

# SERVICE DEALER

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY

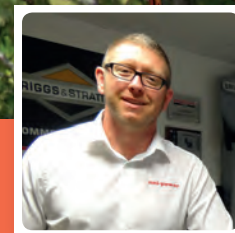
SEP / OCT 2016

## FORESTRY MACHINERY

*Preview of the APF Exhibition, dealer developments and new products*

- ❖ Conference & Awards 2016
- ❖ Cereals Report
- ❖ Focus on Handy Distribution
- ❖ Dealer Focus

- ❖ SME digest
- ❖ Business Monitor
- ❖ New products
- ❖ Jim Green



**FACE to FACE**

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# EDITOR'S MESSAGE

**W**elcome to the September/October 2016 issue of *Service Dealer*.

What a couple of months it's been! Our previous issue had gone to press just before the momentous Brexit decision was taken. That feels like an eon ago now. Everything feels like it has changed so quickly, with no one really knowing what the future is going to look like for our country.

On 24th June the AEA quickly issued a statement saying, "Uncertainty is unsettling because it discourages decisions, especially those related to investment; the sooner the issue is progressed the better," – which are of course wise words – but encouragingly confidence doesn't appear to have been hit too hard in the dealer network. Our latest survey found that 63% of dealers who responded still felt either Confident or Very Confident about their business prospects for the rest of 2016.

As we're moving into that time of year now when various trade shows are upcoming, we might get more of a sense of how the industry is feeling going forward. This issue we preview both Glee and the APF shows, and next time we'll be looking forward to Saltex. These events will be an excellent opportunity to evaluate both the mood of exhibitors and customers.

One guarantee you can be sure of though, is that *Service Dealer* will be here, reporting events and opinions, supporting the ongoing great work being achieved in the UK independent dealer network.



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*Service Dealer* is produced by  
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Publications LLP

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## DEALERS

# BOB WILD MACHINERY ENTERS AG MARKET

## *Partner with Kubota*

Halifax-based machinery dealer Bob Wild Machinery is for the first time expanding its operations into the agricultural market after joining forces with Kubota UK.

The family-run company, which employs 17 staff at its Hebden Bridge site, has been supplying and servicing professional machinery to the Groundcare sector for over 17 years. However, this new working partnership with Kubota has seen Bob Wild Machinery reshape and relaunch its business model, embarking on a new era targeting the professional farming industry.

The deal means the company is now the independent dealer for Kubota's complete range of agricultural solutions in North and West Yorkshire (covering as far as Scotch Corner on the A1 in the East, to Tebay in the West). This includes the supply of Kubota's recently launched M7001 Series.

Bob Wild of Bob Wild Machinery says, "Having operated in the Groundcare sector since the business was launched in 1997, entering the agricultural industry is a major evolution for our business.

"Our close proximity to a large livestock farming community, coupled with our machinery expertise and the serious investment made by Kubota into the higher horsepower farming market, was a fantastic opportunity not to be missed. We've built up an excellent reputation with our customers over the years for providing a quality, fast and efficient service offering and our aim now is to take this forward with Kubota and target the mainstream agricultural market."

### Expansion

As well as Kubota's new flagship M7001 Series, Bob Wild Machinery

will also supply Kubota's range of M Series, MGX-II Series and Grand L Series agricultural tractors. The company has also introduced a dedicated service centre to ensure its customers the highest levels of service.

In addition to Kubota's new agricultural machinery solutions, Bob Wild Machinery will also continue to service and supply nearly new and refurbished Groundcare and Construction Equipment.

Richard Wild of Bob Wild Machinery says, "This is a really exciting opportunity for both parties. For Kubota it enables it to expand its agricultural presence into North and West Yorkshire.

"For Bob Wild Machinery, we're investing and evolving into a new market with Kubota and we're looking forward to the future opportunities this will present us."



Bob and Richard Wild

# BURGESS TAKES OVER SCAMBLERS' JOHN DEERE SALES

*Dealer splits with manufacturer following 25 years of partnership*

Dealer A J & R Scamblers & Sons Ltd of Bourn, Cambridgeshire has announced that the time has come for the company to split from John Deere.

In a short statement Director of the company, Ed Scambler said, "The time has now come for a parting of the ways.

"After nearly 25 years of partnership A J & R Scambler and Sons Ltd is breaking away from John Deere. In these times, we all have to look forward for more profitable opportunities, allowing John Deere to do the same.

"We would like to thank all the staff at John Deere Langer and wish them all the very best for the future."

Scamblers already holds a number of other franchises, but Ed told *Service Dealer* "... we will however be replacing the Deere franchise with a main franchise and will be announcing which one very soon."

Managing Director, Tony Scambler, added, "We have enjoyed helping with the development of the John Deere product and brand but now feel it is time to help other manufacturers to develop within the groundcare and golf course sectors."

## Ben Burgess

The trading area for John Deere turf products vacated by Scamblers will be taken over by Deere's long-serving eastern counties dealership Ben Burgess & Co Ltd with effect from 1st November 2016.

Paul Thomas will be moving from Domestic to Commercial Equipment sales to work alongside Chris Pateman in the new area. Ben Burgess will also be looking to appoint a new Domestic Sales person as well as additional sub-dealers to support sales and service of John Deere's

full professional and domestic turf equipment range across the area.

"We look forward to working with new customers and developing the relationships already in place," says Ben B Turner of Ben Burgess GroundsCare. "We will also be adding further parts and service resources in order to ensure our new customers are fully looked after, alongside Paul joining the Commercial Sales team."

John Deere Limited Turf Division Sales Manager Chris Meacock adds: "We would like to put on record our thanks to Tony Scambler and his team for their partnership with John Deere over the past two and a half decades. Ben Burgess is one of our longest serving turf dealers and we're confident that the dealership will continue to provide the highest possible standards of customer support to existing and new customers."



Chris Pateman, Ben B Turner and Paul Thomas of Ben Burgess GroundsCare

## INDUSTRY

## OVER 350 DEALERS ATTEND STIHL ROADSHOWS

### *Viewing the Compact Cordless System*

STIHL hit the road recently, travelling the country to introduce its Approved Dealerships to the Compact Cordless System – what the company describes as “the most exciting development from STIHL in recent years”.

Around 350 dealers attended the 10 roadshows around the country from Inverness to Exeter. The roadshows gave STIHL Approved Dealerships an opportunity to see these new cordless products in action before they launched to the market.

The new cordless range, designed with the home gardener in mind, was well received by dealers, with almost every attending dealer placing an order for the new range on the day.

Greg Barwick from Buxtons Ltd, said, “I’m really impressed with the system. There’s a gap in the market for this kind of range and each tool seems to be a very sturdy piece of kit.”

Graham Jones from Morgans Machinery, said, “To be honest I came into today negatively, thinking this range wouldn’t cut it. I didn’t think they would be powerful enough. But they are. I’m very impressed with the range and the price points will make a real difference in the domestic market.”

Spencer Lyon from Seddon Plant & Engineers, said, “We’re really impressed. We’ve always dealt with petrol so this is a big change. But we understand the industry’s changing and we need to change with it. The machines are smooth running, easy to operate and lightweight. I can’t fault them. If I needed a small chainsaw for home I’d choose this one – and my wife could use it too!”



# AGRIPARTS TAKES ON GRIZZLY TOOLS

## *New dealer for Scottish Borders*



Grizzly Tools has announced that Agriparts Borders Limited is its new distributor dealer covering the Scottish Borders region.

Agriparts Borders is selling a wide range of lawnmowers and offering a full aftercare and maintenance package.

The dealership is a provider of farm machinery wearing parts, power tools and welding equipment and consumables, based in the Scottish borders. With over 40 years’ experience in farming and agriculture, it has the knowledge and specialities to provide a full service of advice and equipment needs.

Grizzly Tools is currently setting up a dealership network throughout the United Kingdom, with appointed dealers being given exclusivity over their areas. The company says that with full after care support for dealers it offers unique agreements – giving dealers products to demonstrate in store (subject to terms and conditions) and 60-day payment terms on their first order.

The company asks dealers interested in joining its exclusive dealership network and being the only appointed Grizzly dealer in their area to contact it on 0845 6832670 or via [www.grizzlytools.co.uk](http://www.grizzlytools.co.uk)

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## APPOINTMENTS

# CHANGES AT THE TOP FOR JOHN DEERE

## *Jonathan Henry takes over from Antony Scott*

Jonathan Henry has been appointed the new Managing Director of John Deere Limited in the UK and Ireland.

He took over from Antony Scott, who had elected to retire after 40 years of distinguished service with the company.

Jonathan Henry joined John Deere Limited as a management trainee in July 1993, following an HND in mechanisation, planning and business management at the Scottish Agricultural College, Auchencruive, and a spell in the service department of an agricultural dealership. From late 1993 he worked as an Area Manager Product Support (AMPS) in South-West England, and from 1997 to 2001 as a Territory Manager in the North of England and borders of Scotland.

Subsequent appointments included Product Manager of the then newly established Agricultural Management Solutions (AMS) precision farming technology range, Key Accounts Manager, Combines Product Manager and Division Sales Manager from January 2006.

From early 2009, Jonathan held various product marketing roles in Germany and the US, chiefly supporting the launch of the 6R to 8R Series tractors. Since May 2015, he has been Planning Director for Deere's global crop harvesting business.

### **Antony Scott**

Antony Scott was appointed Managing Director of John Deere Limited in the UK and Ireland in July 2014, succeeding Richard Johnson. He joined the company in December 1975, also as a management trainee, after obtaining an HND in agriculture at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester and an advanced diploma in agricultural engineering at Writtle College.

Antony served at Langar in positions of increasing responsibility including Territory Manager, Division Credit Manager, Parts and Wholegoods Manager, Distribution Manager and Division Sales Manager. From 2011, he was based in Mannheim as Region 2 (Europe, North Africa, Near & Middle East) Dealer Development Manager, Scale and Coverage, in which role he was responsible for the region's Dealer of Tomorrow strategy.

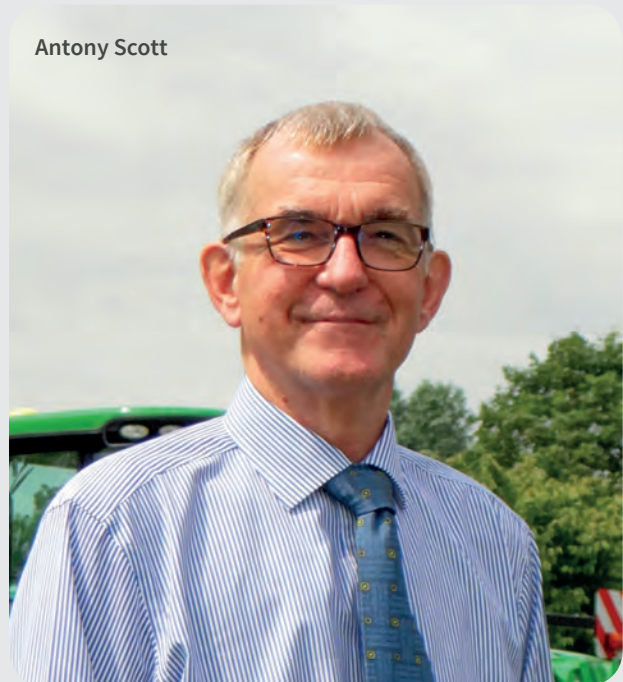
"Throughout his career, Antony has had an impact on thousands of customers, dealers and

employees," says Jim Orr, John Deere's Vice President, Sales and Marketing for Region 2.

"He's known to many as a consummate business professional and team player, fully committed to the brand. We thank him for his significant contributions to John Deere over his career – particularly so in the year the branch is celebrating its 50th anniversary in the UK and Ireland – and wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement."



Jonathan Henry



Antony Scott



## DEALERS

# FIRST BRANSON DEALER IN SCOTLAND

## Agri-Services of Darvel

Agri-Services of Darvel has been appointed as the first dealership in Scotland for Branson Tractors.

The Royal Highland Show provided the ideal occasion to introduce the Branson range of compact tractors to Scotland.

Among the many visitors to the stand of Branson Tractors UK, Robin and Chris Moir of Agri-Services were impressed with the quality and build of the tractors being exhibited.

Agri-Services has an established reputation having been supplying and servicing machinery and equipment to the groundcare and forestry contractors of Scotland since 1970.

Chris Moir of Agri-Services said: "For some time we've been looking to compliment our range of machinery with a compact tractor dealership. Until now we hadn't found the right one.

"When we visited the Branson Tractors stand at the show we immediately liked what we saw. We were looking for quality engineering combined with all the capabilities to meet our customers' needs at a sensible

price with a brand that would give us some exclusivity. Branson ticked all the boxes and we agreed the dealership with Nathan Walker, Managing Director of Branson Tractors UK there and then."

Nathan Walker concluded: "As first-time exhibitors the Royal Highland Show was a great success for us. Our tractors created a lot of interest with many serious enquiries. But the icing on the cake was being able to appoint Agri-Services a dealership."



L-R: Robin and Chris Moir of Agri-Services with Stuart Winwood, Sales Manager of Branson Tractors UK

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## APPOINTMENTS

# DIGITAL MARKETING SPECIALIST FOR HAYTER/TORO

*Chris Heffer joins*

Hayter and Toro have appointed digital marketing specialist Chris Heffer.

Chris arrived with a wealth of experience in website development, social media growth and digitally-led business campaigns and marketing strategies.

As part of his role to lead the digital marketing efforts for Hayter and Toro Chris is primarily hoping to grow the online communities of the two well established businesses and increase awareness of the brands among a new audience.

“Both Hayter and Toro are such well known and well respected brands and businesses that I’m really excited about the challenge of developing the online image of

each and reaching new and potentially untapped markets and demographics,” says Mr Heffer, whose recent experience includes working with enterprise software providers SAP and Oracle, while he has even presented on social media strategy at the UK Facebook offices.

“I hope that by further developing the digital side of the business we can increase our following and really reinvigorate our presence in this area and the wider market,” he says.



## DEALERS

# MERCEDES BENZ APPOINTS FAROL

## *For the Unimog*

Mercedes-Benz has appointed Farol as a franchised Unimog dealer.

The move represents the first step in a new strategy designed to raise the profile and boost sales of the off-roader in Britain.

The deal was concluded between Farol Managing Director Matthew Vellacott and Bernhard Dolinek, who recently took up the position of Head of Special Trucks, Unimog at Mercedes-Benz UK.

Farol’s appointment coincides with its 40th anniversary.

The family-owned company operates from state-of-the-art headquarters – opened last year, following a £3.5 million investment – in Thame, Oxfordshire, and other depots in Byfield, Northamptonshire; Hinckley, Leicestershire; Midhurst, West Sussex; and Shefford Woodlands, near Hungerford, Berkshire.

Senior members of the Farol team have undergone product and systems training by the manufacturer, with more planned for members of its 18-strong sales force, as well as technicians, parts and warranty staff.

The new Dealer has also commissioned a number of vehicles for demonstration purposes.

Farol Managing Director Matthew Vellacott says, “What potential customers don’t always appreciate is that the Unimog is an extremely cost-effective vehicle, not least because it commands such strong residual values. We will be making

the most of these attributes, and our own expertise, by developing attractive package deals that make the product easier to understand and operate than ever before.”

Meanwhile, Bernhard Dolinek, Head of Special Trucks, Unimog at Mercedes-Benz UK, is convinced that given its track record as a successful and diversified business, Farol will quickly establish itself as a high-performing member of the manufacturer’s dealer network.

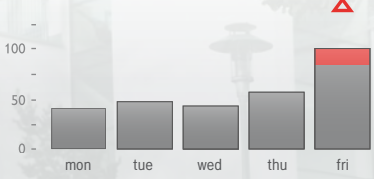
“We discussed this franchise opportunity with Matthew Vellacott and his colleagues for some months and were impressed by their enthusiasm for the Unimog product, as well as the dynamics and drive that underpin their business,” he said.

I’m confident that our new partner will deliver the enhanced customer experience that’s going to be crucial if we are to achieve our strategic goal of a significant improvement in the Unimog’s market position in the UK.” ●



L-R: Kevin Newman, Bernhard Dolinek & Matthew Vellacott:

### VIBRATION REPORTS - healthy, active operators

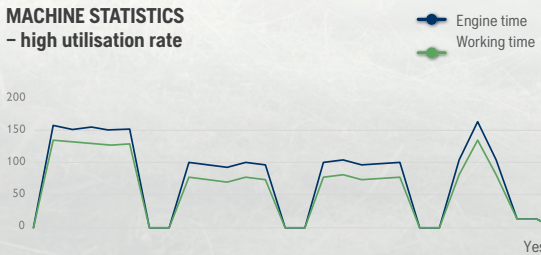


### INTERACTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM - maximum uptime

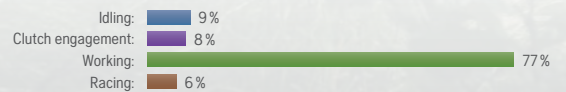


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### MACHINE STATISTICS - high utilisation rate



### OPERATOR STATISTICS - MORE EFFICIENT WORK



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# SHAPE THE DAY TO SUIT YOU & YOUR BUSINESS

*Choose the breakout session to meet your needs*



The outline of this year's *Service Dealer* Conference (17th November 2016, Oxford Belfry Hotel) has been announced – and it expands and improves on last year's inaugural event.

The biggest change this year is the choice of three breakout sessions offered to delegates, which will allow you to become more deeply involved in subjects that are close to you and your business. These will address three key areas of the business for dealers: the

use of social media, successful websites and creative merchandising in the showroom.

The breakout sessions will feature dealers talking about methods that work for them – not only the benefits, but also the pitfalls.

The sessions will be fast-moving, interactive and fun.

Don't miss out on this essential event for dealers – book now at [www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk) and confirm which session best fulfils your needs.

## THOSE BREAKOUT SESSIONS IN DETAIL



### BREAKOUT SESSION A – SOCIAL MEDIA

Moderator and panel will include social media experts and dealers with success stories.

- Role of social media in generating footfall, sales and customer service.
- Engaging with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and others.
- Actively and wholeheartedly embracing social media.
- How to get the best results month after month.
- Techniques to get remembered properly.
- Creating the right image.
- Choosing the best way forward to get value for money.

### BREAKOUT SESSION B – WEBSITES AND TECHNOLOGY

Moderator and panel will include a market expert and three or four successful dealers and their experiences.

- Website design.
- E-commerce – to sell or not to sell.
- Technology – effective & efficient forms to suit.
- Content – make the best shop window.

- Optimisation of your site – Google analytics, SEO etc.
- Platforms – templates or tailored.
- What to look for in suppliers.
- The demands on your staff.

### BREAKOUT SESSION C – EFFECTIVE MERCHANDISING AND POS

Moderator and panel will include an expert and three or four successful dealers.

- What is the right route for each dealer?
- Taking advantage of manufacturers' merchandising and displays.
- How competing franchises can fit.
- How much overall control does a dealer want?
- Asserting your own identity.
- Levels of support and targets agreed.
- Is the customer buying me or the brands I sell?
- Should the manufacturer or dealer brand dominate?
- Starting from scratch.
- Individual manufacturer ranges or product groups?
- How much individual creativity and local input?



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# YOU COULD STILL BE A DEALER OF THE YEAR WINNER

## Nominations open until 30th September

Have you got your entry in yet for our Dealer of the Year Awards?

If not, don't worry there is still time – and don't forget that dealerships are able to nominate themselves this year.

Our core awards will recognise Dealers of the Year across the **Garden, Professional Turfcare, Farm Machinery, Forestry Equipment, and ATV/Quad sectors.**

This year the finalists for the Dealer of the Year awards will be assessed via feedback from the most important people to your business – your customers.

Once you are entered into the competition we will send you a link which you could email to your customers that will take them to a page on our website where they can submit comments in favour of your dealership.

We will also provide you with a logo you can add to your own website and a Word document that you can print off and hand out at your premises.

We are gathering this feedback from now up until 30th September 2016, so don't delay, head to [www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk) and get your dealership in the running.

### New awards

As well as the Dealer of the Year prizes, this year we shall also be awarding two new honours, recognising key members of your dealership's team. These are:

### 2016 STAR OF THE DEALERSHIP AWARD

Dealers will be asked to nominate a member of staff from the sales, parts, service or support team who have demonstrated exceptional skills, commitment to customer service or any other compelling reason during the 2016 season – and who are deserving of industry recognition.

### 2016 APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Similarly, we wish to recognise an apprentice who, during the 2016 season has demonstrated the desire, willingness and ability to progress within the dealership and the industry.

You can nominate deserving candidates for these awards on our website now. Please visit [www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk) and head to the 2016 Conference and Awards section. ●

## SPONSOR FOCUS

### Fuel Fit is the solution to a growing problem

An increasing number of lawnmower engine repairs, including warranty claims, are being wrongly diagnosed as carburettor problems when, in fact, the fault is caused by the ethanol in fuel that is causing corrosion and gumming.

The misdiagnosis is increasingly becoming a problem for dealers, customers and Briggs & Stratton due to non-starting engines that have been affected by ethanol. The problem is only likely to get worse as lower priced fuel, which often contains higher levels of ethanol, becomes more popular. Ethanol attracts water into the fuel system which, in turn, causes corrosion and the build-up of gummy deposits and varnish on engine components, particularly the carburettor. In extreme cases it can cause total engine failure.

The EU's Renewable Energy Directive instructs fuel producers to dilute petrol with green alternatives. The high oxygen content of ethanol attracts and traps water vapour inside the engine from the atmosphere.

By adding Fuel Fit to the petrol tank the problem can be eradicated. It forms a protective shield over the engine's components, protecting them from the damaging effects caused by the ethanol. Green petrol will begin to deteriorate in storage or the fuel tank within one month and Fuel Fit will help overcome this ageing process, keeping petrol fresher for longer.

"Fuel Fit is not only a remedy for an increasing problem in our industry but also provides a cost saving solution to misdiagnosis when equipment comes in for repair," says Ian Small, Head of Marketing for Briggs & Stratton UK Limited.

Fuel Fit is sold in 100ml and 250ml bottles.

Briggs & Stratton has a long-standing commitment to protecting the environment and, through continuous research and development and investments in advanced technology, has reduced the emissions produced by its engines by up to 75% since 1995. The company's manufacturing facilities are committed to cutting energy use by 25% in the next 10 years.

# QUIET TIMES BUT NEW KIT KEEPS COMING

*WITH COMBINABLE CROP PRICES SHOWING LITTLE IMPROVEMENT, AND SOME BIG PLAYERS STAYING AWAY FROM THE SHOW, IT WAS PERHAPS NO SURPRISE CROWD NUMBERS APPEARED DOWN AT THE CEREALS EVENT IN MID-JUNE. THERE WERE PLENTY OF INNOVATIONS ON SHOW THOUGH, REPORTS MARTIN RICKATSON*

There was a noticeably smaller crowd at this year's Cereals, the annual arable machinery and agronomy event held in mid-June – and with little evidence of an imminent upturn in commodity prices, plus the fact the event was held just prior to the EU referendum, that was perhaps unsurprising.

The continued steady decline in the number of manufacturers present was also notable. Among the big names to stay away were McCormick and Landini importer AgriArgo, JCB and Claas, the latter continuing its leave of absence from the show. While in recent years it has been present by proxy through its Combine

World used equipment business, this year that was absent too.

But many of the manufacturers and importers present reported that, while the number of visitors appeared to be lower, the quality of enquiries was good, suggesting that many of those who did attend were looking to make investment decisions.

Some manufacturers chose to capitalise on others' absence by returning for the first time in many years. Among them was SDF, which showed Deutz-Fahr tractors and one of its straw-walker combine models on its static display, alongside a working demo of its Agrosky precision farming technology.

The business is continuing to snap up new dealers to fill gaps in its network, most notably as a result of the big manufacturers' decisions to restructure their networks and withdraw their franchises from certain dealerships to extend others' areas.

Market newcomer Armatrac, whose Turkish-built tractors are now imported by Staffordshire firm AS Tractors, was also present for the first time, and continues to seek dealers.

Next year's Cereals will take place on 14th-15th June, returning to the farm at Boothby Graffoe, Lincolnshire, which has previously hosted the event.



Visitor numbers appeared to be down at this year's Cereals, according to exhibitors, although the organisers suggested the first day total was near to 2015's. Those that did come, though, were generally looking to make serious investment decisions, suggested standholders.



North Yorkshire firm Ryetec is now importing into the UK the Ma/Ag range of disc coulters direct drills from Italy. Discs are mounted in pairs, one serrated and one smooth, and are staggered in two rows, for effective trash flow, with the drills claimed to be especially suited to working in high trash or cover crop situations. There are 3m and 4m mechanical feed models and 3.0/4.5/6.0m pneumatic versions.



UK sprayer manufacturing specialist Chafer chose Cereals to launch two self-propelled sprayer models based on an in-house design. The Interceptor comes in 4,000 or 5,000-litre tank capacities, with booms from 24m to 36m, while comparable figures for the Defender are 3,000 or 3,500 litres and booms from 24m to 30m. Both will be available from spring 2017. They are both powered by six-cylinder Deutz TCD Tier 4 final engines, producing 215hp in the Interceptor and 180hp in the Defender. Hydrostatic Bosch Rexroth drive systems feature in each machine, while the Interceptor also benefits from automatic dynamic traction force distribution, compensating for changes in terrain by automatically adjusting wheel motor displacement to maximise traction and fuel efficiency.



This was the first Cereals for Hubert ploughs, manufactured by Suffolk former Dowdeswell dealer Agri-Hire. Already a muck spreader manufacturer, the firm says the ploughs it is building use a new beam design with Dowdeswell-based wearing parts. The firm says it may at some point be seeking sales agents. There are three series – the 2141 in-furrow models, the 2145 on-land/in-furrow and the 2170 on-land ploughs. Model availability ranges from five to 10 furrows, all fully-mounted. While it is at first concentrating on direct sales, dealerships may become available.



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Landquip, the aluminium boom UK sprayer specialist, managed to get around the show absence of JCB, still securing a Fastrac 4220 to show off its new rear boom fold demount. Available with 20, 24, 28 and 30m booms, the rear fold design provides a narrow transport width of 2.45m and a height of 3.8m. Tank capacity is 2,500 litres and the sprayer can be paired with the firm's Vision 1,500-litre front tank to create a 4,000-litre combination. Options include multi-section air-operated nozzle switching and individual electric nozzle switching.

Essex used machinery specialist J Brock and Sons recently entered the new equipment market with a line of cultivation kit, and aside from a range of min-till cultivators now offers a series of Cambridge rolls, topped by a massive 24m set which was on display on the show's working plots. The new rolls are targeted at the increasing UK interest in controlled traffic farming, following the same pathways for as many operations as possible.



Power harrows from Italian manufacturer Breviglieri had only been available on the UK for a short time prior to the decision of the family behind importer RECO to wind down its business. New UK agent for the firm is Worcestershire-based Weaving Machinery, with the harrow range filling one of the few gaps that still existed in the line of arable equipment the firm offers.

New tractor news was thin on the ground at Cereals, but a series of updates was revealed for Case IH's flagship Quadtrac tractor, including a number of transmission enhancements. Meanwhile, New Holland gave visitors the chance to see its methane-powered development tractor, previously displayed at international exhibitions but on show here for the first time in the UK. Further displays are planned. ●







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# GLEE 2016 TO REFLECT MODERN GARDEN RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

## CHANGES TO SHOW FORMAT THIS YEAR

Organisers of this year's Glee exhibition, i2i Events, say that anyone involved in the garden retail business will not want to miss Glee 2016 (12th–14th September, NEC Birmingham), where the latest innovations, exciting new product launches, unrivalled networking opportunities and future trends will all come together.

Matthew Mein, Event Director at Glee says, "In the last few years Glee has benefited from a number of changes which have helped to create a refreshed and revitalised show for both exhibitors and retailers. This year we have focussed on making changes to Glee's format, making it even more reflective of the modern garden retail environment.

"This change is best showcased in the rebranding of three of our core show sectors. Whilst the show itself will look the same, the focus within these sectors will be much more targeted and key trends from each will take centre stage within the show's wider content."

### New sectors at Glee 2016

**Outdoor Entertaining** is the new home of garden leisure products. A new approach to this sector will focus largely on the move from 'outdoor living' to garden spaces being an extension of people's homes, with gardens taking centre stage when it comes to entertaining space. The revised sector will focus largely on how retailers can reinvigorate their offering to attract younger consumers into store to purchase core products such as outdoor furniture, barbecues, firepits, pizza ovens and exterior audio visual equipment.

**Glee Garden Design & Landscaping** has entered a new chapter in 2016 under the banner of Landscaping and Garden Decoration. This revitalised area will look at how retailers can better profit from a mixture of hard landscaping, and those decorative elements that help to complete most garden design projects.

Finally, **Retail Experiences and Services** will replace the area previously known as Retail Services. Offering the best in shop fittings, POS, EPoS and retail design, this area will be expanded in 2016 to better incorporate the wider aspects related to inspirational and functional retailing concepts. Glee's established Catering section will also find a new home within the Retail Experiences section and Services this year.

Visitors to Glee 2016 will also notice that Home DIY and Water Gardening will also be better represented at the show.

Matthew Mein adds, "The success of Glee lies in its ability to provide a platform for future growth, and this includes diversifying through new product categories. In the case of water gardening and home DIY, both are showing increased coverage within garden retailing and consumer demand is increasing also.

"Glee is in its best shape for some years. We've reached maximum capacity and are on track to deliver over 550 exciting brands, including 100 international suppliers, as well as 220 new and lapsed brands.

"Look out for thousands of new product launches, including exciting new innovations that will take the garden retail industry by storm in 2017.

"It's fair to say that this year's Glee exhibition is set to be one of the most exciting showcases of garden retail and outdoor living brands, products and added value content anywhere in the UK."

### Machinery at Glee 2016

Machinery at Glee 2016 can be found in the Garden Care section once again. Described by the organisers as Glee's most thriving area, this year Garden Care is set to be 15% bigger compared with the 2015 show.

This is where Handy Distribution's large stand will be found. Also to be found here once again, will be Lawn King.

As always Garden Care will also feature everything from growing media, compost, fertilisers, and GYO products to garden tools and accessories.



## HANDY TO DISPLAY IMPROVEMENTS



Handy Distribution will be showing improvements across both of its Webb and Handy brands this year.

Firstly, Webb is unveiling its new range of Electric powered Webb Rotary Lawnmowers.

The 33cm, 36cm and 40cm mowers will add strength to the brand, which already includes three hand-push cylinder mowers, 16 petrol rotary mowers and petrol hand-held machines.

The Handy product range will be showcasing its new look and enhancements for 2017. The biggest change is the new colouring, product livery and new look full colour boxes.

“We’re looking at our products in closer detail than ever before,” explains David Garraway, Handy’s Marketing Manager. “Beneficial changes are happening across the full product range, such as replacing the pneumatic tyres, currently fitted to many of our products, with puncture-proof tyres. We’re working to make these products look more robust with a premium edge whilst maintaining their affordable gardening position in the market.

“In addition, we will be launching some new additions to include a garden roller and electric impact shredder.”

# VITAL INFO

Entry to Glee is free of charge to all pre-registered visitors. Register via the Glee website [www.bleebirmingham.com/register](http://www.bleebirmingham.com/register). Glee 2016 takes place at the NEC, Birmingham, from Monday 12th to Wednesday 14th September and opens between 9.00am and 6:00pm (Monday and Tuesday) and 4:00pm (Wednesday). For full details visit [www.bleebirmingham.com](http://www.bleebirmingham.com)

## SPECIAL SHOW FEATURES FOR 2016

### The New Product Showcase and Glee Awards

The New Product Display is the place to head to see innovative, unique and commercial products from the hundreds of suppliers at Glee. The competition sees new designs and products displayed for consideration with the best of each category receiving the accolade of a Glee Award.

Show visitors can cast their vote for their favourite, awarding one lucky entrant with the title of Retailers’ Choice Award.

### Seminar content, in association with the HTA

As always Glee will offer visitors a free, three-day seminar programme organised in conjunction with the HTA (Horticultural Trades Association), which will share expert business and garden retail advice to help grow your business through challenging trading conditions.

This year’s show will be officially opened by TV’s Diarmuid Gavin, who will then be joining the organisers within their seminar theatre to share his experience of how he got to where he is today in the industry.

### Glee Innovators Zone

This special area is designed to help nurture valuable grass-roots product development and one-off design ideas, while also bridging the gap between market-ready new product launches from established companies and pre-commercial product ideas. This year it will be home to over 30 brand new companies. ●



# A PASSION FOR DISTRIBUTION

*Steve Gibbs met the management team at Handy Distribution to discuss Webb, brands, shows and the future*



Sales and Marketing Director Mark Moseley and MD Simon Belcher

It has been a busy couple of years for Handy Distribution.

Not least has been a £3 million investment in its new premises at Murdock Road in Swindon. The appeal for this new 65,000sq ft facility was that it came with a development order that means the company can add another 10,000 sq ft in the next few years without planning permission and therefore supporting its ambition for future growth. Combined with the original Warehouse in Swindon which it still owns, Handy now occupies around 100,000 sq ft of storage space in the town.

These two facilities now support a £6m stock holding capacity which is required to support the sheer volume of products that is currently being distributed to dealers across

the country. As well as its own Handy and Webb brands it has a number of exclusive agreements with well known garden machinery manufacturers such as Flymo, Gardena, McCulloch, Greenworks, Solo, and Kärcher.

To support the continued expansion of the Webb brand of mowers and petrol-powered products, Mark Moseley was brought in during January 2015 as Sales and Marketing Director to oversee the brand development and channel strategy. Within the past 18 months the brand has received a complete face-lift by introducing three performance and pricing categories of its mower range that now comprises a Classic, Supreme and Elite range. The Classic offering is purely there as an affordable first-time buyer option while the Supreme range provides greater performance enhanced with Briggs & Stratton engines. The Elite range offers superior performance and quality exclusively for the specialist dealer.

## Webb

Mark came to Handy with a wide and varied CV ranging from running his own business to being Senior National Accounts Manager for Kärcher – which is where his relationship with Handy was initiated. Handy Distribution Managing Director Simon Belcher says, “We wanted to bring someone into the business who could really drive the sales and marketing side. The business got to a certain size where myself and Steve Bartlett [Operations Director] were pretty much flat-out all the time just with the day-to-day running of the business.

“We wanted somebody to come in who could blinker that out a little bit, and just concentrate on driving us forward. We knew Mark for many years and we knew he was the right person for the job.

“Specifically, we knew Mark could really drive the development of the Webb and Handy Brands.”

Mark realised this was a task he could take on, coming from a background heavily involved in branding. “The first thing I saw when I looked at Webb,” he said, “was a fantastic opportunity to really do something great. We’re starting to see that really filter through now, however I believe there is so much more that we can do.”

Webb now has a range of 23 lawnmowers and nine hand-held petrol-powered products. Simon describes the brand as a traditional, quality garden machinery range which he believes customers have really begun to engage with. “What we’ve aimed to do this past year and a half is lift it to the next level. It already was a huge success for us, but we realised it had so much more potential.

“In the early days we said it was a lawnmower-only brand but it’s been doing so well that we’ve felt that we had to bring other categories in – such as the hand-held range.

“We were delighted with the response to this, the uptake on it was unbelievable.”

Mark was very keen to differentiate where Webb sits in the marketplace. “Our strategy has been to invest in our brand,” he explains. “Everything from consistency in quality of the products, enhanced packaging, improved dealer earnings, to the rustic looking stand

we provide dealers with. The effort that has gone into Webb products has enhanced the brand and has contributed to its success.”

What he and Simon both believe has been one of the crucial contributing factors to Webb really working for them though, has been how they have ‘channel managed’ the machines.

“The dealers told us they wanted to be able to offer their customers something a little bit different,” says Mark, “so we have the Elite machines that are specialist dealer exclusive.”

Simon agrees, saying, “Elite machines are only stocked by our Elite Dealers who have to have their own showroom and servicing department, because this is the premium end of the range where the customer demands a higher level of service.

“We wanted the very top of our range to be sold to the right

customer,” Simon continues, “and to do that we need experienced people who know what they’re talking about.

“We wanted customers be able to actually get hands on with mower demonstrations which only specialists can provide. We need it assembled and PDI-ed correctly because it’s more complex than a standard machine. And should they have a problem, we want it sorted out quickly, easily and locally.

“Therefore, when you start talking about what that premium customer is looking for, he’s looking for a specialist dealer. Hence our products that suit that customer, need to be sold through a specialist dealer – that was very clear from day one.”

This strategy certainly appears to be working. This year Handy has seen Webb sales increase by 59%, despite a very late start to the season.

## Handy range

It isn’t just Webb which Handy has been concentrating on lately though. The company has begun the process of looking at its own Handy range of garden products – with the aim of giving them a facelift too.

“We have 77 products to concentrate on here so it won’t be completed overnight,” explains Mark. “We’ve started on certain products to give them a bit of a more premium feel. We will replace the old Handy sticker branding with a premium metal branded logo and change the colour from the bright green to a gun-metal grey with a hint of green components on certain items. We feel this helps make them look more robust, sturdy and distinctive in dealer’s showrooms.

“We’re also bringing the packaging up to date and giving each machine box more

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shelf shout”.

It isn't just cosmetically, however, where the Handy range is changing. For instance, on the garden carts it has just introduced puncture-proof tyres. “It's little touches like that,” says Mark, “which we feel are going to help elevate the products. They are still affordable garden equipment, but just a little more premium.”

## GLEE

It will be on these new Handy products that the company's always impressive Glee stand will concentrate at the NEC in September. Last year the main focus was on Webb, this year it will be on other dealership friendly products such as log-splitters, carts, trolleys, rollers and sack-barrow – all in the new, muted Handy colour scheme.

The company still sees value in Glee. Whereas it was once the great garden machinery industry focal point of the year, nowadays machinery can pretty much just be found on its large ‘show-within-a-show’ stand.

Simon Belcher estimates that last year probably less than 10% of visitors to the stand were specialist dealers – it's mostly the garden

centre trade and the DIY outlets which make Birmingham so important for them. But he feels that a trip to the NEC would be well worth it for dealers.

“The key about Glee is that it's the right time of year,” he says. “The shows that are later in the year are no use for showcasing new products to dealers because our area managers will have already had to present those. August/September is the critical window for new products for the following season.”

Mark Moseley agrees: “I feel dealers would benefit from visiting because we aim to bring as many new and innovative products as possible to the NEC in September – and not just from our own ranges, but from the other brands we distribute.”

These other brands, big names such as Flymo, McCulloch, Gardena, Bosch & Kärcher all send down their own product specialists to host their own sections of the Handy stand. As well as this, as Simon points out, specialist machinery dealers can always find inspiration from the myriad of ancillary garden products to be found at Glee – many of which would sit nicely alongside mowers and other

garden machinery equipment in dealerships as potential spontaneous purchases.

## GreenWorks

The one brand which Handy deals with that made it to Saltex later in the season last year, was the GreenWorks range of cordless machinery. This was because of the larger machines increasing popularity with contractors and other professionals.

Handy fully believes in the future of cordless machinery, but Simon sees a challenge therein. “I think a significant issue is that every brand has its own battery-powered range now. The competition out there currently is very high.

“GreenWorks, however, produces a lot of the equipment for various named brands – it makes technology for GGP, Bosch, Ryobi, and, of course, STIHL recently bought into its parent company Global Tools.

“The whole notion of GreenWorks wanting to set up a brand under its own name was to make sure it had a solid business should its work for the OEMs ever cease.

“As soon as people start to understand that GreenWorks is the power behind some of the other brands, they will start to think ‘well I'd rather be buying the stuff that's got the actual maker's name on it’. So I think that does go in our favour.”

Mark believes that once a customer has bought into GreenWorks, it has them for life. “Once you own the battery we're finding customers are returning to add to their cordless garden machinery collection and buy into the other tools available; and with all the innovation GreenWorks is pioneering, we find we're capturing new customers who are converting across from other brands.”

Simon is of the opinion that as the technology is now there for cordless machines to offer serious



Mark Moseley with stacks of Webb mowers waiting to leave the warehouse

performance, customers are now starting to make longer-term decisions with their purchasing.

“Everyone knows you’ve got to be in the cordless market now because it’s going to be huge in the future,” he says. “OK it’s coming from a low starting point, but its annual increase is massive.”

### Driving forward

Even though Handy has many routes to market for its products, it is clear from talking to Simon and Mark that the specialist dealer is still integral to its proposition. In fact, Mark says, “They are the backbone of our business – not least because that’s our background.”

Simon describes distribution as his passion and feels that with the company’s move into its new premises it’s really put them in a position to continue to

drive forward.

He says, “Where we were before we couldn’t expand, we were pretty much at capacity, but now with this new site we have scope for future development, so we can go on pushing our products harder than ever before because we can

expand and cope with the increased demand.

“Our focus is to continue to drive our own ranges, work hand-in-hand with our distribution partners and support our specialist dealers to ensure they remain competitive and profitable.” ●



Webb mowers displayed on Handy’s rustic stands



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# DIVERSIFICATION AND RELOCATION



James Barlow says staffing recruitment and bank lender understanding are two of the biggest challenges facing family dealerships

*Moving to new main premises and expanding into new product areas are the key ways in which Barlows Agri is meeting the challenges facing its two-branch family dealership. Martin Rickatson found out more*

**T**win tractor franchises – one of which has been part of the business for half a century – plus a product list that spans multiple sectors and a number of specialisms mark out Barlows Agri as a dealership offering something different. But perhaps more surprising, given its relatively small scale compared with some of the growing number of multiple-branch outfits in agriculture, is its commitment to infrastructure investment.

The history of Barlows dates back to around 1890, when Joseph

Barlow moved to Macclesfield to start a business offering contract threshing machine services. As the company grew, Joseph's son Harold joined the business, followed in the late 1930s by his own son Harry, by which time the business had moved onto using tractors to power its threshers in place of steam engines. One of those, a 1939 Allis-Chalmers model A, used right up to 1966 and is still in the family today. Reckoned to have worked in the region of 32-35,000 hours, it still has its original clutch, piston and liners.

In 1954 Harry Barlow moved the business to Pump House Works at Henbury, where Barlows remained for the next 60 years. As farm machinery became more affordable, making contracting less profitable, Harry began to use his knowledge in repairing his own machinery to carry out repairs for local farmers and supply new equipment.

It was when he attended the Royal Smithfield Show in 1965, which marked the UK unveiling of Zetor tractors, that Harry, after appraising the products, signed up



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Mick Rimmer (right) from Barlows Agri hands the keys of a new McCormick X6.420 to Graham Andrew at Cliffe House Farm, home of Sheffield's Our Cow Molly Superfresh Milk



as one of the first Zetor dealers in the country. The business sold its first model, a 4011, the following spring, and that tractor is now back within the family collection. Aside from a short spell a few years ago, the firm has been a Zetor dealer ever since and reckons to have the largest stock of Zetor parts in the UK, holding over 18,000 different lines and exporting worldwide.

“We built a strong reputation with Zetor and have always done well with their tractors, which suit this predominantly livestock farming area,” says James Barlow, managing director and the fifth generation of the family to run the firm, working alongside his parents,

Alan and Sally.

“As a company we’ve always had long relationships with suppliers, so our customers benefit from the service and spares knowledge we’ve gained over many years.”

But Zetor’s lack of a larger tractor range meant that, as farmers’ horsepower demands grew, even in livestock areas where the need was for bigger models to pull tankers and trailers and power mowers, it became clear that bigger machines were needed.

“We signed with Renault in the mid-1980s, which ultimately gave us tractors up to 200-250hp, but that ended when the tractor business was sold to Claas in

2003. After a few years out of that sector, we were approached by McCormick, and signed up for the franchise in April 2009. They offer us a quality product, the basis of which has been tried and tested for many years, and with the newest X8 models we have machines with CVT transmissions and up to 310hp.”

## Expansion

May 2010 marked a big move for the business, opening a second depot in Leek, Staffordshire, following the closure of the main agricultural supplier in that area.

“This also improved access to spares for our customers, as it also fell into our McCormick dealer area, and between the two depots we employ 11 staff,” explains James.

“Further growth came from our appointment as Arctic Cat and Suzuki ATV agents, while in 2012 we also took on the Kawasaki Mule franchise, and with these two products we have access to a wide range of markets.”

A further feather in the company’s cap came from its appointment as one of only eight Krone Forage Centres in the UK, enabling it to supply and service the German firm’s self-propelled forage harvesters, self-propelled mowers, balers and other grass equipment.



Shows and involvement in local farming activities are an important part of Barlows’ marketing strategy and customer support

Barlows' franchise range now also encompasses Merlo, McHale, Schaffer, Arctic Cat, Kawasaki, Amazone, Twose, Fleming, Marshall Trailers, Quicke and Trima. Also on the list is Bateson, Storth, Wessex, Kioti, Slewtic, Suzuki, Bateman-Sellarc, Enduraspray, Harry West, IAE, Hi-Spec, Matermacc, Lumag, Dickies and, most recently, Cobra garden machinery.

By far the firm's biggest move, though, has been a physical one, upping sticks from the site in Henbury it had occupied for 60 years and relocating late last year to new purpose-built premises in nearby Marton, close to Macclesfield.

"It was a necessary commitment to allow us to expand to meet the demands of today's modern machinery and to carry more stock," explains James.

"We'd outgrown the Henbury site – for example, the workshops



weren't tall enough to accommodate kit such as self-propelled foragers, and there was limited road access for deliveries.

"Packing, moving and unpacking the huge stock of parts was a big task, and then there's been the construction of drainage, groundworks, a new workshop and a new entrance road built.

"Things weren't helped by someone crashing a car into a nearby telegraph pole, cutting our phones and internet access for a few days, but we were quickly fully-functioning again, thanks to our staff and our building contractors."

The eight-acre site is well situated between Macclesfield and



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Congleton, with no near neighbours and sitting alongside a main road, providing both easy access and potential for passing trade.

“The site was a former plant nursery, so we had to dismantle and sell most of the glasshouses to make way for used equipment storage and display, although we’ve retained some temporarily to house our stock of classic tractor parts,” says James.

“Starting from scratch, a new six-bay workshop has given us a modern, lighter, brighter structure with underfloor heating, plus taller doors and roof to cater for big harvest machinery. Alongside it, we’ve retained a building for parts and sundries, and this will be extended to house feed and animal health products under a new agreement with farm supplies firm Carrs Billington.”

## Diversification

Aside from James and his parents, the Marton and Leek premises are supported by a strong team including workshop technicians Alan Rcadliffe, James Stubbs, Pete Smith and Nick Mottorshed, plus apprentice Matthew Sherratt. Mike Rimmer looks after sales for



Anthony Hutchinson (left), animal supplies manager at Chester Zoo, receives the keys to a new McCormick X5.40 tractor from Paul Williams of Barlows Agri

Derbyshire from the Leek depot, while Paul Williams oversees Cheshire sales from Marton. Rob Brown is aftersales manager, while Dan Torr and Wayne Sutton look after parts management at Marton and Leek respectively. Freda Winterbottom completes the team, managing accounts.

“The new premises have enabled us to build on our moves into new product areas,” says James.

“That’s included a greater range of hydraulic pipes and fittings, Tuffa tanks for oil, water, chemicals and other products, Hotline electric fencing, Portak agricultural and outdoor equipment products, Edgar Brothers shooting products and CSJ dog food. Each one is an important part of getting more

people through the door and realising they can use us for many of their rural needs.

“We’re not forgetting our core products, but we’re diversifying here too. One of the first tractors sold from the new Marton depot by Paul was a 105hp McCormick X5.40, which has gone to Chester Zoo for mowing, haulage, feeding and loading duties. Farms remain at the heart of our business, though, and we’re fully aware of the way they’re changing – Mick has recently sold an X6.420 to the farm near Sheffield known for its Our Cow Molly milk marketing.

“We’ve also introduced items of machinery such as flail mowers and dump trailers for hire on a daily basis, with discounts for weekly bookings. It’s an area we’re looking to expand, so are inviting suggestions from customers of machines that they would like to see available.”

Expanding into new premises has presented plenty of headaches, but perhaps the biggest challenge has been working with lenders, says James.

“To be fair, the local team at our bank was very good when it came to helping us fund the site purchase. But it’s proving more of a challenge to get it recognised higher up that small businesses need support over time and that they need to understand the cash flow of machinery dealerships. This and the need to recruit new young staff into the business are two of the biggest challenges we face.” ●



Barlows is one of the oldest Zetor tractor dealers in the country, selling its first model in 1966. This machine is pictured outside the Leek depot



50 years



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# BUSINESS MONITOR

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## BUSINESS CONFIDENCE ONLY TAKES A SLIGHT KNOCK

### Dealers are still pretty bullish post-Brexit

We ran our latest Dealer Survey about a month after the UK public's choice to leave the European Union. We were interested to see if business confidence had suffered post-Brexit, especially in light of the fact that in our previous issue we had reported that 63% of dealers who responded felt either Confident or Very Confident about their business prospects for the rest of 2016.

Encouragingly this confidence does not appear to have been hit too hard. In our latest survey those describing themselves as Confident or Very Confident had only slightly dipped to 57%.

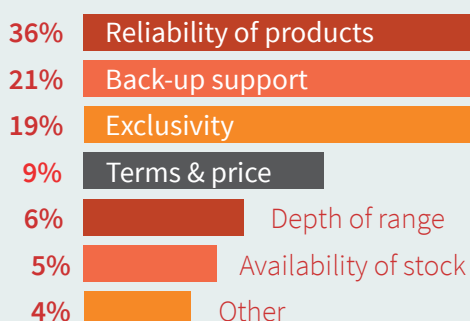
We also took the opportunity to revisit some areas surveyed this time last year, in order to compare the mood in this new UK. Last year only 15% said they were planning on taking on any new franchises in the coming 12 months – and basically nothing has changed. Now 16% say they are planning to take on new franchises

this coming year with the vast majority (65%), staying the same. Unsurprisingly, the factors which influence choosing how to pick a new franchise have remained pretty much constant.

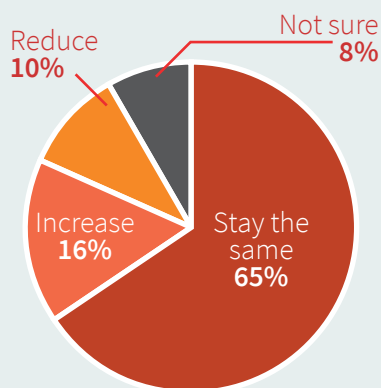
An interesting development in how dealers look to attract new customers cropped up in this survey. Last year the second most popular answer after 'word of mouth' (which triumphed again this year with 53%), was 'newspaper advertising' with 14%. This year zero respondents cited this as a successful method. Own websites (20%) and social media (10%) gained traction.

The vast majority of dealers who responded to the survey are seemingly content with their current premises (69%), but a few are confident enough to be either looking to develop where they are (14%) or move to larger premises (8%).

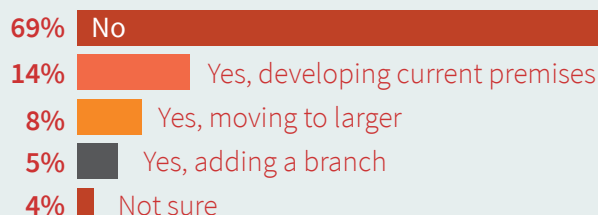
Which factor most influences your choice of a new franchise?



Will you increase or decrease the number of franchises you hold in the next 12 months?



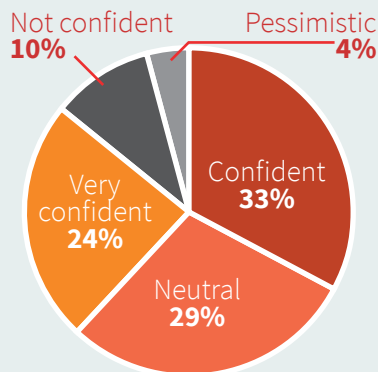
Are you considering changing your premises in the coming year?



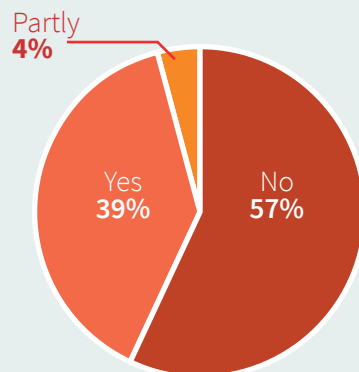
What method do you consider the most effective to gain new customers?



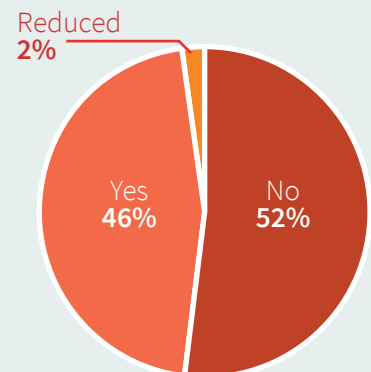
**Following the Brexit decision how confident are you for your business prospects for the rest of 2016?**



**Has your level of confidence changed to what it was before the referendum?**



**Have you taken on any new franchises during the past 12 months?**



## YOUR SAY

**WE ASKED YOU: AS WE MOVE INTO THE POST-BREXIT WORLD, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS'S PROSPECTS?**

- We feel confident. Europe should be viewed as a competitor and we can now take business from them.
- I think people underestimate how inextricably linked we are with Europe on so many levels and what it will cost to exit. I think we will continue to trade but, again, service and repairs will dominate rather than new sales.
- We feel steady in our business.
- We're uncertain – but with a positive attitude and favourable weather conditions we will react accordingly to what could be a very good, normal or very bad year.
- We are certainly cautious currently.
- Staffing is currently our major concern.
- As we deal with imported products, currency fluctuation will be a key factor in the coming months. This will affect people's buying decisions.
- I personally feel full of uncertainty.
- I can't help but feel pessimistic.
- I am extremely positive. We as a business make the most of every opportunity.
- The situation will possibly be difficult in the short term but better in say a year.
- Holding off expansion plans due to concerns about the future. Will wait until we know whether or not the economy will be affected, and if so whether it will have a positive or negative impact.

- The country will prosper and so shall we.
- There should be no change in the real world for some months, probably years. If public figures stop talking us into a perceived recession we will be fine in the short term, and long term once Brexit is concluded fully, we will be much stronger as a trading nation. ●



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# PHIL BROWN

uni-power, Managing Director

uni-power, the specialist supplier of original parts, engines, drive solutions and power products to the trade and original equipment manufacturers, has been running for 30 years this year. Editor Steve Gibbs met Managing Director Phil Brown at its premises in Great Dunmow, Essex to talk Brexit, changes and customer satisfaction

**SERVICE DEALER:** How goes it with uni-power?

**Phil Brown:** Very well thank you – although we’re yet to see how Brexit will affect us all.

**SD:** Are you concerned about how the decision will affect your business?

**PB:** I think in terms of stability of business it would have been better for us to stay in. The point is nobody knows what’s going to happen. Looking at the pound’s value and everything else, it’s a concern.

There won’t be any knee-jerk reactions from ourselves though. I’m not going to suddenly put prices up or reduce discounts. We shall just have to see what happens.

**SD:** Other than that, how is uni-power finding things?

**PB:** Very good. We’ve just come off the back of a couple of really strong years. We had a record year last year in fact.

2016 has begun a little slower with a late start to the season plus maybe there was some concern over whether we’d vote in or out.

**SD:** How does your business work?

**PB:** We’re a wholesale trade company that sells to trade dealers and OEMs – not to the end user. Our business is roughly a 60/40 split between OEMs and dealers. If an individual did come to us wanting to buy one of our products we, of course, wouldn’t turn them away, but there’d be no discount – it’d be full retail price. That way we’re not treading on the toes of our own customers.

That’s the way the business has been since my Dad, Ray, started it in 1986.

**SD:** So this year is the 30th anniversary since your Dad established the company?

**PB:** That’s right. He originally worked for Autocar Electrical which was the sole distributor of Briggs & Stratton in the UK and he was its After-sales Dealer Network Manager. He travelled around the country looking after everyone with Briggs & Stratton parts.

From fulfilling that role, he saw a gap in the market for a specialist engine and parts supplier.

Before we filled this niche, if a dealer wanted specialist engine advice it was quite difficult to come across – and this was the same for OEMs. Engine manufacturers in this country tend to have quite small teams, so they rely on a specialist such as us to handle all their engine problems.

**SD:** Which companies do you work with?

**PB:** Briggs & Stratton was our first engine manufacturer, so we’ve been with it for our full 30 years. Kohler has also been 30 years, as have Kubota and Lombardini. We’ve been with Yanmar for 18 years and Honda for 15 now.

When Tecumseh went out of business the Peerless side of it got sold to Husqvarna, so we’re now also Peerless transmission dealers, and we can still get hold of some Tecumseh parts if we need to.

As well as all the engine lines we’re also dealers of power products for Briggs, Honda and SDMO, as well as Ultrasonic Cleaning Tanks.

We also deal in machinery parts as part of our official product lines, even though we don’t sell the end products.

So basically we like to feel that we’re a one-stop shop by offering a full spread of manufacturers, but without competing with our customers by selling the end product.



**SD: Was that ever an option, to sell whole goods too?**

**PB:** My Dad had some people who tried to convince him he should years ago, but they quickly parted company. He was always convinced of the benefit of being purely an engines and parts specialist. And the fact that we're still here 30 years later entirely justifies that decision.

**SD: In terms of the trade, is it just garden machinery dealers you work with?**

**PB:** Not at all. We deal in industrial engines, so anywhere a non-automotive engine is utilised, we'll supply. Sectors such as forestry or construction for example.

We did start off with just mainly the garden machinery side of it, but an industrial engine can fit on all sorts of equipment. We supply engines all the way to the large engines you'd find on construction machinery.

This gives the company a good wide spread. If we were focused just solely on one industry and that industry was taking a knock, we'd be in trouble.

**SD: This must help with the seasonality of our industry?**

**PB:** Exactly. It used to be that summertime was our busiest period and then we'd go a bit quieter. But now because we've got a wide spread with our OEMs who cover various industries, we're busy all year round.

**SD: What have been the biggest changes you've seen in your business over these 30 years?**



**PB:** I guess the switch from just being predominately lawn and garden. We started off with Briggs & Stratton, and obviously the majority of its petrol engines are used on garden machinery. Then we took on Kubota petrol engines which were also mainly lawn and garden. Once Kubota dropped its petrol line and concentrated on diesel, however, we then began to widen our scope, dealing with other sectors.

Another recent change is that we re-branded last year. We changed our old 'globe' logo and dropped being known as Universal Engine Power. We are now 'uni-power – Industrial Engine and Parts'. This lets customers know exactly what we do.

**SD: You supply dealers across the country?**

**PB:** We have a small trade counter here at our headquarters in Great Dunmow for local dealers who want to come in to see us, but we supply to anywhere.

**SD: Is there a lot of competition for the service you provide?**

**PB:** There are only a very few other solely engines and parts specialists out there. Many of our competitors will sell the end product as well. We're in a fairly unique position just being the engine and parts guys.

**SD: You have recently relaunched your website haven't you?**

**PB:** Indeed we have. It went live during August. We had to update what we had because, as we deal with so many different manufacturers, we were having difficulties with our previous site's shopping cart processing all the different levels of discount and carriage.

Also we wanted a fresher, cleaner more user-friendly looking online presence.

This new site, which we've spent an awful lot of time and money on getting developed, offers all this as well allowing the dealers to view live stock availability. Account customers are given a unique login ID to access prices, discounts, manuals and all manner of technical information for all our product lines.

**SD: This year there's lots of talk of battery powered machinery. Does the proliferation of this worry you as an engine specialist?**



Stacks of Briggs & Stratton engines

**PB:** Yes it will have an effect, but I think the main engine manufacturers will be looking at developments to compete with this new technology. Also it's going to take a while for cordless to really compete with certain engines anyway. When you've got a 50hp turbo diesel engine powering a chipper, to make that battery powered is some way away yet.

The batteries available will, of course, start to go up in horsepower, but this will take time. And it helps that we're not purely a lawn and garden engine and parts specialist. We will, of course, offer the batteries and associated items as spare parts for our customers.

**SD: What do you need to do to keep your customers satisfied?**

**PB:** First and foremost I'd say it would be our specialist engine and parts knowledge.

But then also, very importantly, we have our discounts. We're main dealers for all of our brands, only supplying genuine parts. Therefore we can give the best discounts. As we work so closely and directly with a company like Honda Engines for example, we can offer top discounts.

The discount structure across all of our products then allows our dealers a good margin to make decent money themselves.

But, of course, everything in the end boils down to customer service. Our speed and accuracy of delivery is paramount.

I analyse everything that we sell to make sure we always have everything we might need on our shelves – we're constantly replenishing our stocks. We offer three different levels of carriage and discount based

on how quickly a part is needed. And we also offer third party warranty access for machinery dealers – something which is not available from our competitors.

**SD: You see your discount offers as a major reason why dealers choose to use you?**

**PB:** Very much so. It used to be just our pre-season offer which came out in October/November which allowed dealers to stock up over the quieter winter months with a top discount – and to get extended credit into the following summer.

But now, this year, we've introduced a Spring/Summer offer as well. And as well as this, if I buy a stock of new engines or parts on special offer, I'll pass that discount onto our customers.

**SD: And it's only the trade that can benefit from these offers?**

**PB:** Absolutely. To buy from us we will only give an account to a trade company or an OEM. A dealer will send a dealer pack request form through our website. That will come through to me and I'll check out who they are and will send them a dealer pack with their discounts.

Plus with the new website, it's only our trade customers who can log in to see all the discounts. I feel we're really offering dealers a one-stop shop. If they need engines, or engine or machinery parts, we're not competing for their customers. We're here to back dealers up and help them sell more.

**SD: Thank you. ●**

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# RECORD NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS FOR APF 2016

BI-ANNUAL EXHIBITION TAKES PLACE AT RAGLEY ESTATE, 15TH-17TH SEPTEMBER



**A**PF 2016 has announced that a record number of exhibitors have already booked for the show which runs from the 15th to 17th September at Ragley Estate, Alcester, Warwickshire.

Exhibition Secretary, Ian Millward, reports, "With three months still to go we had already exceeded the record set in 2014; 280 exhibitors have booked so far and more are coming in on a daily basis.

"Our static display area is now full and we've had to create some extra space on the demonstration circuit to cope with demand. There is the real possibility that we will sell out of space completely for the first time."

The exhibition is not just for the big companies in the forestry, woodland, arboricultural and fencing sectors, however.

Ian went on to say: "We decided to offer the option of a slightly smaller and cheaper stand this year and this has attracted a lot of new companies that have not exhibited with us before."

## New exhibitors and machines

There will be several makes of machines never before seen in the UK. The UK market for equipment for both the forestry and arboricultural sectors is seen as very important and the APF exhibition is renowned as the place where visitors come to buy new equipment.

"We currently have exhibitors from over 12 different countries from as far afield as America and Japan," says Ian. "Look out for the new Ohashi chipper range. Other big names like Albach and Bruks will be exhibiting with us for the first time. It's fair to say that every major chipper manufacturer will be represented and showing their machines in action."

Of course, it is not all about chippers. Nearly every large harvester and forwarder manufacturer has booked – Ponsse, Logset, Komatsu and the show welcomes back John Deere after an eight-year absence.

Smaller scale machinery is becoming increasingly important to manage small woodlands and companies such as Norcar and Farmi among many others will have new machines on show.

The full list of current exhibitors can be seen on the visitors' section of the APF website.

## Tree felling

The APF show has faced comments in the past that not much actual tree felling seems to take place any more for a forestry show, so this year it has addressed that with some large-scale harvesting taking place. Over 300 tonnes of timber will be felled over the three days by a range of both large and small-scale harvesters.

Plant health continues to be ever more important and the Forestry Commission will be promoting its Keep It Clean campaign and holding a series of topical seminars to bring visitors up to date with current research and news on the latest pests and diseases.

## Other features

For the first time the show will have a Forest Worker Zone. Organised by The National Coppice Federation and specifically aimed at the forest worker, there will be a range of daily practical drop-in discussions and demonstrations on a variety of subjects from ergonomic and efficient felling techniques, managing back pain, the new forest apprenticeship scheme to payment through the head. The draft programme for this can be found on the events page of the APF website.

Both the main catering areas will have large covered seating areas in case the weather turns inclement and both of these areas will have free Wi-Fi available. The catering area near the woodland crafts area will have a range of artisan produced food including squirrel pie!

The Husqvarna World 25m pole climbing and the A W Jenkinson and Tilhill Forestry European Chainsaw carving competitions are both taking place again with the standard set to be higher than ever before. There will also be The Komatsu UK Forwarder Driving Competition and the popular woodland crafts area with a huge range of rarely seen crafts on display.



# VITAL INFO



APF EXHIBITION 15th, 16th, 17th September,  
9am to 6pm each day.

Site Address: APF 2016, Ragley Estate, Alcester,  
Warwickshire B49 5PS.

Tickets can be ordered online via  
[www.apfexhibition.co.uk](http://www.apfexhibition.co.uk):

1 day advanced £18,  
2 day advanced £32,  
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# GREENMECH TO LAUNCH NEW FEATURES AT APF

## INCLUDING NEW LOOK ARBORIST 130 AND ARBORIST 150 CHIPPERS

GreenMech will be showcasing its newest innovations at this year's APF Show.

Stand 80/110, in the outside area, will be showing a selection of its wood chippers in a new livery and sporting a new folding table, bottom control bars and all new



infeed touch controls.

Among them will be the first showing of the new look Arborist 130 and Arborist 150 chippers. Staff will be on hand to offer comprehensive technical advice and explain the flexible finance options that are currently available.

The Arborist 130 and Arborist 150 are described by the company as simple-to-use, cost-effective, road-tow chippers designed for quality, performance and economy. They both have a 970mm x 790mm in-feed hopper which aids bushy brash reduction, coupled with a 150cm x 230cm letterbox-style throat enabling heavily forked branches to be fed in easily.

The Arborist 130 comes as standard with a 23hp Honda petrol

engine, while the Arborist 150 offers a choice of a 26hp or 34hp Kubota diesel engines. Both machines are fitted with GreenMech's patented Disc Blade system giving up to 150 hours of chipping before requiring re-sharpening and the electronically controlled No-Stress feed system.

These two new products will be shown beside other popular machines from the GreenMech range, such as the CS100, QuadChip 160 and the SAFE-Trak 19-28.

GreenMech's Sales Director, Martin Lucas, is upbeat: "We're expecting the new additions to our arb range to make a big impression this year at APF and look forward to introducing all the new features to new and existing customers."

# STIHL LOSING WEIGHT

## UPGRADED MS 261 C-M SEEN AT THE ARB SHOW

STIHL was once again the main sponsor of The ARB Show this year for the 12th consecutive show.

The company presented the newly upgraded MS 261 C-M at the event. The professional chainsaw has had a 300g weight reduction (now at 4.9kg) and a 0.1kW power increase for a better power to weight ratio, as well as an improved sprocket cover for better chip guidance.

The company boasts that this powerful chainsaw for professionals ensures up to 20% less fuel consumption and up to 50% emissions reduction compared with the same power STIHL two-stroke engines without 2-MIX technology.

Also new at the show were additions to STIHL's PPE range including the ADVANCE X-LIGHT trousers. Made from ultra-light, extremely breathable AVERTIC pro lite cut protection material, developed

exclusively for STIHL, these dynamic chainsaw protective trousers are made up of six layers and are the lightest in the ADVANCE series.

Also showcased in STIHL's PPE range were the ADVANCE X-FLEX trousers. Available in a lightweight and highly breathable arborists' Design C, their smart and distinctive peat and orange colours gave them a modern twist to the high-tech, durable design.



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The Power Behind The Brands



# FÖRST SIGNS KEY PARTNERSHIP DEAL WITH ORANGE PLANT

## SUPPLYING WOOD CHIPPERS ACROSS THE NORTH OF ENGLAND

Först, a brand of Redwood Global, has joined forces with Orange Plant in a strategic partnership that will see the arboricultural sales and hire specialist supply Först's range of wood chippers across the North of England.

The deal now means that Orange Plant is the regional distributor for Först machinery at its branches in Newcastle upon Tyne, Wetherby and Bromborough (Cheshire).

Doug Ghinn, Director at Först, comments: "We've developed an excellent reputation in the market for manufacturing and supplying wood chippers that produce outstanding chipping performance, backed up by a first-class service offering.

"In order to enhance our coverage of the market and make the premium Först product and service available to tree surgeons and contractors right across the UK, we've signed an exclusive partnership with Orange Plant for the sales, service and hire of Först equipment across the North of England."

Först says its premium range of 6" and 8" wheeled, tracked and PTO woodchippers are designed to be robust and reliable. The company's whole range of woodchippers also comes with a three-year warranty as standard.

Doug continues: "Joining forces with Orange Plant is a major milestone for our business. The company is the largest independent arb equipment dealer in the UK,

with a hire fleet in excess of 120 wood chippers. This new relationship is testament to quality and robustness of the Först product and we're looking forward to working with Orange Plant and taking our businesses to the next level."

### Orange Plant

Orange Plant is a family-run business that sells, hires and services a range of arboricultural equipment including wood chippers, shredders, access platforms and stump grinders, employing 30 staff across its seven UK depots, including 20 service engineers.

Joanna Chapman, Orange Plant's Managing Director says: "This is an extremely exciting partnership. While the Först brand is still relatively new in the UK, it has made huge strides since it was launched to the market three years ago.

"The main reason for this is the quality and confidence Redwood Global has in the Först brand; the company has developed and introduced a range of robust wood chippers that the industry is asking for, supported by a three-year warranty that's very appealing."

Joanna concludes: "While we will continue to provide service and support for competitor wood chippers, our focus now across the North is to promote and develop the Först brand, coupled with the first-class service and aftersales support from Orange Plant."



Först XR-8 Traxion wood chipper





L-R: Tim, Josephine & Andy

## BRAND AMBASSADORS FOR HUSQVARNA

### THREE NEW FACES REPRESENTING

Husqvarna has announced three new brand ambassadors for the UK. Josephine Hedger, Andy Campbell and Tim Bendle will all become the new faces behind the Husqvarna brand in the UK.

As part of their ambassadorship, Hedger, Campbell and Bendle will join Husqvarna at a number of its key industry events throughout the year and feature heavily within the company's 2016 marketing campaign.

#### Josephine Hedger

Multiple World Tree Climbing Champion, Jo Hedger, already runs a successful arborist business, Arbor-Venture Tree Care with her partner, employing 10 people as well as an arb training school that trains around 300 students per year.

Commenting on her ambassadorship, Jo said, "I've used Husqvarna power tools at work for the past 12 years and have seen the products evolve and improve."

#### Andy Campbell

Andy Campbell has spent most of his working life in the forest. He is Chairman of the UK

Loggers, who send a team to represent the UK in the World Logging Championships (WLC). Andy has competed in all four European Logging Championships since they started in 2009 and achieved 3rd place in the tree felling in 2013.

Based in East Anglia, he has worked with Husqvarna on numerous occasions in the past at events such as the APF. Passionate about the company, Andy comes on board as a forestry expert but will also cover commercial landscape and ground care.

#### Tim Bendle

Tim is self-employed with 30 years' experience working as a professional contractor in the forestry and arboricultural industry. His extensive experience stretches to 21 years as a City & Guilds NPTC Assessor in Forestry and Arboriculture and 21 years as a Lantra Instructor in Forestry and Arboriculture.

He performs independent training and is also contracted to Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester in the Rural Skills department, covering all chainsaw activities (forestry and tree surgery), brush cutting, wood chippers, stump grinding and aerial platforms. ●

# SME DIGEST

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## EXPENDITURE

### SHOWING OFF: REFITTING YOUR PREMISES

**R**efitting a showroom requires time, thought, plenty of expense and an understanding of how HMRC treats expenditure as its rules are as clear as mud, writes Yen-Pei Chen, *Corporate Reporting and Tax Manager at ACCA*.

The first thing to get straight is whether your refitting costs relate to repair or improvement. If the costs relate to repair, they are deductible from your taxable profit. If the costs relate to improvement, say a new shopfront, the taxman will consider them to be capital expenditure: as such, no deductions from taxable profit will be allowed.

HMRC's manual, written to guide HMRC inspectors, gives the example of a company that needed to have its roof repaired and decided to open up the roof area for extra office space. The fact that the roof was unsound and needed to be repaired was beside the point; the additional work that got done on the roof makes what happened improvement, not repairs.

Whether your fittings count as fixed assets or stock

determines how you will be taxed when you sell the assets on. The sale of stock is taxed as a taxable income; the sale of fixed assets is taxed as a chargeable gain.

The latter is taxed at a lower rate.

If it's your business to sell, say kitchen units, HMRC will assume the kitchen unit displayed in your showroom is intended for sale, and therefore is trading stock. Another type of business that uses racks etc should be fine to declare their subsequent sale as a chargeable gain while treating genuine stock as such.

In terms of capital expenditure, the good news is if you can't claim deductions on your refitting costs, you may still get tax deductions in the form of capital allowances. The Annual Investment Allowance (AIA) allows you to claim tax deductions on 100% of qualifying expenditure, up to £200,000 (from 1st April 2014 to 31st December 2015, £500,000). This is available on plant and machinery, and integral features.

Over and above the AIA limit, lower capital allowances are available each year – these are currently 18% for plant and machinery and at 8% for integral features.

To qualify as plant and machinery, the expenditure has to be kept “for permanent employment in the business,” so this excludes stock in trade or expendable equipment with a life of less than two years; and function as “an apparatus employed in carrying out the activities of the business” and not as part of the premises in which the business is carried on.

Anything which can reasonably be expected to form part of your building – for example, walls, partitions, ceilings, floors, doors, windows and lighting – should be considered to be premises and not plant.

Lastly, if the allowances for plant don't apply you can look at special rate allowances that are available on assets which are integral to buildings, such as electrical systems and cold water systems.



Edited by Adam Bernstein



## ROTTING AWAY? CLAUSES WITH A PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE

*Paul Taylor, Partner at Fox Williams LLP writes, we have all received them: "Notice of appointment of administrator/liquidator". The letter invites us to a meeting of creditors and asks us to fill in a notice of claim. The net result will often be, at best, a paltry few pence in the pound paid out to the unsecured suppliers/creditors of the formally valued customer.*

With this in mind, how can a disgruntled supplier prevent the above scenario from playing out in the first place?

Tighter credit control is one option. Money up front is probably the oldest and simplest credit control tactic. If that is not possible, consider refusing to supply further goods until the last invoice is paid.

Next comes security. It may be difficult to get charges over a customer's assets, but do not be afraid of asking a director/shareholder for a personal guarantee if they want you to continue to supply to their company.

Insurance against non-payment can help. There are two main types of cover: whole turnover, where an insurer agrees to protect a company against all its bad debt for a given period, often 12 months. The main advantage is the comprehensive nature of the cover.

Alternatively, invoice insurance can be purchased selectively, on an invoice-by-invoice or customer-by-customer basis.

But probably one of the most commonly used protection tactics of suppliers is the retention of title (ROT) clause. A ROT clause allows the supplier to retain ownership over the supplied goods until such time as certain conditions are met (usually payment), thus providing the supplier with a form of security against the customer's default or insolvency. A retention of title clause is sometimes known as a Romalpa clause or as a reservation of title clause.

However, these clauses are commonly attacked by insolvency officials because the supplier fails to get the clause included in the agreed contractual arrangements, eg the supplier/buyer engaged in a battle of the forms (the last set of terms put into effect before the contract is executed wins); the supplier fails to link the unpaid invoice to the goods in question; the supplied goods have been mixed in a production process; or the clause purports to cover the follow-on proceeds of sale.

### But there is hope

Increasingly suppliers are getting legally savvy. They are breaking

their retention of title protection into various sub-clauses. That means if one of the sub-clauses is attacked, it does not necessarily contaminate the rest of their legal protection.

The devil is in the detail so regularly take advice to make sure your retention of title clause is up to date to stand the best chance of being enforceable.

**Read more at [www.foxwilliams.com/restructuring-and-insolvency](http://www.foxwilliams.com/restructuring-and-insolvency)**



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# THE NEW PENSION LANDSCAPE

Four years ago this October, the starting gun was fired on a workplace pension revolution, writes *Nathan Long*, Senior Pension Analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown.

Known as auto-enrolment, it means the pensions landscape is now very different.

Auto-enrolment provides a starting point for retirement preparation as employers enrol their eligible staff into a company pension and contribute to it.

Eligible staff are aged between 22 and State Pension Age earning the equivalent of £10,000 a year or more. While auto-enrolment started with the largest employers, the continued roll-out means small employers must also tackle workplace pensions – small firms are not exempted.

The first step is for employers to find out when they must comply as failure to do so can lead to fines of £50 to £10,000 per day. Employers can find out their start date by visiting the Pension Regulator's website armed with their payroll reference number.

It's important to remember that employer responsibilities don't stop once an auto-enrolment scheme is up and running as there are several on-going requirements including enrolling staff as they become eligible; paying sufficient contributions; certifying at least every 18 months that the employer has met their auto-enrolment responsibilities; and re-enrolling all staff every three years (with an opt-out for those that want it).

But as well as this, employers must be aware of any legislative changes. Recent tinkering so far has reduced the burden on employers, including pushing back the two increases in minimum contributions by six months. These will now occur in April 2018 (increasing to 5% with a minimum of 2% from the employer) and 2019 (increasing to 8%, with 3% required by the employer) – they could rise further.

The number of workplace pension providers is huge, but there are two main types of pension that they provide: Group Personal Pensions (where employees build up a company pot which is converted into income) and Master Trusts (where a provider offers a pension to employees of a number of firms, each of which has a ring-fenced pot).

As a result of auto-enrolment there has been an explosion in the number of small Master Trusts and question marks exist around the security of some of them.

An alternative is NEST (National Employers Savings Trust), a pension scheme introduced by the Government, with a duty to accept any employer.

Whichever route is followed, employers should ensure that they understand all the costs, as some providers will charge a scheme set-up fee.

Visit [www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk)

## SME NEWS

### Self-employment savings time bomb

The FSB has released a report about self-employment called *Going it alone, moving on up: supporting self-employment in the UK*. Over 4.6 million of the UK's 5.4m businesses are self-employed, and the report warns of a self-employment savings time bomb as less than a third (31%) of self-employed people are saving into a private pension, with 15% suggesting they do not have retirement savings of any kind.

FSB is urging ministers to work towards a savings solution for the self-employed, who are not currently being catered for by automatic enrolment.

See <http://bit.ly/1XWNPRO>

### Wi-fi speed plans

Ofcom has set out plans designed to help speed up wi-fi connections for millions across the UK.

The proposals (<http://bit.ly/1Tax8hr>) would open up more airwaves for wi-fi channels so that larger amounts of data can be carried at faster download speeds. This would improve the quality of service, especially for applications that need more internet capacity, such as high-definition video.

Many wi-fi routers in the UK currently use a part of the spectrum called the 2.4GHz band, which is becoming increasingly congested and can impair broadband performance. Many now have newer broadband routers, which use not only the 2.4GHz band, but

also the 5GHz band – which has much more spectrum and is less congested.

To make connections faster, Ofcom is proposing to open up an additional 'sub-band' within the 5GHz frequency range for wi-fi – while ensuring protection for other users, such as satellite services. The extra sub-band would increase the number of 80MHz channels available for wi-fi from four to six, to accommodate data-hungry applications.

Broadband users can check whether their wi-fi is giving them the best service today by using an Ofcom app available from

<http://bit.ly/1jwuBTd>

Please take proper advice before acting on anything written here. ●

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# NATIONAL LAND BASED COLLEGE ESTABLISHED

## *Appoints a CEO*

A new national college for those pursuing land based careers was launched at the House of Lords recently.

The National Land Based College [NLBC] will be a “virtual college” creating a hub for leading colleges, universities and industry experts to collaborate on dynamic new courses tailored for, and responsive to, this vital part of the UK economy.

“Our food and farming industry generates over £100 billion for the UK economy, employing one in eight people. We are very ambitious for the agricultural sector’s future and want to see it become a leading career destination for high-flying students, entrepreneurs and new entrants,” said George Eustice, Minister for Farming, Food and Marine Environment.

“I’m delighted to see the National Land Based College come to fruition.”

Courses will be delivered through the UK’s specialist land based colleges, a new online platform and by industry experts in their workplaces – blended learning that will balance theory with practical skills training.

### **Leigh Morris**

The newly formed NLBC has appointed its first Chief Executive Officer. Leigh Morris joins from the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland where he was Director of Community Conservation. He is a Trustee of the Marine Conservation Society

and a previous chair of the Grow Careers initiative for the horticultural industry.

He said: “Farmers and those in land based industry maintain 75% of land in the UK. These custodians of our countryside face diverse and increasing pressures, from the drive towards environmental sustainability to concerns about food security and public health. The goal of NLBC is to equip this, and associated workforces, with the skills they need to flourish.”

The NLBC hub will actively promote land based careers in collaboration with organisations such as Bright Crop and Grow Careers, and will work to attract the very best people into the sector.

Its online platform will also function as a portal, linking to diverse land based organisations and a CPD register for graduates.

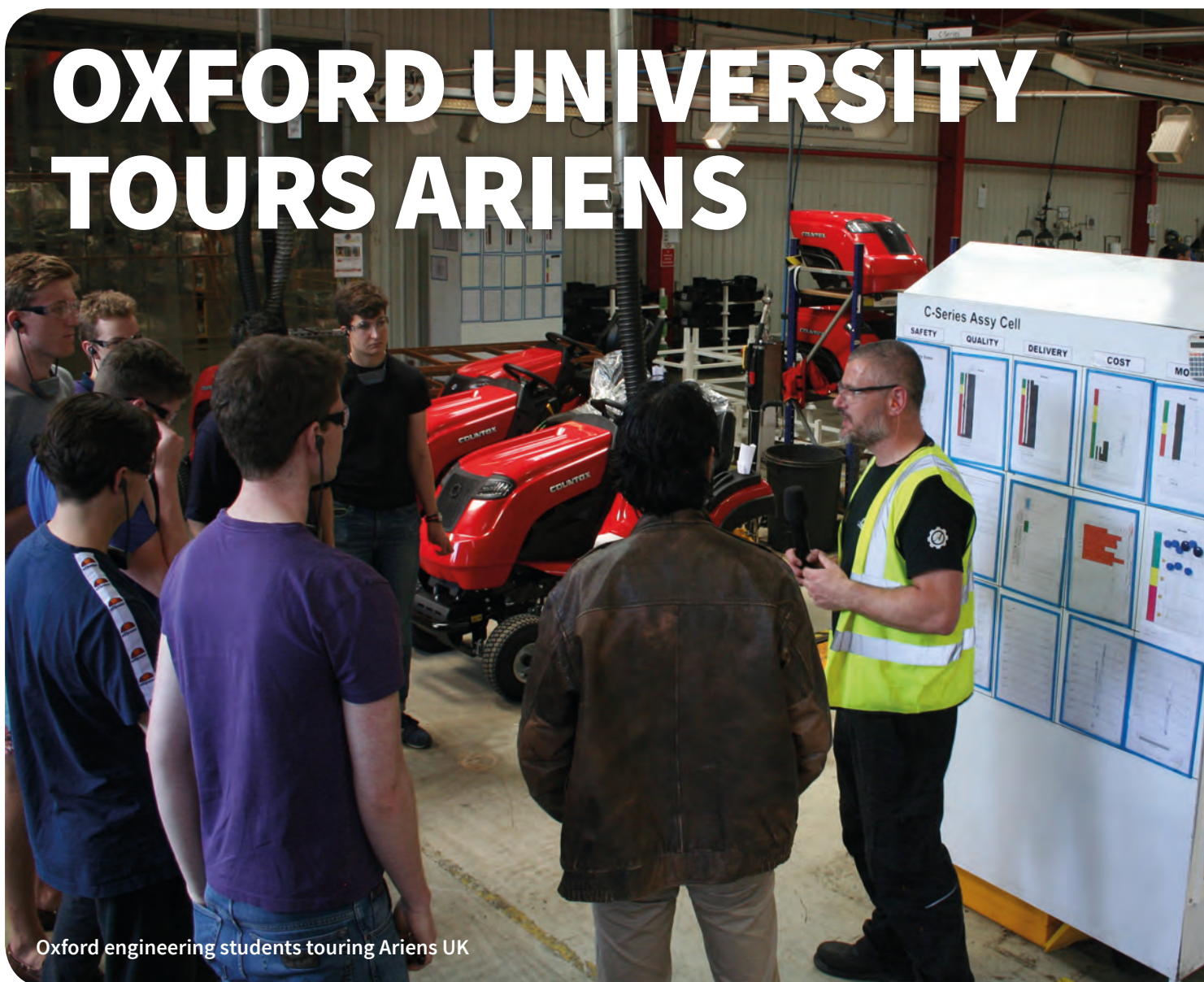
The NLBC has a board of 21 directors – 10 principals from UK land based colleges and universities, 10 from industry leaders, and Lord Curry. It is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Seed funding has been provided by Landex member colleges, Landex, and City and Guilds which contributed £250,000 from its National Proficiency Test Council fund. The NLBC will receive a percentage payment for all City and Guilds land based qualifications endorsed by the college.



**Leigh Morris new NLBC CEO**

# OXFORD UNIVERSITY TOURS ARIENS



Oxford engineering students touring Ariens UK

## *Supporting the next generation of engineers*

For the second consecutive year Ariens UK has hosted a factory tour for Oxford University Engineering students.

Keen to support the next generation of engineers, the Ariens visit offered them the chance to observe at first-hand the design and manufacturing processes used in a real working environment.

Very much a reflection of the various elements of their courses, the second year students were able to see the fabrication and assembly of Countax and Westwood tractors, following every aspect of the engineering and manufacturing process. The tour was led by Phil Edwards, Manufacturing Director, Ariens UK.

“Ariens has an engineering heritage, including the Countax history at Great Haseley, that dates back a long way,” he says, “and we’re always looking to help in the development of the next generation of engineers in the UK as an investment for the future.”

The Oxford students were able to follow the design and build processes from CAD conception to the arrival of raw materials and fabrication. The tour moved on from laser cutting sheet metal into the press shop, welding and the painting line where Ariens employs powder coating for the paint finish.

“Our students had a very interesting and useful tour of the Ariens factory,” says Paul Bailey of Oxford University’s Department for Engineering Science, who organised the tour.

“What they saw ties in well with some of the topics they have been learning, such as the use of the SolidWorks CAD package and the manufacturing process.

“It’s good to see a factory where the raw material comes in and a finished product emerges.”

It is expected that the Ariens factory tour will remain an annual event.

# RANSOMES PROMOTES APPRENTICESHIPS

## At Suffolk Show

Ransomes Jacobsen took its apprentice recruitment drive to the Suffolk Show recently.

Besides showcasing some of its latest machinery, alongside a number of historic models, the company also promoted its range of apprenticeship opportunities on offer.

A total of 18 apprentices are at present learning their trade at the manufacturing facility in Ipswich, with a further six to eight expected to be offered places on the scheme following a new round of recruitment currently in progress.

“The craft and technical apprenticeship scheme at Ransomes lasts three years, with a possible fourth year for apprentices who have excelled during their time with the company,” a spokesman for the company told the local paper, the *East Anglian Daily Times*.

“The first year of the scheme is comprised of three-monthly rotations, whereby apprentices will have the chance to work in the weld shop, press shop, machine shop

and blades and cylinders sections of the factory.

“In the second and third years, apprentices will specialise in the area that they have shown the most interest and aptitude in.”

### Apprenticeship programme

Apprenticeships at Ransomes are open to two age groups – those aged 18 and under and those aged between 19 and 24.

The scheme is run in conjunction with the Colchester Institute and apprentices are expected to spend one day at college and four days at the company’s factory per week.

Once applications are received, applicants will be asked to attend an interview which consists of a factory tour, followed by a 30-minute interview with a factory manager.

Applications are accepted each year from March onwards and the latest intake of apprentices starts on 1st September.

Ransomes reintroduced an apprenticeship programme three

years ago in response to a looming skills shortage, with many of its factory staff approaching retirement age.

With around 150 staff currently working in the factory (out of a total of around 350 people employed by Ransomes Jacobsen in Ipswich) the arrival of the apprentices has already had an impact on the overall age profile.

More importantly, the company says that the benefits of the programme are set to far outweigh the cost in the long run, with a number of senior factory roles currently being occupied by former apprentices and a good chance that some of the current crop will go on to emulate them.



# DEALER TEAMS UP WITH COLLEGE

## To put on Grassland demo day

South Staffordshire College and Rea Valley Tractors teamed up to deliver a grassland demo day in June.

The event was held at the College’s rural Rodbaston Estate with agricultural businesses and employees across the region attending.

The event provided visitors with the chance to enjoy demonstrations and test drive a range of machines.

Guests at the event also had the opportunity to find

out more about South Staffordshire College’s new AgriSTEM Academy. They were able to enjoy a tour of the site as building work progressed and were able to try out the new Tenstar Tractor simulator.

Opening this autumn, the AgriSTEM Academy is set to transform the scale and quality of industry relevant training for the agricultural engineering and technology (AgriTech), agriculture and manufacturing sectors. The Academy will provide businesses with a unique opportunity to upskill and train their staff and will see further expansion of the range of training opportunities.

New apprenticeships in land based technology, agricultural engineering and engineering technology will bolster the present range of programmes that include apprenticeships in agriculture and a full range of NPTC and short courses including tractor driving, forklift driving, and spraying. ●



An Artist Impression depicting how the new South Staffordshire College AgriSTEM Academy will look once completed



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## DOMESTIC

### MITOX'S MIGHTY MULTI 28MT now available

The new 28MT Multi-Tool from Mitox combines a grass trimmer, brushcutter, pole pruner and long-reach hedge cutter in a single, lightweight product.

The 28MT benefits from a low vibration throttle control for more comfortable use over longer periods of time. The multi-tool comes complete with an all-new 580mm hedge trimmer, a quick-fit 1m extension tube, a grass trimmer/brushcutter and an advanced articulated pruner head.

The unit uses innovative technology such as the new push-button articulation system on the hedge trimmer and the simple adjustment of the pole pruner's articulated head – which also comes with a 1m extension shaft to give an overall reach of up to 5m.

The 28MT is part of Mitox's new Select range of products offering a three-year warranty all backed up with Rochford Garden Machinery's customer service standards.



Mark Rochford, Marketing Director at Rochford Garden Machinery, says: "The new 28MT Multi-Tool has been a long time in the making; the entire product is new with no component the same as the previous version.

"It's a superb dealer product offering a great balance of price, features, and usability to the consumer. Dealers get the added benefit of strong, sustainable profitability and our marketing and after sales support.

"In our opinion, this is the best value for money multi-tool on the market today, and a product that was built around the brand's core values."

## COMMERCIAL

### TORQUE TO THE PROFESSIONALS New Echo brush cutter

ECHO has launched the SRM-2620TES, the latest model in its range of high torque brush cutters.

Utilising a unique gearbox design, ECHO's TES brush cutters deliver up to 50% more torque at the cutting head than previous models, giving the same cutting performance as a larger machine but with a smaller, lightweight engine.

The company says the 25.4cc professional grade two-stroke engine provides greater power with improved acceleration, and a

gear reduction ratio of 2.07 means the SRM-2620TES generates "outstanding" levels of torque.

The lightweight design also features low levels of vibration, providing reduced operator fatigue without compromising a cutting performance that is equal to a higher capacity machine.

Further improvements with the SRM-2620TES include a new fan cover design which reduces the snagging of cables on branches in overgrown areas.

There is a tool-less air filter cover for easy access, even when

wearing gloves, which makes it easier to clean the air filters on site.

Changes to the air filter include a pleated main air filter and foam pre-filter to keep dust and debris away from the engine.

The unit is available in a choice of U-handle or loop-handle versions.



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# MAKITA LAUNCHES NEW MOWERS & LINE-TRIMMERS

## *Cordless, mains and petrol models*

Recent launches from Makita include new cordless and mains-powered lawn mowers, and cordless and petrol-powered line trimmers.

The new **DLM431** 36v push type lawn mower is powered by two 18v lithium-ion batteries and will run the rotary twin-tooth blade up to 3,600rpm. The battery 'fuel gauge' showing the state of charge is conveniently placed at the handle bar controls. The Soft Start system controls the initial power supply giving a smooth run up of the 36v DC motor even if the power control is fully depressed. The 43cm cutting width is complimented by 13 cutting height settings selected by a single adjustment lever. The mower body is a rigid housing and the ball bearing axles give free running wheel action.

The new **ELM3311X** 240v push-type electric mower has a 1,100-watt induction motor that will run the rotary blade up to 2,900rpm and a 33cm cutting width with three height positions of 20mm, 40mm and 55mm. The 27-litre grass box has a useful grass level indicator. Overall this mower weighs 13kg due to the moulded polypropylene deck housing design which also allows the wheels to be fitted in line with the body so they don't protrude.

The new DUR184LZ, cordless 18v, two-speed line trimmer features the latest Brushless motor technology

for long run times and extended life, and in high gear will run up to 6,000rpm. The motor is housed in the drive head and with the battery and electronics housed at the top of the bent shaft, the balance of this trimmer is ideal. The conveniently placed trigger switch has a lock-off lever, two-speed selector and constant speed control. If the trimmer is not used for one minute the power switch automatically shuts off the system. The curved shaft keeps the cutting head parallel to the ground for accuracy and the ergonomic loop handle gives control. The small line protector provides a clear view of the cutting area and the shaft can be extended by 4" for extra comfort and control. This line trimmer is supplied as a body-only model.

Powered by the Makita MM4 four-stroke petrol engine the new **EM2511LH** line trimmer has a 42cm cutting diameter and weighs 5.3kg. Running on straight unleaded petrol the 24.5cc engine develops 1.0hp and the pressure-fed oil lubrication system enables this trimmer to be used at any angle. The MM4 engine has reduced exhaust emissions, low fuel consumption and low noise. It is fitted with a diaphragm-type carburettor, auto decompressor and fuel primer pump for easy starting. The loop handle gives full control at any angle of use and the protector covers both the metal blade and the nylon cutting head.



DUR184LZ cordless linetrimmer

ATV

# NEW BOSS TAKES OVER

## *Polaris adds Sportsman 6X6 Big Boss 570 EPS to range*



Polaris has introduced the all-new Sportsman 6X6 Big Boss 570 EPS to the range.

The vehicle has a longer chassis than previous models to accommodate more cargo and a second person. Polaris says it's unlike any other ATV in that it is specifically designed for customers who demand ultimate traction, a massive payload and carrying versatility while taking them virtually anywhere in the most remote locations.

The Engine Braking System (EBS) with Active Descent Control (ADC) and Electronic Power

Steering (EPS) all come as standard and power is delivered by the highly efficient, liquid-cooled, single-cylinder Polaris ProStar engine packing 44hp and plenty of torque.

It's also equipped with a 1.25" hitch receiver and has a 750kg towing capacity.

The unit is the first 6X6 ATV built for two people and has the capability of hauling exceptional amounts of gear with the industry's largest payload, a highly configurable Lock and Ride cargo system and integrated front storage of 25 litres, plus a rack

extender that can carry 41kg.

The exclusive, fully integrated passenger system includes a raised second seat for more visibility together with hand grips and foot rests. Behind the passenger sits a 340kg capacity gas-assisted dump box with steel Lock and Ride bed rails, dual rear tracks and six high-mounted tie-down points to ensure loads remain secure.

Polaris All-Wheel Independent Suspension with the furthest rear suspension travel of any 6X6 and 29.2 cm of ground clearance is also included.

COMMERCIAL

# VREDO ENHANCE OVERSEEDER RANGE

## *With Vredo Sport with DDS System*

Vredo has revamped the precision Overseeder range by giving the machine a complete make-over, improving the shape, aesthetics and functionality, with the launch of the Vredo Sport with DDS System.

The improvements begin with the lid and rear of the seed hopper, which now both have sleeker round shapes. The curved edges encourages the funnelling of seed towards the cam wheel, providing even greater accuracy through a more reliable seed flow.

Lid chains have been replaced by cleverly placed gas springs, allowing the lid to close simply and smoothly, making the machine safer when filling the hopper, whilst LED lights have been added and new look stripe.

Functionality has also been a priority in the upgrading process, with the option of a seed grill to protect the agitator shaft, whilst serving as a sieve to protect the seed from straw and any other small debris.

The gear box, which is also used to set the seed dosing rate, has a new spindle adjustment,

making the calibration of the seeder much easier, whilst improving on accuracy.

Adjustments to the Agri Series range have made it even more functional, with the calibration tray now divided into two separate parts to make handling easier and quicker.

The Vredo Sport with DDS System model is now available for order, with other models soon to follow.



# PUT TO THE SWARD

*New mounted version of grassland rejuvenation equipment launched*



OPICO has launched a mounted version of the HE-VA Sward Rejuvenator.

It enables worn grassland to be overseeded in one pass, so fields are rejuvenated without taking them out of production. It can also be used for reseeding cultivated land.

The Sward Rejuvenator consists of an aggressive Shattaboard with slicing plates, two rows of heavy-duty harrow tines, an Air 8 grass seeder and a Star roller.

The slicing plates and harrow tines break up and level the soil surface in front of the grass seed outlets. The soil is then firmed behind by the heavy 600mm diameter Star roller, which also breaks any clods produced by the front equipment to leave a fine tilth for grass seed to germinate in.

The aggressive slicing plates and harrow action make the Sward Rejuvenator ideal for use in badly poached fields that require restoration.

It can also be used – minus the seeder – for harrowing grassland to remove trash and stimulate grass growth, and for molehill levelling.

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# REEL LIGHT FAIRWAY MOWERS

## 3555-D and 3575-D new from Toro

Brand new from Toro to the UK are the Reelmaster 3555-D and 3575-D fairway mowers.

Joining the Reelmaster 3550-D, which weighs in at 900kg, these two additions also boast light-weight credentials weighing approximately 500lbs less than comparable four-wheel Toro mowers.

With the weight balanced from front-to-back and side-to-side, a low centre of gravity is created and when this is combined with smooth turf-friendly tyres the result is a reduction in turf compaction and damage.

Also contributing to this light step around the course is a manoeuvrable three-wheel-drive system which allows the machines to make tight turns, reduces

turnaround time and, just like the tyres, significantly decreases the potential for turf tear.

As well as being among the lightest on the market, both machines are also among the quietest in their class. Registering at just 84dB(A) for the operator and at 73dB(A) 25-feet away they are suitable for courses in residential areas.

Powered by a 24.8hp Kubota diesel engine, the company says the Reelmaster 3555-D and 3575-D provide plenty of power to climb hills, even while running groomers and rear roller brushes, yet they use less fuel per acre than traditional fairway mowers. A 100-inch width of cut and Toro's Dual Precision Adjustment (DPA) cutting units

featuring Toro's all-new Edge Series cylinders provide a consistent, long-lasting, crisp, clean cut whether opting for five-inch cutting units on the RM3555-D or seven-inch on the RM3575-D, with the choice of eight or 11 blades on both.



Reelmaster 3555-D



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- A brand that is only available through specialist dealers
- Innovative new products for 2016 include premium roller mowers and 80V cordless roller mowers

**Brand matters, Range matters, Atco matters.**

For more information contact Gary Whitney on 07771 818947 or email [gary.whitney@ggpuk.com](mailto:gary.whitney@ggpuk.com)

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

## SEPTEMBER 2016

- 1 Bucks County Show  
[www.buckscountyshow.co.uk](http://www.buckscountyshow.co.uk)
- 3 Alresford Show  
[www.alresfordshow.co.uk](http://www.alresfordshow.co.uk)
- 4-7 Autumn Fair, Birmingham NEC  
[www.autumnfair.com](http://www.autumnfair.com)
- 4-6 spoga-gafa 2016  
[www.spogagafa.com](http://www.spogagafa.com)
- 5-6 Dorset County Show  
[www.dorsetcountyshow.co.uk](http://www.dorsetcountyshow.co.uk)
- 8 Westmoreland County Show  
[www.westmorlandshow.co.uk](http://www.westmorlandshow.co.uk)
- 10 Usk Show  
[www.uskshow.co.uk](http://www.uskshow.co.uk)
- 10 Romsey Show  
[www.romseyshow.co.uk](http://www.romseyshow.co.uk)
- 12-14 Glee 2016  
[www.gleebirmingham.com](http://www.gleebirmingham.com)
- 14 Tillage-Live, Monks Kirby, Warwickshire  
<http://tillage-live.uk.com/>
- 15-17 APF 2016, Ragley Estate, Alcester  
[www.apfexhibition.co.uk/](http://www.apfexhibition.co.uk/)

## OCTOBER 2016

- 5 The Dairy Show, Bath & West Showground  
[www.bathandwest.com/the-dairy-show](http://www.bathandwest.com/the-dairy-show)
- 19-21 Green Industry & Equipment Expo, Louisville, USA  
<http://gie-expo.com>
- 22-23 Countryside Live, Harrogate  
[www.countryside-live.co.uk](http://www.countryside-live.co.uk)

## NOVEMBER 2016

- 2-3 IOG Saltex 2016, Birmingham NEC  
[www.iogsaltex.com](http://www.iogsaltex.com)
- 16 AgriScot  
[www.agriscot.co.uk](http://www.agriscot.co.uk)
- 17 Service Dealer Conference & Awards  
[www.servicedealer.co.uk](http://www.servicedealer.co.uk)
- 28-29 Royal Welsh Winter Fair  
[www.rwas.wales/winter-fair/](http://www.rwas.wales/winter-fair/)

## JANUARY 2017

- 3-5 Oxford Farming Conference  
[www.ofc.org.uk](http://www.ofc.org.uk)
- 17-19 BTME 2017, Harrogate International Centre  
[www.btme.org.uk](http://www.btme.org.uk)
- 18-19 LAMMA 2017, East of England Showground  
[www.lammashow.co.uk](http://www.lammashow.co.uk)

## SPRING FAIR 2017

- 4-9 Golf Industry Show, Orlando, Florida  
[www.golfindustryshow.com](http://www.golfindustryshow.com)
- 5-9 Spring Fair 2016, Birmingham NEC  
[www.springfair.com](http://www.springfair.com)
- 8-9 Executive Hire Show, Ricoh Arena, Coventry  
[www.executivehireshow.co.uk](http://www.executivehireshow.co.uk)
- 14-16 World Ag Expo, Tulare, California  
[www.worldagexpo.com](http://www.worldagexpo.com)
- 14-15 Totally Tools, Ricoh Arena, Coventry  
[www.totallydiy.co.uk/content](http://www.totallydiy.co.uk/content)

## MARCH 2017

- 24- Ideal Home Exhibition, Olympia, London  
[www.idealhomeshow.co.uk](http://www.idealhomeshow.co.uk)
- 09/4 West County Game Fair, Shepton Mallet  
[www.westcountrygamefair.co.uk](http://www.westcountrygamefair.co.uk)

## APRIL 2017

- 13 CountryTastic, Three Counties Showground, Malvern  
[www.threecounties.co.uk/countrytastic](http://www.threecounties.co.uk/countrytastic)
- 25-27 The Commercial Vehicle Show, Birmingham NEC  
[www.cvshow.com](http://www.cvshow.com)
- 20-23 Harrogate Spring Flower Show, Great Yorkshire Showground  
[www.flowershow.org.uk/spring-show-2017](http://www.flowershow.org.uk/spring-show-2017)

## MAY 2017

- 1 North Somerset Show  
[www.nsas.org.uk](http://www.nsas.org.uk)
- 13-14 Nottinghamshire County Show  
[www.nottinghamshirecountyshow.com/](http://www.nottinghamshirecountyshow.com/)
- 23-27 Chelsea Flower Show  
[www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events](http://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events)
- 18-20 Devon County Show  
<http://devoncountyshow.co.uk>
- 29 Surrey County Show  
[www.surreycountyshow.co.uk/surrey-county-show/](http://www.surreycountyshow.co.uk/surrey-county-show/)



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# STIHL®



# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

## *Manufacturer's vs dealer's own brand*

Overheard conversation at my local branch of Homebase recently: "I think we'll go for the Qualcast, they are a good old British-made mower". Resisting the urge to pipe up that 'are' be changed to 'were', it brought home to me how brand names have an emotional and hypnotic impact on what we buy. They are auto-suggestive. They position the brand in the deep recesses of the mind, often with little relevance to the actual buying decision. The fact that HRG, owner of Homebase, made a shrewd decision to snap up the Qualcast brand name to attach to machines made far, far away means nothing to the consumer. And you can watch out for some Aussie-style aggressive marketing in the future now that Bunnings has bought Homebase.

It's the same with the supermarkets: the NFU has complained recently to Trading Standards about the use of generic farm brands on foods that mislead consumers as to the provenance of the products. Tesco's use of 'fake' brands such as Woodside Farms, Boswell Farms and Nightingale Farms are often applied to imported food, not some homely farmstead in Somerset or Cumbria as suggested.

We have a different problem – and always have – one of identity. For instance, there is an ongoing debate, particularly among trade bodies, about the use of the phrase 'agricultural engineers'. Many think it sounds a bit Dickensian – plough shares, foundries and threshers, rather than GPS systems, satellite technology and drones. The reaction has been to a reclassification as Land Based Engineering. But I bet if you stopped the first 10 people in the street for their definition of Land Based Engineering, you'd get some interesting answers and a lot of blank stares.

It's a bit the same with 'garden machinery dealers' – it's not a snappy description, and there are still too many people who don't realise that it's a genre of the retail market that actually exists! In Germany, GM dealers are covered by a single word 'motorist'. A singular title that sums up the sector for German consumers, but quite unworkable in the UK.

I have long held the belief that garden machinery dealers ought to be termed Lawncare Centres which immediately positions them in the consumer's mind. Perhaps even more relevant today given the rise of the nationwide franchised lawn treatment services.

But if we accept that the upkeep and care of the 'outside room' extends well beyond simply cutting

the lawn or trimming the hedge, then dealers could and should extend their offering into all areas of feeding, nurturing and enhancing that garden space that can add value to virtually every property.

On a slightly different tack, we might also consider whether it's the manufacturer's brand that hooks in the buyer – or the dealer's own brand. His name above the door.

We haven't gone as far as single franchise car dealerships where the original garage ownership has mostly been submerged beneath the brand. However, more and more manufacturers are supporting elaborate branding programmes, externally and in-store, for their dealers. I'm referring principally here to the multi-franchised garden machinery dealer. I know of many dealers whose footfall and added revenue has been boosted greatly by professional merchandising teams re-working their showrooms. On the other hand, the 'name over the door' is still a powerful brand, a symbol of trust. Would it be best for dealers to 'pick and mix' suppliers' materials and support services that suit them, their range of products, customer base, locality, premises and their 'brand'?

In the end it almost always comes down to individual circumstances. There's rarely a one size fits all solution. But if I might end with a commercial: this emotive topic on effective merchandising for independent dealers will be enthusiastically debated at the Service Dealer Conference on 17th November with the pros and cons given a proper airing! ●



# JIM GREEN



## FEET OF ENDURANCE

## BARTRAM BROTHERS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE *Coast to coast run*

Mark and Matt Bartram from dealership Bartram Mowers, which has branches in Norwich and Ipswich, successfully completed a coast to coast run across two days in June, running from Workington to Tynemouth, a distance of approximately 130 miles.

Running in aid of local charities The Big C Appeal and the Norfolk Heart Truist, the run took 35 hours and they ran the distance in one go, only stopping to take on fluids and food from their support vehicle and occasionally patch up the ever increasing number of blisters on their feet.

Mark says, "Coming from Norfolk we aren't used to the hills you have to deal with in this part of the country and it does tend to sap your energy when you're going from one valley to the next in the middle of the night in dense fog. However, the upside was that during the daylight hours of Friday we ran through some of the most beautiful scenery I've ever seen in the UK."

While the run was a personal challenge for the two runners it was performed in aid of charity and anyone wishing to donate can visit Mark's fundraising page at <http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/MarkBartramcoasttocoast>



Mark and Matt Bartram

## ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

## HOPPING MAD

### *Mower-injured treefrog flown 1,000km for treatment!*

A heart-warming, if slightly bonkers, story recently involved a woman who accidentally ran over a treefrog with her lawnmower and was left so grief-



stricken that she patched up its wounds with gauze and flew it 1,000 kilometres to hospital.

Min Tims mowed down the frog as she was cutting her grass in Mount Isa, Queensland, reported *The Daily Mail*. The amphibian suffered a cut to its head during the accident. Ms Morgan then researched where to get help and discovered Frog Safe – a hospital designated for frogs – in Cairns.

The following morning the frog was transported to the airport and flown to the hospital. Don't worry though, despite the "serious wounds" the frog suffered to its back and above its eye, it underwent treatment at the hospital and will soon be released back into the wild. ●

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