



# Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

## NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

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**Welcome to another edition of your National Newsletter.**

### **CMPE NEWS**

#### **CMPE Preston & Fylde Branch**



Preston & Fylde branch recently paid a visit to Derian House Children's Hospice on 10th September 2025.

We were welcomed with a tour of their facilities so that we could see first-hand how years of generous support has had on the children and their families.

Derian House has been helping children and young people with life-limiting conditions make the most of every moment for more than 30 years. The hospice offers respite and end-of-life care to more than 400 children and their families from across the whole of Lancashire, South Cumbria and North Manchester.

During the visit Preston & Fylde branch presented Derian House with a cheque for £700.00.

Malcolm Saddington, Paulene Saddington, Ellie Smith,  
David Nicholson, Gerry Bingham.

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## CMPE National AGM & Dinner Dance 2026



*Save the Date.*

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**CMPE 62nd NAGM  
Weekend.**

**19th - 21st  
June 2026**

Stanwick Hotel, Northamptonshire  
NN9 6QY

More details and prices to follow.



## Thomas Renwick Eulogy 1936-2025.

UK crane and access pioneer and veteran Tom Renwick passed away on May 25th following a long period of ill health. He was 87, a few days short of his 88th birthday. He leaves behind a son Alan and a daughter Beth, having lost his wife Betty a few years ago.



In 1967 he got his first taste of the rental market with J. Bowen & Sons of Glasgow where he was appointed plant hire representative, taking up a similar role three years later with Rowan & Boden Plant Hire in Renfrew, before joining Motherwell Bridge Plant Hire as plant hire manager in 1971.

Over the next few years, he moved up through the ranks to director and then managing director. It was during this period that he played a key role in kicking off the self-propelled aerial lift market in the UK.

In February 1975, and by now a director of Motherwell Bridge Plant, he travelled to the USA to attend what was still widely known as the 'Chicago Road Show', but officially the International Construction Equipment Exposition, becoming Conexpo when it moved to Houston in 1981 and Las Vegas in 1987. The main purpose of the trip was to look at cranes following an invitation to join a trip organised by one of the US crane manufacturers. However, while at the show he wandered through the lesser visited back halls where he spotted a small stand, for a company that he had never heard of, called JLG.

What attracted his attention was a 40ft boom lift - the JLG 40F. Manning the young company's stand was chief executive John Grove. Renwick agreed to buy five units of a diesel powered model which became the 40FDR and was offered the distribution rights. When he got home he had a call from Paul Adorian of EPL who had agreed the same deal with one of Grove's colleagues. The two men recall what happened differently.

Speaking of the JLG deal a year or two ago, Renwick said "When the first machines arrived with us, John Grove arranged for an HSE inspection so that the new machines had some form of official approval. I recall collecting the two inspectors from Inverness airport and taking them to our yard in Evanton. The first thing they did not like about the booms was the fact that the gate was not self-closing, so we agreed to add a spring to it. Then when we did the overload test, the machine tipped - not an overturn, it just leaned forward as the back wheel lifted off the ground. When they asked what we were going to do about it we agreed to contact JLG and find a solution - probably more counterweight? Which we did."

Tom Renwick spent most of his life in the construction equipment industry having started out in 1958 as a mechanical engineering draughtsman apprentice with Colvilles of Motherwell, with a focus on the erection and commissioning of a steelworks at Ravenscraig.

His entry into the construction equipment industry kicked off in 1964, when he joined Reekie Plant in Glasgow as an area sales representative selling Komatsu machines. He said that he sold the first JLG booms to the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, an aluminium plant in North Wales, while Hewden Stuart took two and the fifth went into the Motherwell Bridge rental fleet. That rental unit went to work at an offshore rig construction company, blasting topsides. When recalling the deal he said: "It replaced an 18 tonne Grove Rough Terrain crane with a basket, which tied up the high cost crane and its operator, while not providing the best solution for the blast crew. So, the switch to the JLG boom made sound economic sense as well as being safer. The company was delighted with the demonstration we organised, so when they asked for a rate, I quoted them £300/week which they jumped at. The list price of the machine at that time was £12,000, but we had a 25 percent dealer discount and then on top of that you could claim a 20 percent investment grant, reducing the effective cost to £7,000 - Happy Days!"

Motherwell Bridge was also a dealer for Acklift truck mounted lifts, and he claims to have sold the very first truck mounted lift 72 over 30 metres to arrive in Scotland - a 31.3 metre model. Adding: "There is much more to tell, but I was very fortunate to have come into the industry at a time when we seemed to be constantly trailblazing."

He left Motherwell Bridge in 1985 and for a year worked at Ingersoll Rand Sales as distribution manager for Scotland, before deciding to buy his local pub, the Craignethan in Lesmahagow, which he ran with his wife Betty, and their teenage children Alan and Beth for the next five years. The pull of the equipment industry remained with him, and in 1991 he joined the Genie and Niftylift dealer William Laird as managing director, a role he held for the next 11 years, retiring in 2002.

However, as a member of the Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers (CMPE) association for most of his career, he agreed to become vice chairman and secretary in 2004 and chairman the following year. He said that he had been lucky to have led a fascinating and varied life, travelling the world to exhibitions and conventions in Chicago and Seattle as well as Iceland, and Germany to name just a few.

Tom Renwick was a true character and always one to speak his mind, while forthright and 'not one to suffer fools gladly' he was genuine, straight forward and liked things to be correct. Even long after he retired when he would call or write to us to suggest we deal with an issue or correct an inaccuracy he had come across or heard from others. We will miss his calls and suggestions.

*Courtesy of Cranes & Access magazine*





## Industry News

### UK's longest railway bridge.



(Click on image to view video)

The 3.4km-long Colne Valley Viaduct, the UK's longest railway bridge, is now structurally complete.

Colne Valley Viaduct will carry the HS2 London-Birmingham rail line over a series of roads, lakes, the River Colne and the Grand Union Canal to the northwest of London.

Construction of the 10 metre-tall viaduct started in March 2021, led by HS2's main works contractor for this section of the route, Align, a joint venture between Bouygues Travaux Publics, VolkerFitzpatrick and Sir Robert McAlpine. The last of the giant pre-cast deck segments was lowered into place in September 2024.

Since then, Align has installed parapet sections, noise barriers, a structural health monitoring system and waterproofing and drainage.

It means that the 2.25km Tay Bridge, linking Fife and Dundee, has finally ceded the crown of Britain's longest rail bridge, a record it had held since 1887.



## The world's first all-electric demolition job.

A demolition site in Germany is being hailed as proof that battery-powered machinery is now full ready.



A fleet of all-electric construction machines from Volvo Construction Equipment and Volvo Trucks has delivered a landmark project in sustainable urban development, powering the world's first fully electric deconstruction site in Erlangen, Germany, in collaboration with technology company Siemens and Metzner Recycling.

Siemens' new €500 million, 200,000 sqm Technology Campus is designed to be zero-emission, adhering to the highest sustainability standards. But an emission-free site clearance was not part of the original scope. Instead, it came about through collaboration between Volvo and Metzner, and was enthusiastically received by Siemens.

According to Volvo, the project marks the first full-scale electric deconstruction of its kind and serves as an important proof of concept that demolition can be carried out more sustainably, without relying on fossil fuels.

The electric machine fleet included:

- Volvo ECR18 Electric compact excavator with hydraulic breaker, operating inside the buildings performing precise break-up and demolition of concrete and masonry
- Volvo L20 Electric wheeled loader transporting the extracted materials from inside the buildings for processing
- Volvo EW240 MH Electric grid-connected material handler for exterior deconstruction and handling
- Volvo EC230 Electric crawler excavator for deconstruction, concrete cutting and crusher feeding
- Volvo L120 Electric wheel loader for transporting materials to and from the electric crusher.

Demolition specialist Metzner Recycling used machines to bring down three buildings, sorting and processing 12,800 tonnes of construction waste, of which 96% was recycled into raw materials for future use.

Indoors, the compact [excavator](#) and wheeled loader operated safely and quietly – supported by a Husqvarna DXR145/DXR305 demolition robot – eliminating emissions and the need for air filtration systems and speeding up [demolition](#) tasks. Outside, bigger electric machines dismantled, crushed and loaded materials directly into a Kleemann electric [crusher](#) and screening [plant](#), with a Volvo FM Electric hook lift and a Volvo FH Electric semi tractor from Volvo Trucks transporting materials off-site.

Power for the site was provided by a custom on-site transformer, which provided a direct connection to the grid and access to certified renewable electricity. This allowed multiple machines to be fast-charged simultaneously, while ensuring a continuous energy supply for the grid-connected equipment. grid-connected material handler for exterior deconstruction and handling.

Operating on an active campus – with nearby offices still in use – the low-noise performance of the electric machines proved a major advantage, minimising disruption while maintaining productivity.

Michael Metzner, owner of Metzner Recycling, said: “The fact that we have now taken the first major step towards an all-electric, low emission dismantling site as a technical standard is a huge success for us – the Metzner team – and our clients. I get goosebumps when I think about what these machines make possible. Electric equipment could unlock urban projects currently held back by noise and pollution concerns. In fact, we’ve already introduced electric wheel loaders at some of our other sites.”





## JCB responds to new dumper standard.

JCB has launched the 6T SiteSafe ROPS site dumper in response to new European standards.

Changes to the European manufacturing standard EN474 2022: Parts 1 and 6 came into force on 1st February 2025. Part 1 now requires all front-mounted dumpers with an operating weight of more than 4.5 tonnes to have a full cab to protect the operator in the event of a rollover or falling objects (otherwise known as ROPS and FOPS).

Part 6 now requires site dumpers with a machine weight of more than 3.5 tonnes and up to 4.5 tonnes to have rollover protection.

Additional EN474 changes that came into force in February include a bubble inclinometer as standard, to prevent the operator exceeding the maximum safe slope, rear view mirrors and a front camera.



JCB's new 6T SiteSafe ROPS dumper has a maximum machine weight of 4,500kg and therefore meets the EN474 revisions with a rollover bar.

The ROPS structure features large opening gates to either side of the machine, with heavy-duty latches. The design allows three-points of contact when climbing onto or leaving the machine. The gates also provide additional operator stability when traversing rough ground and there is no impact to all-round visibility, JCB says.



“Some manufacturers’ designs don’t offer much operator protection, while others have large pads that significantly restrict visibility to the side and rear,” said a JCB spokesperson.

“Having a good view of these areas is critical when driving a dumper through cones, poles or past other vehicles, so we decided that our design had to maintain the exceptional all-round visibility of a conventional ROPS **dumper**, while maximising safety.”

The 6T SiteSafe ROPS **dumper** is powered by a 55kW (74hp) JCB DieselMAX diesel engine, that has been paired with a JCB SS670 4-speed synchroshuttle transmission. The transmission boasts a 45% shorter gear lever throw, 35% less shifting force and up to 80% less gear lever play than the previous model, JCB says.

“Some manufacturers have moved to a hydrostatic transmission on larger dumpers, but the parasitic loss of a hydrostatic system results in reduced performance,” said JCB. “Most customers still like the simplicity and performance of a gearbox and torque converter, as this is easy to service and has great performance on and off-road, including up and down steep inclines and through deep mud, where hydrostatic transmissions may struggle.”

The 6T SiteSafe ROPS dumper is available with a Swivel Tip, allowing the machine to tip to either side, or the SiteSafe Front Tip skip, which offers better visibility than a conventional front tipping model, thanks to its lower overall skip height.



## **HSE publishes excavator isolation warning.**



There is a risk that people can be struck by an excavator or a load if the safety control lever or isolation device is not used correctly.

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has published a safety notice aimed at excavator operators, slingers and anyone working near them\*.

HSE warns of the risk of injury to others if the operator does not use the safety control lever or isolation device correctly.

If there are people in the operational arc of an excavator or similar mobile plant, the safety control lever should be applied, or other methods used, to isolate the machine, while it is at rest (ticking over), the HSE warns.

Research shows unintended movements of plant occur, but use of a safety control lever or isolation device can prevent this.

The warning follows a recent site fatality. During a lifting operation, a slinger was fatally crushed between the quick hitch and a fixed structure. The excavator operator was leaning out of his cab to communicate with the slinger when he inadvertently made contact with the left-hand joystick, causing the excavator to slew. The safety control lever had not been applied to isolate the machine.



## **New late payment sanctions planned.**

The government has announced new measures to ensure small businesses are paid on time.



The Department for Business & Trade is planning legislation to give stronger powers to the Small Business Commissioner to impose fines on firms who persistently pay their suppliers late.

The Small Business Commissioner will be given new powers to carry out spot checks and enforce a 30-day invoice verification period to speed up resolutions to disputes. The legislation will also introduce maximum payment terms of 60 days, reducing to 45 days.

Audit committees will be legally required to scrutinise payment practices at board level, placing greater pressure on large firms to show that they are treating small suppliers fairly, backed by mandatory interest charges for those who pay late.

According to the government, late payments costs the UK economy £11bn per year and cause an average of 38 UK businesses to close every day.

Prime minister Keir Starmer said: “From builders and electricians to freelance designers and manufacturers, too many hardworking people are being forced to spend precious hours chasing payments instead of doing what they do best – growing their businesses. It’s unfair, it’s exhausting and it’s holding Britain back. So our message is clear: it’s time to pay up.”

Small business minister Gareth Thomas added: “I want the UK to be the best place in the world to start a business, grow and succeed - and that’s why we’ve taken bold steps today. Too many small firms go under each year because they aren’t paid on time - that is completely unacceptable.”



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