator selling a floating charge asset will distribute the

proceeds with insolvency costs first followed by preferential creditors (employees currently), the 'prescribed part', and then the floating charge holder, unsecured creditors and, lastly, shareholders. Fixed charge assets realisations are sent directly to fixed charge asset holders only.

This process leads to banks wanting a fixed charge over any assets with any significant value, and a floating charge over everything else; banks lending against floating charge assets will want to know what creditors before them get paid when calculating the value of the security, and how risky the lending is – this determines the cost and availability of borrowing.

As noted earlier, under the old regime, the Crown (that is, HMRC) used to be a preferential creditor. The Enterprise Act 2002 removed that to drive a rescue culture. However, the government inserted the 'prescribed part', a percentage of the floating charge realisations that by-pass secured creditors

holding a floating charge and is paid to the unsecured

creditors including the taxman. This is around 20% of net floating charge monies recovered to a maximum of £600,000.

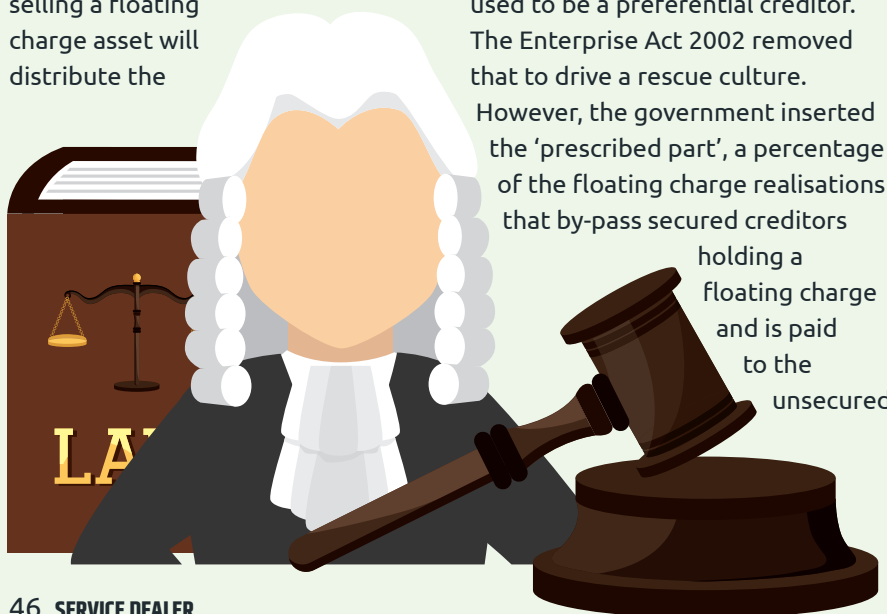
The Finance Bill reintroduces a different form of Crown preference. If passed, VAT and 'relevant deductions' (probably PAYE, employee NICs and Construction Industry Scheme deductions) will place HMRC second in line after employees and above prescribed part creditors.

Worryingly for those without security, there is to be no cap to the amount or the look-back period for HMRC to reclaim tax.

Firms ought to be worried as the proposed changes will impact the potential recoveries an asset-based lender could make on insolvency. This means more risk for lenders, and therefore more cost, on any borrowing and more rejected attempts to obtain finance.

Worse still is the retrospective application of the proposal. Lenders may have to take out insurance on existing floating charge loans, while they will also have to review every borrower's books to check for unpaid taxes which may pose a risk to their capital. This will add cost for borrowers.

Lastly, lenders will start to ask for a greater number of personal guarantees from directors as additional security.



COMPANIES HOUSE – THE CASE FOR REFORM

The work and practices of Companies House, the repository for all information on the majority of the UK's companies and similar registered entities, is currently under review. In May 2019, the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy issued a consultation about options to reform the body, says Peter Windatt, Accountant and Licensed Insolvency Practitioner at BRI Business Recovery and Insolvency.

In recent years concerns have grown that the UK's framework is open to misuse. Concerns arise mainly from four interrelated issues: misuse of UK companies by international criminals and corrupt elites; the accuracy of information held at Companies House; the abuse of personal information on the register; and the limited nature of cross checks between Companies House and other public and private sector bodies.

The government is proposing that individuals who have a key role in companies should have their identity verified. This would apply to company officers (directors), People with Significant Control (PSCs), and those filing information.

The consultation sets out why greater certainty over the identity of those shown as owning, running or controlling companies is needed; it shows how new technology offers the opportunity to obtain greater assurance over identities; and sets out far-reaching proposals to introduce identity checks for those who file information on the register, directors, PSCs and, on a voluntary basis, shareholders.

It also sets out a series of proposed reforms that would deliver better quality information on the register, including extending the powers of Companies House to query and seek corroboration on information before it is entered on the register, and making it easier to remove inaccurate information.

The government has outlined how Companies House will store information if its proposals are adopted. Under identity verification proposals, access to the register will be carefully managed allowing only identified or authorised persons to file information. New processes are proposed for sensitive information to be protected. Proposals to allow directors some additional rights to suppress their information from public view have also been set out.

Information on the register should be of real, practical use to those who wish to find out information about those taking advantage of the privilege and protection of limited liability. However, information on the register should not become a tool for abuse and so information of a sensitive personal nature will not be made publicly available.

The government wants to see the exchange of intelligence made easier in order to enable greater sophistication in identifying possible criminal behaviour. This will lead to faster identification

of anomalies between data at Companies House and elsewhere.

Also sought were views on several related measures that might deter abuse of UK legal entities, including ending the business activities of limited partnerships which are being misused, imposing limits on the number of directorships any one individual can hold, disclosure of banking information and action to deter misuse of company names and addresses.

The routine cross-checking of information on the companies register against external data sets and powers to obtain feedback from obliged entities on discrepancies identified is proposed alongside adopting a risk-based approach to the sharing of intelligence with law enforcement agencies and requiring companies to provide details of their bank accounts.

The proposals in the consultation, if implemented in full, would amount to the most significant reform of the UK's company registration

framework since a register was first introduced in 1844 and go to the core of the Companies Act.



CREW-CAB VANS & TAX



Crew-cab panel vans are very popular, and a recent case involving Coca-Cola has thrown doubt on the tax treatment of these vehicles, writes Helen Thornley a Technical Officer at the ATT.

Back in 1997, Coca-Cola moved to supplying technicians with vans instead of estate cars. The vans were three types of crew-cab vehicle – a series 1 or 2 VW Kombi and a Vauxhall Vivaro.

All three look very similar and are based on a panel van design. Each had additional seating and windows behind the driver and had been subject to further modifications after manufacture, such as the addition of racking.

All the vehicles had been treated by Coca-Cola as vans for benefit-in-kind purposes.

HMRC challenged this, arguing that all three types were cars. This resulted in demands for additional National Insurance contributions (NIC) and income tax from both Coca-Cola and their technicians. They appealed and in March 2019, an earlier tribunal ruling which decided that the two VW Kombis were cars and the Vauxhall Vivaro was a van was upheld.

When an employee is provided with a car and they are allowed to use it privately they must pay income tax on the value of the benefit in

kind – a percentage of the list price of the car, including any accessories. If private fuel is provided, the same percentage is applied to a set figure to calculate the benefit for the year. The employer must also pay Class 1A NIC on the benefit-in-kind.

Where a van is used privately, the benefit in kind is calculated using a flat rate regardless of the cost of the van or its CO² emissions. If any fuel is provided for private use, then the fuel benefit charge is also a flat rate, which is much lower than the car equivalent.

As well as a van having a lower benefit in kind charge than a car, it is possible for there to be no benefit in kind at all if the private use of the van is incidental or limited to ordinary commuting from home to work. For a car, any private use means a benefit in kind.

What differences there are between the vehicles appear to centre around the seats to the rear of the driver. The Vivaro vehicle held to be a van left the assembly line as a panel van and was subsequently modified by Coca-Cola to add a second row of two seats behind the driver, together with a single window. The seats did not span the vehicle, leaving storage space to the side. These extra seats could be removed with tools.

Both models of the Kombi vehicles

held to be cars arrived from the manufacturer with a second row of seats already fitted. This row spanned the vehicle, and there were windows on both sides. However, the whole row of seats could be removed without tools and it was a company requirement that the seats were removed during working hours.

The type of vehicle also affects the capital allowances available to the employer (the tax relief they can claim for the cost of the vehicle) and the VAT recovery. Again, being classed as a van is preferable for tax.

Following the Coca-Cola decision in March 2019, employers should review the tax treatment of all crew-cab type panel vans provided to their employees.

Unless it was possible to distinguish their vehicles on the facts, some employers will have found themselves where certain vehicles could no longer be considered a van and must be taxed as a car, significantly increasing the tax cost for both them and their employees.

If the outcome of the Coca-Cola case changes on appeal, employers may need to revisit their 2018-19 P11D returns.

If the current decision is upheld, however, then employers must consider if they should amend returns for earlier years.

Good advice should be taken.

GARDEN TRADER

uni-power

ENGINES • TRANSMISSIONS • PARTS

ENGINES



TRANSMISSIONS



MACHINERY PARTS



TEL: 01371 875331 info@uni-power.co.uk www.uni-power.co.uk



THREE COMMON PITFALLS IN HIRING

Sara Hey, Vice President of Operations and Development at Bob Clements Inc, the dealership development company based in Missouri, shares the insights she offers US dealers with Service Dealer's UK readership every issue. This issue, mistakes to avoid when employing new staff for your dealership

It's probably no surprise to most owners and managers, but typically, the biggest expense in a dealership are the people you employ. In the heat of the battle, when you feel the pain of needing another set of hands, it can be easy to justify adding another body to the dealership and another person to the payroll. However, you may find yourself questioning the decisions you have made.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU NEED

The first major pitfall is that you aren't clear on who you actually need in the position. Often, owners and managers fill the position to take care of the pain they are feeling in the moment but don't look at who they will need down the road.

For example, you may feel like you need an additional parts person to help with the chaos that ensues at the parts counter, when what you need is a parts support person who helps by putting away stocking parts orders and allows the parts people to focus on taking care of the customers. In addition, this person would help the service department as well as they would pull the parts the technicians need for their repairs. A parts support person is generally a low-level person that we can grow into the next parts salesperson when the need truly arises.

YOU DON'T HAVE A PROCESS IN PLACE FOR HIRING OR TRAINING

Many dealers don't have in place a process for hiring or training employees once they are hired. The most important thing you do as an owner is to hire right and develop your people.

We encourage the dealers we work with to utilise a five-step process in hiring. This includes: having a clear job description and benchmarking the position, finding candidates, phone

interview, in-person interview and then the final interview. When you can have a repeatable process in place in hiring, it allows you to have consistent results with the people you are adding to your team.

The other piece is that owners and managers don't typically have a process in place for training of their new hires. Typically, the new employee is put next to a veteran employee who has a bad attitude and told to "follow their lead" over the next week.

You, as an owner or manager, have spent a substantial amount of time and money to bring this person onto your team, and will only set them up for failure if you don't have a training plan in place. We have seen time and time again the best way to set your new employees up for success in your dealership is to train them early and keep them engaged in the training process. Maybe in your dealership the process looks like you, as the owner, working alongside them for the first week. You might have them attend online service or parts workshops, or even send them off-site for training. If you want to have your people perform at or above your expectations, you must train them early and often.

YOU IGNORE THE REFERENCES

One of the most overlooked parts of the hiring process is having conversations with the references of the applicant. You wouldn't ever decide on a new service truck or a new piece of technology without getting the opinion of others before the purchase. However, when we are hiring, all of this conventional wisdom goes out the window. Take time to call at least five references. We have to keep in mind that everyone is bringing some sort of baggage into the job, but it's just up to us which baggage we will bring into the dealership.

As you get ready to add a person to your team, be sure to avoid these pitfalls and success will be yours!





Pete McArthur

A WHIRLWIND OF A YEAR

In his first diary entry, Pete McArthur of Strathbogie Forest & Garden, based in North-East Scotland, reflects on advice heard at the Conference and prepares to make use of a larger shop window

We have developed a great working relationship with *Service Dealer* and were delighted when Strathbogie Forest & Garden were asked to take over the reins of *Diary of a Season* for 2020.

A little history on our company: Strathbogie Saw Service was formed by William (Dan) Grant and was predominantly a chainsaw business. He then sold to my father, Bob, in 1999 when the business started to head in another direction with a more horticultural theme. Within five years it was recognised that help was required, and I joined in 2004.

The business started to gather a head of steam and, realising the potential, we purchased land just outside the town, closely located to the main A96 between Aberdeen to Inverness in 2010. We then set about designing and building a purpose-built premises to facilitate the growth of the business with room to expand in the future.

In December 2015 we didn't only move into the new premises but took the bold decision to modify the business name to Strathbogie Forest & Garden, where we have now grown to six staff plus Daisy the dog!

The business has continued to grow over the past four years from strength to strength, with an ever-increasing customer base and evolving product ranges.

What makes us a little different is

that we predominantly feature just two brands in the showroom, which is very obvious and quite funny when customers come in the door and choose to only go to one side – it seems a crime to visit the other!

We are writing this after attending the *Service Dealer* Conference & Awards 2019 and realising what a whirlwind of a year it has been! Again, the team at *Service Dealer* excelled themselves producing a very topical day that I'm sure produced some very thought-provoking sessions and fuelled the tank of optimism for the 2020 season.

2020 is the start of another decade. Who would have thought that our core sales focus would be robotic lawnmowers and battery products?

There still exist the same issues from previous decades – namely, employees. Being located in North-East Scotland has many advantages with many fantastic industries located here giving great opportunities of employment. However, the disadvantage is that businesses are all chasing that same allusive, knowledgeable and attentive person!

Taking on board the sessions at the Conference, I think we may need to change our approach to gaining new staff and look at other avenues. Also, I feel we need to review the service and stores department and will be looking at some business management systems to assist

with increasing performance and streamlining. When Bob Clements showed some facts and figures about service and parts at the Conference, I could very much relate as I'm sure could many other dealers.

Another change coming for Strathbogie is the launch of our new website with e-commerce functionality. I never really thought we would enter this area, but I have now realised that this shop window is way too big not to acknowledge. We are not expecting to suddenly sell twice as much product as we will never be competing against the larger internet retailers, but with everyone looking online at 'out of hours' times throughout the day, you're giving yourself the best opportunity of getting a sale.

In other areas, the blower and hedge trimming season was a little late getting started and never really materialised. I think with having snow in early November it really killed off the season. Reflecting on the season just gone as a whole, we can't complain at all, seeing growth in all areas – with spare parts in particular increasing.

Looking ahead, I really don't know what is coming. It seems like we are going to see changes, not only in government, but potentially Brexit may be decided and for us north of the border, we may have another contentious issue of independence to consider!

PRODUCTS

CONTACT:
07929 438213
steve@servicedealer.co.uk

COMMERCIAL

NEW LEVEL OF BATTERY BRUSHCUTTER PERFORMANCE

Husqvarna launches two new models

Husqvarna has launched two new battery-powered brushcutters which it claims will raise the bar for performance.

Increased levels of productivity are available for professionals, says the company, when using the 535iRX or 535iRXT, due to the Husqvarna-developed high torque motor, large cutting diameter and effective anti-vibration system. The new machines also boast a host of new key features.

The brushcutters are part of the 500-Series product range and offer the company's first anti-vibration system on a battery brushcutter. This feature reduces strain on the user, allowing for smoother

operation during extended hours of use.

These products are also equipped with a new user interface, allowing the operator a constant view of the battery status to more easily plan their work.

Johan Svennung, Product Specialist, comments, "Our high torque motor, extended cutting diameter and robust design mean that we will be able to meet the needs of our professional customers who rely on these products day-to-day."

Other benefits of the models include full flexibility to choose between internal or backpack batteries, with the models also

being compatible with all Husqvarna BLi batteries.

They feature superior anti-vibration – a first on a Husqvarna battery brushcutter – as well as boasting built-in connectivity (on the 535iRXT). The integrated Bluetooth module makes the 535iRXT compatible with Husqvarna Connect and Husqvarna Fleet Services.

The machines feature a new user interface which the company claims provides an improved, tactile feel, with battery status always visible on the product handle.

Also an ErgoFeed trimmer head (on the 535iRXT) eliminates unintentional line feed when hitting stones and debris.

COMMERCIAL

WORLD'S FIRST MAGNESIUM PISTON

With STIHL's new MS 400 C-M



STIHL has launched the new MS 400 C-M, which it says is the world's first chainsaw with a magnesium piston.

The saw has been designed with professionals in mind, offering the highest maximum speed (14,000 rpm) in the 60cm³ class. The company says the new 66.8cc 2-MIX engine has more displacement, providing both more power and torque than the MS 362C-M, as well as rapid acceleration.

As a world first, the MS 400 C-M features a new magnesium piston. Described by STIHL as lightweight and durable, the piston weighs 70g, which is 14% lighter than the aluminium piston in the MS 362 C-M, helping contribute to the machine's power-to-weight ratio and highest maximum revs in its class.

Due to these new design features and materials used, the unit has a power-to-weight ratio of 1.45 kilograms per kilowatt, making it suitable to use when working in the forest, especially over prolonged periods.

In addition to the new 66.8cc engine, it features STIHL's M-Tronic 3.0 technology, including the new calibration process and an improved HD2 filter. The chainsaw also features ElastoStart technology that enables effortless starting of the power tool.

Designed for forestry and arb professionals, the MS 400 C-M can be used for a range of applications, including felling, de-limbing and cutting to size. It is available in 16", 18" and 20" versions, the latter 20" version with an ES light guidebar.

DOMESTIC

COUNTAX OFFERS CLICK & COLLECT

New PGC+ interchangeable cassette system



Countax has introduced the PGC+ interchangeable cassette system for its C and B Series garden tractors.

The company says this latest accessory effectively transforms the Countax into a multi-use, year-round workhorse and offers dealers additional selling opportunities.

The PGC+ Grass Sweeper cassette comes as standard for collecting grass clippings, leaves and debris from the lawn.

The Scarifier cassette has 24 individual tines to rip through moss and thatch and the debris is collected simultaneously. There is no longer a need for a separate scarifying machine or the additional clearing up.

Additional cassettes will become available, including a Hard Surface Brush cassette which the company claims transforms the unit into a heavy duty powered broom for maintaining grounds, clearing leaves, dust and garden debris.

For the customer, says Countax, the PGC+ system delivers time-saving benefits and increased utility, maximising the value of a machine. It provides an alternative to buying stand-alone, walk-behind equipment. A Countax collects grass clippings, leaves and other debris, even in the wet.

Countax believes the introduction of the cassette system will see customers returning to the dealership to purchase further cassettes and accessories as they become available.

FENDT LAUNCHES FIRST TELEHANDLER

Featuring a lifting cab with vibration dampening

Fendt has added the Cargo T955 telehandler to its expanding full-line product range.

The telehandler is marked by what the company describe as its “unique lifting cab with vibration damping”.

The machine is built in cooperation with SENNEBOGEN Maschinenfabrik GmbH, best known for building large industrial machinery. The company also has more than 15 years of experience with telehandlers for industrial use in the field of material handling.

Fendt says the machine combines the advantages of a conventional telehandler – such as lifting height, reach, low body height, high manoeuvrability while being incredibly stable – with the performance characteristics of a wheel loader in the same weight class. It benefits from features such as robust steel construction, enormous thrust characteristics, a maximum load capacity of 5.5t, and Z-kinematics for breakaway torque.

The T955 also benefits from a lifting cab that can be raised to a viewing height of 4.25m. Just lifting the cab by 20-30cm gives the user a 360° all-round view, the likes of which are usually seen on wheel loaders and telescopic wheel loaders. There is no dashboard to



obstruct the lower part of the continuous windscreen, instead, there’s a floor-to-ceiling view of surroundings. Together with the lifting cab, this gives the driver the perfect view of the attachment tool in almost every working position.

Loading is even more precise and the driver stays comfortable on long working days. The cab is vibration dampened, so the driver can enjoy driving comfort. The drive intelligently regulates the power distribution offering variable driving speeds of up to 40km/h.

The telehandler comes with various tyre options for predominant use on solid ground and with wide field tyres for heavy field use. The optional height-adjustable hitch and pneumatics for the trailer brake make it versatile for transport work.

Partners in application solutions

- In-house Design and manufacture
- Full support and spare parts availability
- Good Margins and incentives
- Full product range
- 12 month Warranty
- Cereal/Turf/Potato applicators



www.techneat.co.uk | t: 01353 862 044 | e: info@techneat.co.uk

Techneat
engineering ltd



**DESIGNED AND BUILT TO LAST.
SEASON AFTER SEASON.**



Introducing the Kress range of robotik lawn mowers.

The Kress brand is sold exclusively through dealers in the UK. No capital outlay. Just in time ordering. No pre-season orders required.

To become an authorised stockist, contact: **KressUK.info@positecgroup.com**

For more information, please visit: **Kress-Robotik.com/en**

EVENTS 2020

JANUARY 2020

- 7-8 **LAMMA 2020, Birmingham NEC**
www.lammashow.com
- 7-9 **Oxford Farming Conference**
www.ofc.org.uk
- 21-23 **BTME 2020, Harrogate International Centre**
www.btme.org.uk
- 25-30 **Golf Industry Show, Orlando**
www.golfindustryshow.com

FEBRUARY 2020

- 2-6 **Spring Fair 2020, Birmingham NEC**
www.springfair.com
- 4-6 **Doe Show 2020, Ulting**
www.ernestdoe.com
- 5-6 **Executive Hire Show, Ricoh Arena, Coventry**
www.executivehireshow.co.uk
- 11-13 **World Ag Expo, Tulare, California**
www.worldagexpo.com

MARCH 2020

- 27-13 **Ideal Home Show, Olympia, London**
www.idealhomeshow.co.uk
- 21-22 **West of England Game Fair, Bath & West Showground**
www.westofenglandgamefair.co.uk

APRIL 2020

- 9 **CountryTastic, Three Counties Showground, Malvern**
www.countrytastic.co.uk
- 23-26 **Harrogate Spring Flower Show**
www.flowershow.org.uk/spring-show-2020
- 28-30 **The Commercial Vehicle Show, Birmingham NEC**
www.cvshow.com

MAY 2020

- 3 **North Somerset Show**
www.nsas.org.uk
- 9-10 **Nottinghamshire County Show**
www.nottinghamshirecountyshow.com
- 11 **Scotgrass, Dumfries**
www.scotgrass.co.uk
- 13-16 **Balmoral Show, Belfast**
www.balmoralshow.co.uk
- 16-17 **Smallholding & Countryside Festival, Royal Welsh Showground**
<https://rwas.wales/smallholding-and-countryside-festival>
- 19-23 **Chelsea Flower Show**
www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events
- 20-21 **Grassland & Muck, Ragley Estate**
www.grasslandevent.co.uk/
- 21-23 **Devon County Show**
<http://devoncountyshow.co.uk>
- 23-24 **Herts County Show**
www.hertsshow.com
- 25 **Surrey County Show**
www.surreycountyshow.co.uk/surrey-county-show
- 27-28 **Staffordshire County Show**
www.staffscountyshowground.co.uk/staffordshire-county-show
- 27-28 **Suffolk County Show**
<http://suffolkshow.co.uk/>
- 28-30 **Royal Bath & West Show**
www.bathandwest.com/royal-bath-and-west-show
- 29-31 **Gardening Scotland, Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh**
www.gardeningscotland.com
- 31 **Rutland Show**
www.rutlandcountyshow.com

JUNE 2020

- 4-6 **Royal Cornwall Show**
www.royalcornwallshow.org
- 11-13 **South of England Show**
www.seas.org.uk/south-of-england-show
- 10-11 **Cereals 2020, Duxford**
www.cerealsevent.co.uk
- 12-14 **Three Counties Show, Malvern**
www.royalthreecounties.co.uk
- 16-17 **Cheshire County Show**
www.cheshirecountyshow.org.uk
- 18-21 **BBC Gardeners' World Live - Birmingham NEC**
www.bbcgardenersworldlive.com
- 18-21 **Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh**
www.royalhighlandshow.org
- 24-25 **Lincolnshire Show**
<https://lincolnshireshow.co.uk/>
- 28 **Derbyshire County Show**
www.derbyshirecountyshow.org.uk
- 28 **Royal Isle of Wight County Show**
<https://iwcountyshow.co.uk/>
- 29 **Cranleigh Show**
www.cranleighshow.co.uk

JULY 2020

- 1-2 **Royal Norfolk Show**
www.royalnorfolkshow.co.uk
- 7-12 **Hampton Court Flower Show**
www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-hampton-court-palace-flower-show
- 10-11 **Kent County Show**
<http://kentshowground.co.uk>
- 14-16 **Great Yorkshire Show**
www.greatyorkshireshow.co.uk
- 11 **Newport Show**
<http://www.newportshow.co.uk/>



Sponsored by

STIHL®



NEITHER CHICKEN, NOR EGG!

Profit and people are inextricably linked

It was that master of the cunning quip, Oscar Wilde, who described a character in *Lady Windermere's Fan* as "a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing"; which is apt, given that I'm penning this piece over the weekend of Black Friday, when discount is at fever pitch levels on both sides of the Atlantic. Many US exports are rightly ingrained in our society, but this fad? Ugh!

Be thankful that Black Friday strikes in November, not in April.

Americans have a much more positive and open attitude to making money and celebrating financial success than we do on this side of the pond. It has become fashionable and politically expedient for many to have a vendetta against the rich, despite the fact that the richest 100 individuals in the UK paid £18bn in taxes in 2016-17, according to the HMRC.

But we are not really talking those in the financial stratosphere. We're talking about those running businesses who are striving for success, putting everything on the line in their quest for comfortable wealth. And it all starts with profit – at least in the retail and service sector. Those at the *Service Dealer* Conference will have heard US lawn and garden consultant Bob Clements give a shout-out to the word 'profit' so many times during his address that it could form the basis of a dealer rap (played on a loop each Monday morning).

It's a sobering thought that pre-tax profits at the top 150 UK retailers plunged by more than 50% in the period 2009 to 2018.

Again, our dealer community is not in that league. In boating parlance, we should be 'piloting' a sleek

and nimble powerboat rather than a cumbersome ocean supertanker. Profit is not, and never should be, a dirty word. It is the driving force of business. Discount can be a useful marketing tool, particularly to promote repeat business, but not as the main selling point. So how do we combat those who scream 'discount' in big letters?

Fortunately, we are not in the volume business. We offer a considered purchase, sometimes a bespoke purchase where quality, customer satisfaction and yes, price paid, are all the boxes to tick.

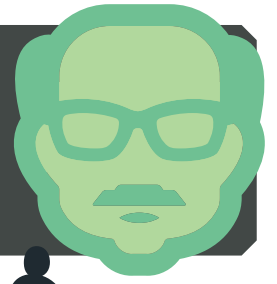
By and large, as businesses we buy-into selling quality. Products that don't come back – to customers who do.

So the vive-la-difference nearly always comes down to people. Your people. No business can make money long-term without being underpinned by quality and reliable staff. And that's a real challenge today. Long gone are the days of a job for life. We heard from Dr Eliza Filby at the *Service Dealer* Conference that many people may have six jobs during their lifetime. There is a quest from recent generations for new challenges and new experiences, which can be hard to combat. But then again, why not promote the agri-tech and turf-tech sector as a new experience?

Business owners need to nurture existing staff. Pay rates are not always the number one driver for staff retention. Offering a way of life rather than 'just a job' is a start. Providing variety and interest constantly – and status. Dr Filby suggested giving each member of staff a personalised business card. That sounds a bit far-fetched, but why not?

Profit and people are inextricably linked. Neither is the chicken, nor the egg!

JIM GREEN



CHANGING FACE OF CUSTOMERS

BOOMER, BOOMER SHAKE THE ROOM!



Millennials taking over from the old guard as your principal customers

I don't know about you, but I have just about recovered from the *Service Dealer* Conference and Awards last November!

At my age, one is not used to that level of revelry! It's all perfectly acceptable, spending the day listening to expert speakers – it's the post-awards 'networking' in the bar which is the problem for those of us of the more mature variety.

I think I left the Oxford Belfry having picked up quite a virulent 24-hour bug. Possibly the same one that some of the other chaps and chapesses in the bar until silly-o'clock in the morning mostly likely also caught! It certainly is an odd day when you go to bed with the smell of breakfast cooking, wafting down the hotel corridors!

But enough of that nonsense. I felt the important business of congratulating our amazing winning dealers and learning from the day's superb presenters was a tremendous success. I heard the words "best ever" bandied around as I very gingerly filled my plate from the breakfast buffet when I eventually surfaced the next morning – and I have to say I think I agree.

I was particularly struck by Dr Eliza Filby, the generation intelligence expert, who as part of her speech broke down the four different generations that dealers encounter: Baby Boomer, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z. Eliza defined the characteristics of these groups and their expectations and desires when it comes to interacting with retailers.

As a Boomer myself, I was fascinated to hear the statistic that one-in-five of my fellow gen-mates are

millionaires! I'm not sure what I've been doing wrong all these years to be steadfastly included in the four-out-of-five that very much are not millionaires – possibly hanging around with lawnmowers too long?! However, I am, of course, delighted for those who are (he said through gritted teeth).

Something that Eliza said which struck me as significant was that where traditional business for dealers would have come from myself and my fellow old codger Boomers, as we were the sector with supposed financial stability, Millennials are now coming of age. "Within the next 10 years, these Millennials will be your most important demographic," Eliza said.

She explained that unlike the generations before them, Millennials are continuing to act as eco-conscious buyers, who are maintaining their values – therefore they will easily favour battery products over petrol power. The idea of recharging a device they use three times a day is not a problem for these youngsters, pointed out Eliza.

I suppose we've all seen a shift towards the favouring of cordless products coming for a while now, but it was interesting to hear an outsider to our industry emphasise the point. These generations who are just starting their own homes will be looking to purchase products that employ technology with which they are vaguely familiar. They're not used to filling their phones with oil and repeatedly pulling a cord to send a message!

The point I took away from Eliza's talk was that it's all very well folding one's arms and maintaining that it was better in my day – the fact is the world, and your customers, are changing. It may take some getting used to and a change of attitudes, but acting like King Canute against the tide of societal change won't achieve much.

As such, I'm off to share a TikTok I've recorded on my phone with all my fellow Boomer Snapchat followers!



9 Mowers. 6 Garden Tools - 1 Battery System

500 SERIES: SMARTER ENERGY, GREATER POWER

An innovative battery system that provides smarter energy usage, longer life span and even greater power.



SLM
Lawnmower



500 Synchronised
Combi



500 Synchronised
Multiclip

Mowers
ranging from
34cm - 55cm
Prices starting
from £159

PLUS A TOOL FOR EVERY JOB IN THE GARDEN.



Chainsaw



Axial Blower



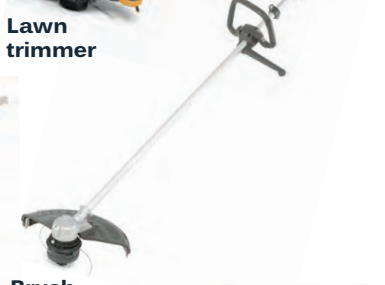
Hedge
trimmer



Lawn
trimmer



Multi-Tool



Brush
Cutter

STIGA

Easy to do business with.

www.stigalawnmowers.co.uk

Gardeners' World magazine

BEST BUY

Cordless tool sets
November 2019

ON TEST



**2 BRANCHES.
14 DEDICATED
STIHL EXPERTS.
10 METRES OF
STIHL DISPLAY.
2200 STIHL
PRODUCTS AVAILABLE.
18 TRAINING
COURSES.
1 SATISFIED DEALER.
STIHL LIFE.**

Huw Owen, Director.
Owen ATVs & Garden Machinery Centre Ltd.
STIHL Dealer since 2016.

Retailers like Huw at Owen's ATV love being a STIHL Approved Dealer. And it's not hard to see why.

At STIHL, our goal is simple. To make sure our dealers' customers benefit from the ultimate sales and service experience. So, we support you with an industry leading

delivery and logistics network. We keep you up to date with all the latest service related developments. And we have a customer service team always on hand to deal with any enquiries.

Better still, we'll give you your own dedicated sales manager to help you develop your

business and drive STIHL sales forward. There are also regular product training sessions and access to unrivalled marketing and promotional support, including the kind of instore merchandising support that has helped Huw create a hugely impressive STIHL display wall to wow his customers.

Put simply, when you become a dealer for the world's best garden equipment, including our legendary chainsaws, we think it's only right you get the world's best service too.

To find out more about becoming a STIHL Approved Dealer, visit www.becomeastihldealer.co.uk

STIHL®