



Contractors Mechanical Plant Engineers

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to another edition of your National Newsletter.

CMPE NEWS

National Council.

The next National Council Meeting will take place on Saturday 17th October 2026 at the Premier Inn, Trentham Gardens, Stone Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 8AX, at 10.00am prompt.

Agenda etc., will follow in due course from the National Secretary.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

GBSS helps unlock canal skills.

Falkirk civil engineers GBSS will support Robertson Construction in the delivery of Lock 16, Scotland's Centre of Excellence for Canals and Traditional Skills, being developed by Scottish Canals and Historic Environment Scotland.



Lock 16, on the banks of the Forth & Clyde Canal, will transform the former AG Barr factory site into a national hub for heritage skills, canal innovation, volunteering, training and employment opportunities.

Supported by Scottish Government Investment of £4 million from the Falkirk and Grangemouth Growth Deal, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and Pride in Place Impact Fund.

The project will help address the growing need for specialist traditional skills while safeguarding Scotland's historic waterways and built heritage for future generations.

As part of GBSS's first partnership with Robertson Construction, the firm will support the delivery of infrastructure and civil engineering works as the project progresses, including all groundworks such as excavations, roads, hardstanding, drainage, various concrete works like new slabs, foundations along with all external finishes. The company's involvement will contribute to a landmark regeneration project that is set to create lasting social, economic and environmental benefits for Falkirk and the surrounding area.

Once complete, the Lock 16 Centre of Excellence will provide specialist training in traditional trades, including stonemasonry and blacksmithing, while creating opportunities for apprenticeships, volunteering and employment. Delivered in partnership by Scottish Canals and Historic Environment Scotland, the centre will help develop the specialist skills needed to care for Scotland's canals, bridges, aqueducts, castles and other historic assets for generations to come.

Construction of the new centre is now underway and is expected to continue into 2027. Once complete, Lock 16 Centre of Excellence will provide a permanent base for Scottish Canals' operational teams while creating a national destination dedicated to canal management, heritage conservation, traditional skills training, volunteering and innovation.

Ashbrook buys 1,600th Cat.

Ashbrook Plant Hire has taken delivery of its 1,600th Cat, a Cat 308 excavator, part of a 166 machine order through Finning.



The £8m order included the milestone [excavator](#), along with Cat 302.7s and Cat 305s fitted with air conditioning and hydraulic quick hitches.

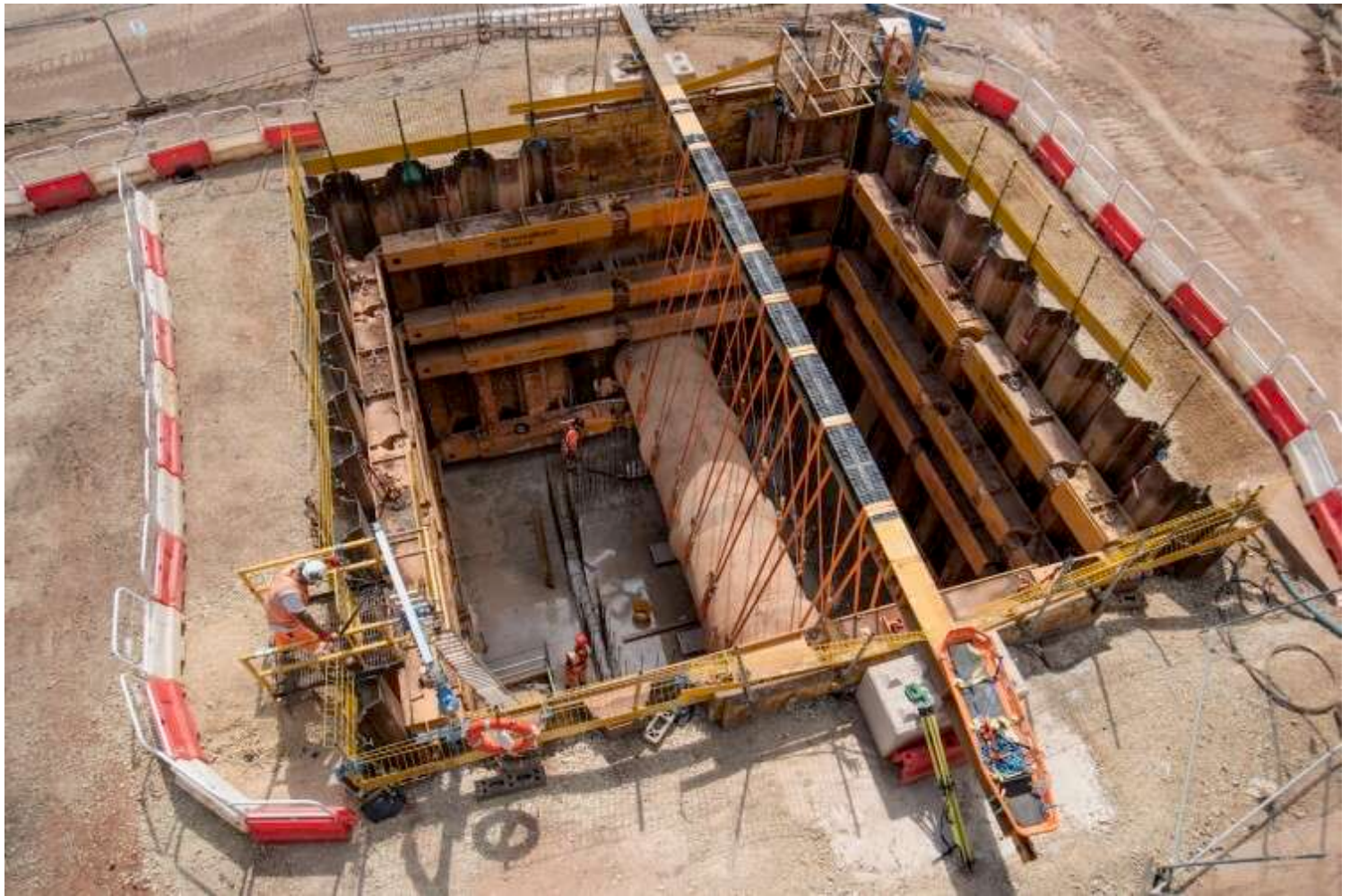
James Ashbrook, managing director at Ashbrook [Plant Hire](#) Ltd said, "Our latest investment from Finning has supported the growth of our fleet, as well as replaced older machines. As we continue to grow, Finning has been a consistent presence, not only delivering machines and on-board technology to meet our performance

standards but providing reliable support with Finning field service engineers based at both of our sites full time.

“With the number of housing developments and infrastructure projects in the UK growing, this latest investment gives us the means to continue to deliver the reliability and performance that our customers need, backed by the ongoing support and expertise from Finning.”

Groundforce supports live water works expansion.

Groundforce Shorco has worked with Mott MacDonald Bentley on a £56m project to expand the capacity of a Severn Trent Water site in Warwick.



Above: Slings from the brace support the weight of the pipe

The modernisation of Longbridge Water Treatment Works will see treatment capacity rise from 734 litres/sec to 1,261 litres/sec. The scheme involves construction of four 32m-diameter final settlement tanks and one new 27m-diameter primary settlement tank.

The project also involves the diversion of all untreated wastewater flowing into the works from the existing 1,800mm-diameter pipeline into a new tunnelled pipeline feeding the new treatment infrastructure.

To do this, MMB must install a new concrete structure around a length of the existing pipeline within a deep excavation, whilst keeping the pipeline live. The new pipeline enters the excavation perpendicular to the existing one. Once the new structure is completed, the design-and-build contractor will cut the existing concrete pipe using specialist wire-sawing equipment, allowing the sewage water to flow down the new 50m tunnelled pipeline.

The excavation itself measures 10.8m long by 10.4m wide and is 8.48m deep. Poor ground conditions and a high water-table necessitate a robust support system.

MMB brought in Groundforce Shorco at an early stage of the design development to ensure the optimum temporary works solution.

To line the excavation, 12m-long L605 steel sheet piles were driven into the ground with approximately 3m of toe-in beyond formation level to ensure maximum stability.

The depth of the excavation, combined with heavy lateral loads from the weak surrounding soil, required four hydraulic frames, comprised of Groundforce Shorco's Super Mega Brace beams, to be installed at different levels. The existing pipeline passes across the middle of this excavation, below the third frame and above the bottom frame.

With the pipeline exposed and the ground excavated from beneath it, some support was necessary to counteract the self-weight of the concrete pipe and the sewage water that constantly flows through it.



Volvo compact loaders get a redesign.

Volvo's L30 and L35 compact wheel loaders have received a frame redesign, with a new rear end suitable for fitting equipment, improved service access and a redesigned cab entrance.



Calling the changes the 'most significant' since their launch in 1998, Volvo is debuting the machines at GaLaBau in Germany this week.

Arno Michels, Global Product Manager at Volvo CE, said: "Customers use the L30 and L35 across a wide variety of applications, often asking one machine to perform several different jobs. These updates make it simpler to adapt the machine as those needs change, while also improving servicing and daily operation."

A redesigned rear end makes the L30 and L35 more adaptable to different applications. New mounting points simplify the installation of rear-mounted equipment, helping customers get more from one machine as their needs change.

Rear-mounted equipment and different trailer couplings can be fitted quickly, while hydraulic and electrical connections can be added or retrofitted with less installation work.

This added flexibility complements the L30 and L35's existing hydraulic capabilities, including adjustable auxiliary flow and high-flow hydraulics of up to 100 l/min on the L30 and 110 l/min on the L35, supporting a wide range of [attachments](#).



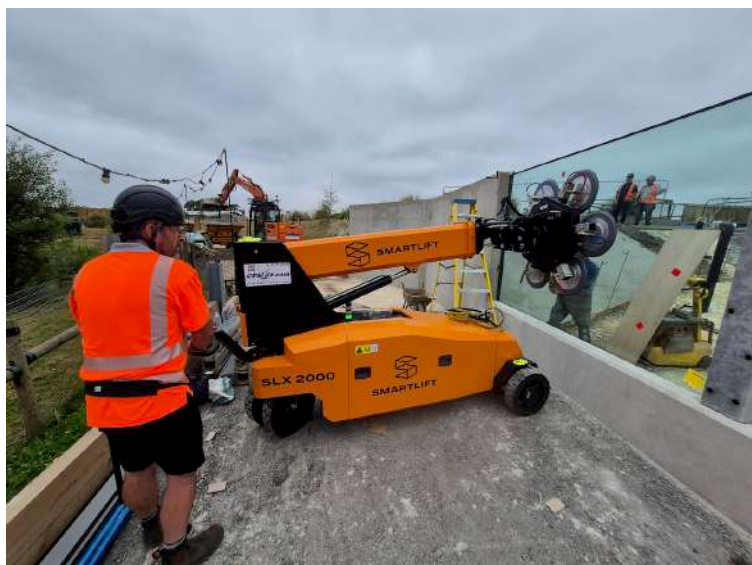
The redesigned rear of the machine also gives technicians better access for servicing and repairs. Split side-mounted counterweights can be removed when needed, while a larger opening in the front frame improves access to key components and simplifies the installation of additional hydraulic or electrical equipment.

Production of the redesigned machines will commence in late 2026.



CPSLift helps build a home for penguins.

Central Platform Services has installed glass viewing panels at a new £1.2m habitat for African penguins at Yorkshire Wildlife Park, being built by Zooscapes.



The company supplied a Smartlift SLX 2000 glazing robot along with an operator to assist Zooscapes with the installation. Thanks to the SLX 2000, the team at Zooscapes were able to lift and install 12 glass units, each measuring approximately 3m x 2m and weighing up to 630kg, over a two-day period.

The glazing robot helped lift the panels from their stillages and manoeuvre them through the construction site prior to installation, before lifting the panels over metal framing and into their recess.

Once in place, fine adjustments could be made using the SLX 2000's precision controls. The installation team could then seal the large units into their recess.



The new habitat with a 552,000-litre pool features rock work, pebbled beaches and nesting areas, recreating the natural coastal environment of Boulders Beach in South Africa.

The use of large glass on this project required careful planning and movement, and capable equipment.

The SLX 2000 offered the necessary lifting capacity to handle the 630kg glass panels, along with the reach and accurate controls needed for positioning the glass. Its

narrow chassis, power steering and remote control make the SLX 2000 suited to areas with restricted access.

This project was delivered as an operated hire service, with company director John Burton working as the operator over the two-day period.

The main contractor for the project was Pacy & Wheatley, an employee-owned construction business based in Doncaster, South Yorkshire. The company delivers projects across the UK in a variety of sectors including leisure, healthcare and education.

Zooscapex were responsible for supplying, installing and sealing the glass into the metal frames. The company designs and builds exhibits for zoos, aquariums, museums and other visitor attractions across the UK.

The glass panels were supplied by Specialist Glass Products (SGP) from Huddersfield, a supplier of curved, flat, and bespoke structural glass.





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