



# Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

## NATIONAL NEWSLETTER



### Covid Vaccine

Dear members,

Welcome to your February 2021 National Newsletter.

Now that the roll out of the Governments Vaccination Program is well under way it is looking like we are heading in the right direction as the word from the Government is that we are on track to possibly start putting a plan into place for the easing of restrictions. I know not when this will happen but we must tread with extreme caution and take things slowly as the last thing anyone would want is another spike in infection rates leading to another lockdown.

I received the Pfizer vaccination two weeks ago with no side effects except a slightly sore arm at the vaccination sight which only lasted two days. Now I have to wait to be called for the second inoculation which should be within 12 weeks of my first.

Editor.



### Obituary



It is with deep sadness that I have to announce that our Life President, Frank Fiveash passed away in hospital on 20th January 2021.

The funeral will be on Tuesday 16th February 2021 and will be for family only, due to the limited numbers of 30 only being allowed.

1 member of CMPE has been requested, and Mrs Pat Moore of Sussex Branch will attend on behalf of the association due to the travel restrictions.



## Industry News

### Speedy brings tool hire into more B&Q stores



Home improvement retailer B&Q and tool hire chain Speedy are extending their trial of Speedy hire outlets within B&Q stores.

The trial started in July 2020 with Speedy concessions now at nine B&Q stores: Trafford Park, Stockport, West Thurrock, Beckton, Roneo Corner, Yeading, New Malden, Gillingham and Darnley. A further five outlets are scheduled to open in January.

The concessions, typically about 90 sqm in size, give B&Q retail and trade customers the

option to hire equipment from Speedy as part of their B&Q shopping trip. The offer in the B&Q concessions includes Speedy's four-hour national delivery promise on certain products. Customers can now order and collect Speedy products seven days a week, complementing Speedy's own network of 200 depots.

The Speedy concessions are located next to the TradePoint areas within the nine B&Q stores. Both so retail and trade customers can now hire a range of mobile access platforms, tower scaffolds, mini diggers and dumpers, plate compactors, floor sanders, mixers and heaters.

Speedy chief executive Russell Down said: "We are delighted to be trialling Speedy concessions in B&Q stores. These will make the option of hiring tools and equipment much more accessible to DIY customers and enable trade customers to hire equipment seven days a week. Customers can hire products to take away, or with our unique four-hour delivery promise, they can order equipment in the knowledge that it will arrive shortly after they return home."

"We have a leading reputation in the construction market, and by joining forces with B&Q, the UK's leading home improvement and garden living retailer, can offer customers a compelling and market leading proposition."

B&Q business development director Chris Bargate said: "We're committed to testing new initiatives and are delighted to be trialling this tool and equipment hire service in our stores with Speedy."

"Our customers are continuing to adapt and change to new ways of living and shopping, and these new concessions with Speedy are just one way in which we're making it easier for people to improve their homes."

"We're excited by the potential re-use of our space to offer new services in store and are keen to understand how customers respond."

B&Q store prices can be viewed at [speedyservices.com/speedy-bandq](https://speedyservices.com/speedy-bandq). B&Q TradePoint account holders can get a discount on most products.



## JCB adds pothole tools to Hydradig



JCB has launched a new version of its pothole repair machine based this time on its Hydradig wheeled excavator rather than the 3CX backhoe loader.

The JCB Pothole Pro makes the same claims as were made six years ago for its Pothole Master – both claim to provide a cost-effective solution to providing a permanent fix for potholes.

“The JCB Pothole Pro could revolutionise the way potholes are eradicated,” said chief innovation officer Tim Burnhope. “No more ‘mend and make do’,” he said.

The new machine is not yet in production but the manufacturer is talking to dealers to gauge and generate demand.

Similar to the JCB Pothole Master, the Pothole Pro has tools for cutting and cleaning around potholes but it also has a hydraulic cropping tool that the older machine lacks.

While the Pothole Master, being based on a backhoe loader, had the planer at the rear and the bucket and brush at the front, the Hydradig base unit makes the Pothole Pro a more versatile sort of machine. The planer tool is attached to the wheeled undercarriage, while the bucket and brush are fixed to the 360 degree rotating upper works.

JCB said that tests with contractors and local authorities have shown that the PotholePro can complete a pothole repair in less than eight minutes. Tarmac, which has been trialling the new machine in Stoke-on-Trent, said that it had managed to repair 63 square metres a day, compared to its usual productivity of 20-25 square metres a day.

JCB said that the machine had completed 51 road repair jobs in 20 days, which would have taken a team of up to six operatives 63 days to complete normally.

The JCB PotholePro is equipped with a modified Simex planer, with integrated dust suppression, mounted on the machine's rear skid steer hitch. The planer is 600mm wide, with up to 1.3m of side-shift adjustment. This allows the operator to plane a full carriageway from the kerb, without repositioning the machine. Hydraulic tilt and depth control provide a consistent depth for larger patches.



The machine's TAB two-piece boom is fitted with the JCB 'Multi-tool', mounted on an X12 Steelwrist tilt-rotator. The 'Multi-tool' comprises of two attachments, a hydraulic cropper and a sweeper/bucket.





The 600mm cropping tool eliminates the need for floor saws or hydraulic breakers, providing a squared off, clean cut to the repair area. The operator then rotates the boom head to bring a 1.2-metre wide sweeper/bucket into use, to clean up the pothole area, eliminating the requirement for a separate sweeper truck. Material lifted by the sweeper/bucket can be loaded directly into a support truck for removal from site.

Above: *The Pothole Pro is based on the JCB Hydradig*

JCB said that the 3CX Pothole Master (*below*) and the smaller Pothole Highways machines will continue to be offered to customers as "they remain very popular with lots customers, particularly in large resurfacing operation, who utilise the front shovel".



Above: *The Pothole Master, introduced in 2014, was based on the less versatile 3CX backhoe loader*



## First order secured for HAV-measuring gloves



Coventry City Council has ordered a new type of vibration-measuring glove for its highway crews.

The HAV-Sentry glove has been developed by Feraru Dynamics to protect wearers from debilitating hand arm vibration syndrome. It monitors vibration in the hand induced by machinery and warns the wearer when a break is required.

A battery-powered monitor on the glove provides a visual indicator of vibration exposure status. A standalone data

acquisition and charging station enables information to be gathered, recorded and analysed.

Feraru Dynamics, itself based in Coventry, launched the glove in 2020 after two years of developing prototypes and completing validation tests. It benefited from a grant of £11,992 from the Coventry & Warwickshire Innovation Programme.

Andrei Feraru, co-founder and managing director, said industry feedback from the early stages of its conception had been positive.

“I initially had the idea for the HAV-Sentry while I was doing a work placement at Rolls-Royce in Derby during my mechanical engineering degree from Coventry University,” he said. “It changed my career path and I decided to invent a product that would ease hazardous exposures in the workplace.

“It is a legal requirement to protect people against vibration and this is a real issue since workers can develop an irreversible condition with one or two years’ continuous exposure. The symptoms are severe and can cause real pain.

“The feedback from industry has been really, really important along with the Growth Hub who made me aware of the ERDF grant. Their connections to businesses in manufacturing and engineering have also been vital.”

The material of the glove is currently made in Germany but Andrei Feraru hopes to bring the glove material sourcing and design manufacturing to the UK.

As previously reported, the HAV-Sentry glove was trialled last year by contractor Callan Connect, digging trenches for CityFibre’s broadband roll-out in Coventry. However, it is Coventry City Council that has become the first customer, with an order for 10 gloves.





These gloves will be shared among 40 council operatives who have been registered on the company's HAV-Sentry dashboard.

Cllr Jim O'Boyle, cabinet member for jobs and regeneration, said: "I'm really impressed by this new product which has been developed right here in Coventry. I'm also pleased that we have placed the first order with Andrei and his team in order to help improve safety for our own construction workers.

"Often all small innovative local companies like Feraru Dynamics need is a small boost of cash and the right connections to get new innovations to market. And that's exactly what our Innovation Programme is all about."



## Small businesses promised 30-day terms as payment code tightened



The government is tightening the criteria for its Prompt Payment Code to give more protection to small companies.

Under new reforms, companies that have signed up to the Prompt Payment Code (PPC) will have to pay suppliers that have fewer than 50 employees within 30 days – half the time outlined in the current code.

Despite almost 3,000 companies signing the PPC, poor payment practices are still rife, with many payments delayed well beyond the

current 60-day target required for 95% of invoices, the government says.

According to the small business commissioner, who oversees the PPC, £23.4bn worth of late invoices are currently owed to firms across Britain.

To help tackle the problem, businesses owners, finance directors or chief executives will be required to take personal responsibility by signing the code, acknowledge that suppliers can charge interest on late invoices under the code and that breaches will be investigated.

The move comes as the government seeks to strengthen the powers of the small business commissioner (SBC) to ensure larger companies pay their smaller partners on time. New powers proposed in a recently closed consultation include legally binding payment orders, launching investigations and levying fines.

Business minister Paul Scully said: "Our incredible small businesses will be vital to our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, supporting millions of livelihoods across the UK.

"Today, we are relieving some of the pressure on small business owners by introducing significant reforms to the UK payments regime – pushing big businesses to pay their suppliers on time.

“By signing up to the Prompt Payment Code and sticking to its rules, large firms can help Britain to build back better, protecting the jobs, innovation and growth which small businesses drive right across the UK.”

The changes coming into effect immediately include:

- Requiring a company’s CEO or finance director, or the business owner where it is a small business, to sign the code personally to ensure responsibility for payment practices is taken at the highest level of an organisation
- Acknowledgement as a condition of signing the code that suppliers can charge interest on late invoices
- Enabling administrators of the code to investigate breaches based on third-party information.

In addition, the new requirement for signatories to pay 95% of invoices from small businesses (those with less than 50 employees) within 30 days will be effective from 1st July 2021. The target for larger businesses will remain 95% of invoices within 60 days.

Interim small business commissioner Philip King said: “Late payment causes real hardship to small businesses, and the issue is more prevalent than ever due to the continued impact of the pandemic. Code signatories of all sizes demonstrate their commitment to ending the culture of late payment and helping to increase business confidence. I encourage businesses of all sizes to implement ethical business practices and sign up to become a code signatory and join us on our journey to aid business recovery post Covid-19.”

Confederation of British Industry policy director Matthew Fell said: “Covid-19 has once again highlighted the importance of maintaining healthy supply chains. Small companies are the backbone of the economy, but remain the most at risk from a late or unpaid invoice – particularly after months of pressure on cashflow. Businesses have been making good progress to improve payment practices, but more can be done.

“Introducing new rules to drive faster payments to smaller businesses will strengthen supply chains, benefiting the firms that need it most, and shortening the road to recovery.”

Business secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said: “If you deliver quality goods or services on time, you should expect to be paid on time. Unfortunately, this basic principle of good business is not always respected by bigger firms, jeopardising the survival of thousands of smaller suppliers and the millions of jobs they support.

“This is bad for business, bad for jobs and bad for the wellbeing of hardworking business owners and their families at a time when they need all the help they can get.”



## Volvo plugs a gap with its EC350E



Volvo is calling its new 35-tonne excavator “the go-to guy for general construction duties”.

The 35-tonne EC350E from Volvo Construction Equipment has been designed to bridge whatever gap there is between its 30-tonne class EC300E and 40-tonne EC380E excavator.

(You knew there was a gap there, right?)

It has all the features and technology that you might expect from a new Volvo. But a more prosaic clincher is that it can be transported with dismantling, having a total height of under four metres when loaded on a trailer.

The promotional material stresses the versatility of this all-rounder: operators can select function depending on task and preferences. This includes boom/swing and boom/travel priority, enabling one function to take the lead over another. The boom-down speed can also be adjusted, giving added control for tasks that require extra precision.

Boom-and-arm bounce reduction technology lessen machine shocks, making the operator's job more pleasant. The Comfort Drive Control option helps reduce fatigue by enabling operators to steer the machine using the joystick rollers instead of the pedals. There are also customisable settings that include a ‘long push’ functionality on the joystick, allowing operators to set an additional shortcut function.

Other operator aid include the optional Dig Assist apps – powered by the 10-inch Volvo Co-Pilot tablet. These include 2D, In-Field Design, 3D software packages, and On-Board Weighing.

Volvo Active Control automates boom and bucket movements, making digging twice as fast. With Volvo Active Control, operators can also set swing fence, height limit, and depth limit. This helps to avoid contact with side obstacles, overhead obstacles such as power lines, and underground hazards such as pipes and cables.





## Genesis Attachments demonstrate shear power



Molson Group supply GXT555R mobile shear to plant decommissioning project in Cheshire.

US-based Genesis Attachments are highly regarded in the UK demolition sector, but the business has never had dealer backing to push its products to the heights it has attained in mainland Europe.

However, this changed last year when the company, part of the Japan-based NPK Group, appointed Molson Group as sole UK dealers for its full range of attachments (alongside NPK products) supplied to the demolition, scrap and recycling sectors.

With a positive reputation the world over, it was not long before Molson were able to get one of the many attachments out to a long-term Genesis user in the UK. For example, a GXT555R rotating shear was supplied and tasked with aiding in the decommissioning and dismantling of a huge Tata chemicals plant in Northwich, Cheshire.

The facility was one of the largest of its kind in the world, that produced soda ash but spiralling costs from the ageing plant forced its new owners Tata to restructure their manufacturing division in Cheshire and, as a result, shut the huge plant at the end of 2014.

The massive tract of land on which the plant sat on was eventually sold off for much needed housing with the final part of the building – which contained masses of steel in varying sizes and grades – being demolished from the end of 2020.

Mounted on to a Hitachi ZX1000 bespoke demolition excavator, the only one of its kind in the UK, the Genesis GXT555R attachment has proved to be a winner for the demolition firm contracted to dismantle the chemical plant.

Despite its 5.6 tonne weight, the body of the shear is considerably smaller than many of its rivals yet still matches the current market leaders in all aspects of its specification. The GXT mobile shear has been specifically designed to process steel and other materials more efficiently in scrap and demolition applications with the equivalent power to other brands all built on a smaller body.

Downtime is said to be minimal, thanks to a bolt-on piercing tip at the front of upper jaw, minimising the potential risk of damage. Short primary cutting blades position the apex closer to the rear of the jaws and draw material further into the jaws, where the higher cutting forces makes the shear more efficient.

The smaller body design and lower build height of the GXT attachment also increases visibility to the jaws for the operator seated over 30m away. With efficient opening and closing times, the GXT555R boasts a jaw opening of 762mm and requires a minimum oil flow of just 340 litres/min.



## Caterpillar launch new range of HCS couplers



Latest hydraulic units improve safety, boost productivity and extend maintenance intervals.

CATERPILLAR say they are raising the bar in operator and on-site safety by introducing their Hydraulic Connecting S Type (HCS) couplers, which offer the ability to switch hydromechanical attachments in seconds without leaving the cab.

The HCS coupler line-up – which comprises five models – has been designed for use on a wide range of Cat machines, from 311-340 tracked excavators to M314-M222 wheeled machines. According to Caterpillar, the HSC couplers deliver 37% better flow capability than competitor units on the market.

The hydraulic couplers have been specially engineered for high-flow performance suited to hydromechanical tools in demolition and in city earthmoving applications. The lower hydraulic restriction results in better machine fuel efficiency. With the minimal amount of time to transition between attachments, operators will be more inclined to switch attachments when needed and use more task-appropriate attachments when required.

The HSC system's quick disconnect design prevents contamination, whilst the frame protects important hoses and components from being damaged inside the coupler.

The Cat HCS couplers also feature industry-leading sensor technology and multiple measures to keep attachments connected in the event of a hydraulic pressure loss. The hydraulic coupler also gives visual and audible cues, as well as confirmation on the machine's in-cab screen of a successful connection to the attachment.





## Contracts Awarded

### **John Sisk wins £27m Calder junction works**



John Sisk & Son has been appointed main contractor for a £27m road construction project in West Yorkshire.

The works to improve the Calder and Hebble junction form Phase 1b of a wider project to improve the A629 between Halifax and Huddersfield.

The project is fully funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority through the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund.

As part of the design and build scheme, Sisk has appointed consulting engineer WSP to work on the design elements

The improvement plans focus on the key areas of Huddersfield Road, Stainland Road and Wakefield Road. A new link road will be created via a bridge spanning the Calder and Hebble Navigation to a roundabout on Stainland Road. A new signal-controlled junction at the interchange of A629/Jubilee Road and an improved approach lane will also be introduced, as well as landscaping along Stainland Road and additional access points to the canal tow path.

When complete, the scheme will deliver improved access to Copley, Sowerby Bridge and Halifax and aims to improve journey times between Huddersfield and Halifax by up to 30%.





Calderdale Councillor Jane Scullion, in charge of regeneration and strategy, said: “Phase 1b of the A629 project represents the largest civil engineering project Calderdale will have undertaken for several decades. It will see the landscape around the Calder and Hebble junction completely transformed.

“The new link road bridge and other improvements will make a real difference to traffic flow in the area, subsequently improving air quality and reducing rat running on smaller village roads in the area. The landscape around the area will also be improved with the demolition of the derelict former Punchbowl Pub, making a real difference to the gateway to Halifax.

“I’m pleased that a contractor has now been appointed for the project, allowing initial work to begin this year.”

It is anticipated that construction will start in the summer, with completion of the Phase 1b scheme expected before the end of 2022.



## Kier gets going on £150m bypass

After months of preparation work, the first major phase of construction work for the new £150m A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool bypass in Lancashire starts on Monday (1st February 2021), Highways England has announced.



*Above: The A585 roundabout at Skippool is being replaced by a crossroads with traffic lights.*

Main contractor Kier is creating a bypass around the village of Little Singleton village a new dual carriageway linked to new junction arrangements along the existing A585 at Windy Harbour and Skippool.

Client Highways England hopes that the project will ease congestion and improve safety around Poulton-le-Fylde.

Work starts on the removal of the existing roundabout at Skippool – also known as the River Wyre roundabout – where the A585 trunk road meets the A588 local road. The roundabout at Skippool is being replaced by a crossroads with traffic lights.

At the same time construction of the new bypass south of Little Singleton will also start with construction work on a new junction with the A586 serving Poulton-le-Fylde.

The work between Skippool and Skippool bridge involves widening the road, including creating a new bridge, to accommodate the new dual carriageway section.

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## Blubberhouses gets £60m for new road



North Yorkshire County Council has been promised central government funding for a £60m realignment of the A59 at Kex Gill and Blubberhouses.

The proposed new road will divert traffic away from the landslide-prone Kex Gill, mid-way between Skipton and Harrogate.

Where it runs through Blubberhouses Moor, the A59 is subject to regular landslips, closing the road, most recently in 2018.

In 2019 North Yorkshire County Council submitted proposals to the Department for Transport for a permanent solution, which involved realigning the route to the other side of the valley.

DfT has agreed to stump up £56m for the scheme; the council will provide the other £4m that is estimated to be needed.

The A59 is one of three schemes approved for DfT funding today. The others are: a £24m junction improvement in Sandwell to reduce congestion at Birchley Island and the intersection of the M5, A4123 and A4034; and £13m worth of upgrades to the Redbridge Causeway bridges over the River Test near Southampton.

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## Bowmer & Kirkland picked for £54m glass research centre



Bowmer & Kirkland has been selected as lead contractor for the construction of a planned centre of excellence for the glass manufacturing industry.

Commercial property developer Network Space has submitted a planning application to build a 160,000 sq ft laboratory for Glass Futures Ltd on the former United Glassworks site in St Helens.

The £54m Glass Futures development will be home to research and development in the glass and glazing sector, with an experimental glass melting facility to trial innovations.

Bowmer & Kirkland has been appointed as stage 1 contractor following a procurement process run via the North West Construction Hub.

The development is being funded through a mix of public and private investment. UK Research & Innovation has approved a £15m grant for the installation of the experimental furnace and infrastructure capable of producing 30 tonnes of glass per day. Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has promised £9m. Glass sector companies will also contribute a further £20m in resource, time and equipment to support the project. Landowner and developer Network Space is seeking private sector investment to support the construction costs.



Network Space development director Catherine Chilvers said: “As landowner and developer, we have worked in partnership with St Helen’s Council and Glass Futures over the past two years to rapidly progress the design and development of this transformational project for the borough and in doing so, have established a hugely effective public/private sector delivery model.

“The submitted planning proposals will regenerate the former United Glassworks site and enable government and industry led research activity and training opportunities. The facility will create new jobs and support the transition of R&D to commercial applications, acting as a catalyst for further economic growth within St Helens.”

Glass Futures, a not-for-profit organisation, will operate the facility. Its chief executive, Richard Katz, said: “The planning submission is a great step forward in creating a facility that will deliver innovative technologies to make glass net zero. The centre of excellence will help us work collaboratively with our members, the supply chain and academia to achieve that aim.”



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