METAL MATTERS

CBM
CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH METALFORMING

2020 - EDITION 57
ISSN 1759-5975 £7.50

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Front cover image courtesy of Somers Forge Limited

up and coming events

- **Build your Dream Engineering Sales Team**
  12th January 2021- 11-1pm. £95 fee waived for CBM members.
- **For more information or to register for this event, please contact Melinda Jean, e: melinda.jean@thecbm.co.uk**

CBM staff

- **President**
  Steve Morley
  president@thecbm.co.uk
- **Chief Executive**
  Geraldine Bolton
  MCMI, Dip.OCR, MAAT, M.IIM
  geraldine.bolton@thecbm.co.uk
- **Company Secretary & Office Manager**
  Louise Campbell
  louise.campbell@thecbm.co.uk
- **Membership & Events Secretary**
  Melinda Jean
  melinda.jean@thecbm.co.uk
- **Media & Communications Administrator**
  Rachael Bromley
  rachael.bromley@thecbm.co.uk
- **Accounts**
  Marie Williams
  marie.williams@thecbm.co.uk
- **Fastener Sector Specialist**
  Derek Barnes
  derek.barnes@thecbm.co.uk
- **Forging Sector Specialist**
  Derek Bond
  derek.bond@thecbm.co.uk
- **Sheet Metal & Cold Rolled Specialist**
  Adrian Nicklin ISME
  adrian.nicklin@thecbm.co.uk
- **Health, Safety & Environment Consultant**
  Mark Sutton
  AIEMA, MRSPH
  mark.sutton@thecbm.co.uk
- **Energy Specialist**
  Kevin Kirk
  kevin.kirk@thecbm.co.uk
- **Policy Advisor**
  Phil Matten
  phil.matten@thecbm.co.uk
- **NMC Conferencing Supervisor**
  Marie Williams
  marie.williams@nmcvenue.com
- **Receptionist**
  Jan Taylor
  reception@nmcvenue.com
- **Events Co-ordinator**
  Charlotte Robinson
  reception@nmcvenue.com
- **How to contact us**
  Confederation of British Metalforming
  National Metalforming Centre,
  47 Birmingham Road,
  West Bromwich,
  West Midlands B70 6PY.
  Telephone: 0121 601 6350
  Enquiries & Advertising:
  Rachael Bromley
  Media & Communications Administrator
  Email: Rachael.bromley@thecbm.co.uk
  Web: www.thecbm.co.uk
  Find us on LinkedIn
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CBM CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH METALFORMING

As I write this, we are just entering our second English lockdown – the result of a rising 'R' rate across many parts on the country. We have been given a date of December 2nd to exit the lockdown so let's hope, by the time you read this, we have been 'released' and we can try and move forward once again.

This second lockdown is different from the first. There has been a very clear message for Manufacturing to stay open. Schools also staying open will allow many parents aligned to our sector to continue to work with, those able to do so, working from home.

Whatever your thoughts on the lockdown, or the Government's handling of it, at least the CJRS furlough scheme has been kept in place - not only for the lockdown but also through to the end of March next year. That will, at least, enable businesses to plan their labour needs and budgets for the coming months. It's also positive that the loan scheme deadlines have been extended until the end of January. This will give those who haven't accessed the facility a chance to do so if needed. Also, those who borrowed early in the crisis may require a top up to that facility, which this additional time permits.

Having worked tirelessly with CBM members through the pandemic, it's clear we still have a long way to go. Less than a handful of our members have returned to anywhere near their pre-Covid sales: the majority are between 70% to 80% of where they were back in March. Many of these companies have lost employees, are saddled with more debt and may need more financial help, before we are out of this crisis.

On Covid, we still have a lot of work to do to support our members. Our focus is still widespread, so our lobbying activity continues on many fronts:

- **Trade Credit Insurance -** we are working with the CBI and the ABI to ensure Government underpinning of TCI is extended beyond the current December deadline. Representation has been made to BEIS and the Treasury, and initial feedback is promising.
- **Skills -** we are already seeing members struggling for skills in key positions. It is critical that we find and retain the necessary skills. The CBM is supporting our stakeholders with a call for a National Task force for Skills, to support retraining of skilled or semi-skilled people from other sectors in much needed manufacturing skills. The CBM is also making good progress in developing its own industry apprenticeship standards and registration as an End Point Assessor.
- **Stimulus -** our automotive and aerospace sectors are in great need of a stimulus from the Government. However, despite strong lobbying, we have seen nothing. Whether this is being hampered by EU state aid rules, only time will tell when the transition ends on December 31st.
- **Capital Investment -** although the Government has supported industry through the crisis, manufacturing has suffered from a lack of investment, for numerous reasons. This is critical. We want our members to thrive and not just to survive, laden with debt. If we are to compete with our European neighbours on an even playing field, we need clear investment in manufacturing to support increased automation and the move to digitisation.

We've made excellent headway with our lobbying this year. We will keep pushing on all fronts, to make sure what we have put in place continues to support our members' needs.

As you are aware, Covid isn't our only problem. As we approach the end of the transition period there is still no sign of a free trade deal. I'd like to hope it's different by the time you read this, but I'm not confident it will happen. The resultant cost to industry could be substantial; especially for those exporting or relying on imports.

Our main concern is the lack of preparation by many companies. We have been working hard, supported by BEIS, to advise members what they need to do now to prepare for the end of the transition period. There are many things companies should be doing now, where legislation and new rules are already in place. They should not wait for December 31st and expect it all to work - quite clearly it won't.

What we don't want to see is company production lines stopped because they cannot get materials - or companies with cashflow issues as they cannot deliver parts on time. I can foresee costs being passed onto companies from customers who have not received goods on time or from transport companies, whose lorries are stuck in customs, due to wrong paperwork.

I had a saying when I worked in industry - 'never underestimate logistics' - and I was proven right many times. I believe that saying has never been more relevant to manufacturing and our country as a whole.

We will continue to communicate new legislation to members and work closely with BEIS to answer your questions. Please, though, be under no illusions, there will be no extension to the transition period, so it's incumbent on you to ensure your business is ready for what's ahead.

• Steve Morley, CBM President

Finally, HS2, whatever people's misgivings, is pushing ahead. It's portrayed as if it's going to give a huge boost to the Midlands and then onto the north when the next stage is approved. This is meant to be a huge boost for our economy and manufacturing but I have to say I am not convinced and feel our members will miss out on opportunities to support what will be the biggest infrastructure investment this country has ever seen, even more so for those based in the Midlands.

Our experience of engagement with HS2 has met with little success, one of our first engagements was to have a presentation about Competefor, which is the portal used to register for tendering for work. Many SME's haven't even heard of this, never mind used it. When we asked for a presentation on how Competefor worked, so our members could use it, we were told we would have to pay, which isn't what I would expect for a government sponsored project.

We also recently attended the Mayoral and HS2 Supply Chain event, which given it's the biggest project in the Midlands history it provided us with an event which clearly wasn't befitting the stature of the project.

Already main contracts have been given out with 3 out of the 4 going to foreign companies and a lot of the steel element has been sourced in Europe.

Despite being told that of 2000 contracts awarded 70% have gone to SME's we need to ascertain if contracts for our manufacturing sector have been won by companies in the Midlands or for that matter across the UK. This is something CBM will be challenging on our members behalf.

It has been a very difficult year, which has impacted everyone reading this in some way. So, finally, I sincerely hope you can all have a great Christmas and we all have a very Happy New Year, with plenty of vaccines for all of us.

Steve Morley,
President of the
Confederation of British Metalforming

THE CBM – HELPING THE UK'S METALFORMING INDUSTRIES TO PROSPER AND GROW

CBM MEMBERSHIP... WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH METALFORMING

CBM is the leading trade association for UK manufacturers of fasteners, forgings, pressings and cold rolled products; the very building blocks of UK manufacturing. CBM members provide high quality components to key industry sectors; indeed virtually every manufacturing sector buys components from a CBM member company, most of which hold a range of third party quality accreditations.

In addition to CBM's manufacturing companies, its associate members include suppliers of materials, equipment, consumables and services, universities and research bodies – a true reflection of CBM's support of a totally integrated metalforming community.

GOVERNMENT LOBBYING
- Lobbying on sector issues and challenges
- Industrial strategy
- Submissions to government consultations

ENERGY
- Climate Change Levy rebates
- Energy services: measurement, Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme (ESOS) audits, energy efficiency workshops
- Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting (SECR) Reporting Service

MEMBER PROMOTION
- Enquiries
- Buyers' guide
- CBM website
- Exhibitions
- Metal Matters magazine

TECHNICAL SUPPORT
- Expert knowledge about fastener, sheet metal/presswork, cold rolling and forging techniques

HEALTH & SAFETY
- Regular health, safety & environment group meetings
- Accident statistics to reduce accidents
- Helpline for all your health & safety questions
- Occupational health services

TRAINING/SKILLS /ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS
- Tackling the skills agenda
- Industry specific courses
- Raise awareness of career potential within our industry
- Metalforming Training Centre

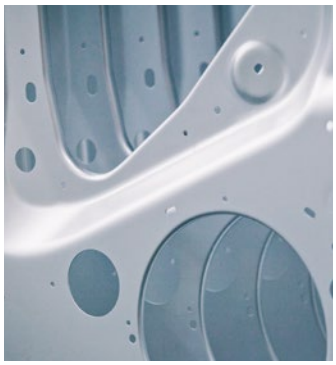
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER
- Monthly Market reports
- Project opportunities
- Regular networking opportunities
- Briefings and Seminars
- Metal Matters magazine
- CBM website

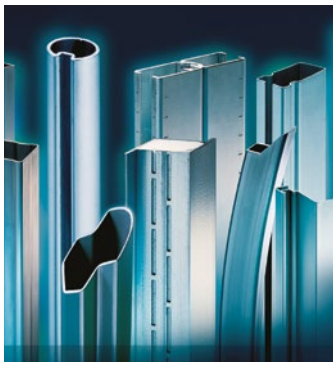
INSURANCE SERVICES
- Cost effective insurance solutions for its members

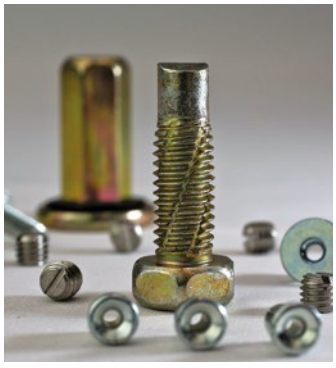
OTHER BENEFITS
- Members' buying group
- R&D tax claims
- Business support helpline for all your employment and HR questions
- International links
- National Metalforming Centre Conference Venue – Discounted rates for CBM members
- British Standards Institution

CBM MEMBERSHIP
- Full Membership is available to companies who manufacture in the UK, by metalforming processes, particularly those who are engaged in hot and cold forging, and the shaping, cutting and forming of sheet metal.
- Associate membership is available to companies and organisations who supply services to the manufacturers.

CONTACT CBM NOW ON 0121 601 6350







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thecbm.co.uk is for you

Visited the CBM website recently? We'd really encourage you to login and explore the Members' Area, now a rich reservoir of useful information for members. Here's a taster of what's available - exclusively to you as a CBM member.

From the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, the CBM stepped up direct delivery of information to its members – through regular online meetings, webinars and email bulletins. And, of course, the CBM team has been there throughout to provide or locate answers members need.

At the same time, we've worked hard to upgrade the CBM website. Hopefully, you will have seen how the introduction of the new CBM logo and colour scheme has really sharpened the website's visual impact.

We've also put some real effort into the site's content - nowhere more so than in developing the **Members' Area** as a reservoir of relevant and rapidly accessible information for you.

What have we updated?

The Members' Area has always hosted information for each of the industry sectors the CBM supports – **Fasteners, Forging, Pressework** and **Sheet Metal.** These sections have been overhauled, including presentation slides and notes from the regular Forging & Fastener Sector meetings. There is also information from and a link to **ICOSPA,** the International Council of Sheet Metal Presswork Associations, for which CBM currently holds the presidency.

Similarly, presentations and information from the regular **Health, Safety & Environment** meetings are hosted, together with links to Government and HSE guidance documents, and how to access the Cronor Health & Safety Help Line. Similarly, you can access support on **Employment Law,** as well as links to CBM webinar recordings on this topic.

What's new?

Early in the pandemic we set up a special **Covid-19 Share Hub.** As well as sharing best practice from members, it links to government guidance and factsheets relating to the coronavirus, plus CBM webinar recordings, and other information.

As we countdown to the end of the transition period, **UK Leaving the EU** is filling up with latest information and links on: UK Border Arrangements and the UK Tariff, Importing and Exporting Guidance,

the transition from CE to UKCA marking, and other crucial areas of preparation.

The **CBM All Members Hub** 'does what it says on the tin' with content on topics relevant to all members. That ranges from AGM reports, and updates from Stakeholders, to an extensive webinar library of relevant recordings and presentations.

Oh…and whenever you feel the urge to express your feelings to your local MP, a couple of clicks will confirm their name and how to contact them.

You can also see how the CBM is making the Voice of Metalforming heard in the media. Just go to **CBM in the News** for our news releases and links to reports featuring the CBM.

What's next?

Next project is to build content in a new Technology and Productivity section with headings including Automation, Robotics, Data & Analytics, Connectivity and Cyber Security. As you revisit, which we're sure you will now you've seen how much resource is available, you'll find this area growing. Similarly, we're beginning to populate the new **Training & Skills section.**

It is all for you!

We want the thecbm.co.uk to be a 'must visit' for wider industry and prospective members. The Members' Area, however, is especially for you – so why not take the tour yourself?

You'll need your login and password. Can't find it? Just email melinda.jean@thecbm.co.uk and Melinda will get an update, or for any other information regarding the website.

More you think we might include? Just let us know. After all - it's all for you!

Also we have a new Proud to be a Member of CBM logo. This can be downloaded in the members area.

Inspired Energy

Inspired Energy is an independent commercial energy and sustainability consultancy, offering a range of procurement, optimisation, and compliance services to corporate businesses, and CBM welcomes them into membership.

We currently represent around 2800 corporate energy consumers, and with 500 utility experts located throughout the UK and Ireland, we have a depth of experience and expertise that is reflected by our position as the UK's number one energy advisor by Cornwall Insight.

Our mission is to optimise the value of every pound spent on utilities. Our buying team is experienced at supporting businesses across all sectors - including manufacturing and metalforming, to ensure they maximise their buying opportunities in the market

We manage both sides of the energy cost equation, looking at both energy price and consumption. As the UK works towards net zero targets, there's increasing pressure on businesses to become more sustainable - we work with businesses to deliver sustainability solutions to suit their needs, providing specialist advice on everything from self-generation through to net zero strategy.

To find out more about the support that we can offer your business, visit inspiredenergy.co.uk/partnership-referral, call 01772 689 250 or email wayne.brown@inspiredenergy.co.uk

INSPIRED ENERGY PLC

Getting personal

Meet Derek Bond, CBM Specialist looking after the forging sector

1. What is your personal background?

After leaving school I joined HDA Forgings and completed a Laboratory Technican apprenticeship, which included part time study for ONC Physical Sciences and HNC Metallurgy. Due to redundancy I left at the end of the apprenticeship and then worked as a research scientist for the British Cast Iron Research Association, where I continued to study part time and completed a honours degree in Metals Technology. Here I provided metallurgical support to research fellows by conducting metallographic investigations into various cast irons including failure analysis and research projects, working on a research cupola for 1 day each month.

I then re-joined HDA Forgings as a QA Metallurgist and quickly moved into production management by taking over the aluminium remelt foundry to produce forging stock. I then moved into Operations management before taking a break from Forging and joining JLR as a production manager. I re-joined HDA in 1999, shortly before they formed Mettis Aerospace, where I was production manager for their heavy forge and then moved into their precision forge as Operations Manager. I added other roles along the way including capital project management, continuous improvement, supply chain improvement and NPI manager before becoming Operations Director in 2018. I have pride in taking a leadership role in the growth of the business and developing young talent from apprenticeships to management roles, to provide both stability and sustainability.

2. In which sector are you primarily interested?

Having worked for most of my career in the forging industry I am keen to see this industry arrest the decline over my working lifetime and compete globally. With my casting background I also have a general interest in most metal related fields.

3. How long did you serve on the CBM board?

I served as a Director of the CBM throughout 2019, where I looked forward to engaging with fellow sector members and understanding what mattered to them and how the CBM could co-ordinate focussed support.

4. What do you feel you especially bring to the CBM forging sector ?

My main contribution is a wealth of manufacturing experience in a number of metal related industries, working with a variety of ferrous and non-ferrous alloys, coupled with a strong technical background. I have managed production teams in both downturn and growth periods and to do that successfully you have to be adaptable, flexible and have good business acumen. In my current role as a part-time forging specialist I am able to provide a valuable supporting role and facilitate co-ordinated activities with sector members.

5. How do you feel the CBM board contributes to the CBM and its membership?

The board recognise that they have an important role to shape the way the CBM develops to meet the challenges that industry faces today, as the pace of change becomes more rapid. Strong leadership coupled with a passion to significantly raise the awareness to members of changes in legislation, market forces, support services and technological advancement. An example of this is evident by visiting the restructured members area of the CBM website.

6. What will be the key challenges and issues for the metal-forming industry to face in the next three years?

Putting covid-19 aside, which represents significant challenges to many sectors, but also opportunities for businesses who are able to maintain/adapt their strategy and vision, I would suggest the following:

- Skills – being able to recruit and retain the next generation of forgers and technical support staff in what is generally a harsh environment is a challenge in itself. People development is key, along with good in depth training in an open learning culture. Video capture and interactive training programmes are required that strike the right balance between active skills and academic learning. This may be via apprenticeships but in our HSE regulated industry there is also a need for ‘mature apprentices’. Skills flexibility is also very important as often we require operators to move around to meet variable workloads, so open learning opportunities should be encouraged, with time allowed to achieve this.
- Industry 4.0 – the UK is behind other developed nations when it comes to automation. Industry 4.0 represents a

step change and businesses who can adopt and embrace changes quickly will open up greater opportunities. The CBM are keen to bring ideas and advances in technology to the attention of members via webinars and workshops, or simply by the flow-down of information.

- Supply chains – there will be changes brought about by Brexit (deal or no deal) and there will be winners and losers. All members will need to re-assess the robustness of their supply chains to avoid disruption, to proactively contingency plan and to take opportunities. There is no substitute for a PDCA approach, (assess/plan/prepare/act). Hopefully the reshoring opportunity will become a reality, but every business still has to strive to continually improve their productivity levels and global competitiveness.

7. How do you feel the CBM will best be able to support its membership going forward?

The CBM must continue to offer support services to members that add value and enable members to make informed decisions by good communication and active engagement. Members have to balance so many things to manage the day to day whilst driving their businesses forward. The CBM have to understand the real needs of their members and ensure their strategy delivers against those needs in order to provide both tangible and 'advisory' benefits. The impact brought about by the Covid pandemic has highlighted how responsive the CBM are, and the proactive lobbying of Government departments pre-covid opened up important communication channels. I believe that numerous changes made in the past 12 months have made a positive impact and if you surveyed members today, I am confident most would wholeheartedly agree.

8. Why should the CBM matter to everyone in the metalforming sector?

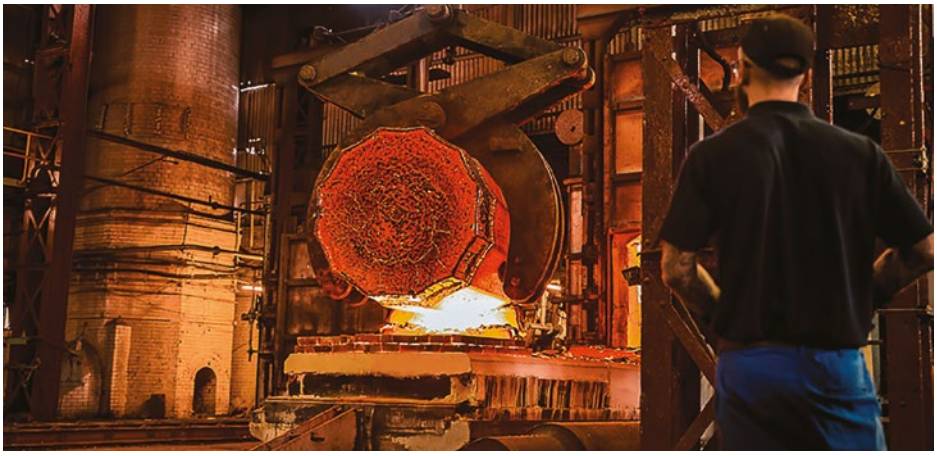
The CBM is the voice of the metal forming sector in the UK. It is well recognised both nationally and internationally and is well positioned to influence industry decision makers. Many of our members are SME's and individually it is not easy to be heard, let alone register important industry related issues at the heart of influential bodies. We have a proud heritage in the UK, but collectively we can also form the future – a united industry with one common voice will always be heard.

9. What have you achieved this year in supporting the Forging sector?

At the start of the year it was felt that the CBM had lost touch with the sector and I recommended that they address this in a number of ways.

I felt that the first challenge was to engage with as many members as possible, to provide an approachable point of contact and understand members needs. Lockdowns have not made visits easy but I have managed to visit two thirds of the members this year and in some cases I have provided follow up visits and responded positively to offer improvement ideas to address specific areas of concern. In the majority of cases I have proposed improvement opportunities and tabled process solutions. As a result of this several projects have had proposals developed for consideration at board level. I feel that I have a lot more to offer in this area where members can host visits and open-up to share the challenges they face. I am pleased that the perception of some members has changed and they now feel that there is positive engagement.

The second challenge was to communicate better. Since March I have facilitated regular sector web meetings, combining the Forging sector with the Fasteners and subsequently shared the content of the meetings with all members



who were not able to join on the day. These have been very well received and also supported with updates on policy and lobbying activities.

Thirdly, the plan was to hold a number of workshops during the year to share technological advancements and business improvement topics of common interest to most members – as we could not meet face to face I have facilitated these via on-line platforms and will continue to do this until we can meet interactively again.

Finally, I also provide ad-hoc technical and advisory support to members and the CBM board. I work with Imperial College on research ideas and also liaise with AFRC. I represent the CBM on Euroforge and I am a member of the Euroforge Technical Committee.

It has been a strange year and one that many will want to forget quickly. However, reflection on what could have been is a distraction to progress and I very much look forward to developing a relationship with the 30% of members who I have not yet managed to visit, (so let's get that visit scheduled in), and further supporting those I am acquainted with. Looking forward to 2021.

Derek can be contacted on Derek.bond@thcbm.co.uk

Images courtesy of
Mills Forgings Limited - pages 6
WH Tildesley - page 7 (top)
Somers Forge Limited - page 7 (bottom)

World's first WI-FI 6 industrial trials

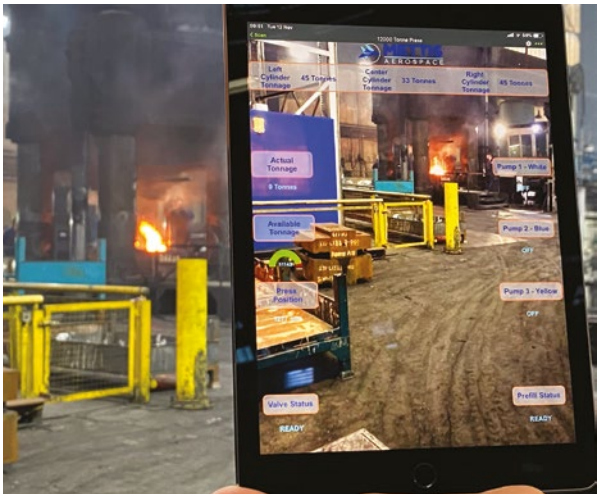
Wi-Fi 6, which is set to be a crucial part of the automation and digitisation of many industries, is being successfully trialled at Mettis Group

Mettis Group has been transforming into a digital factory as part of its industry 4.0 programme which includes introducing cutting-edge business systems, automating production lines and developing new technologies.

The world's first Wi-Fi 6 industrial trial, which is taking place at Mettis, is a key step forward in enabling the use of augmented reality, real-time monitoring of equipment and a host of other applications in an enterprise network environment to help further digitise production lines.

Mettis is an ideal testing ground for Wi-Fi 6 because it is challenging from a connectivity perspective. There is a large geography to be covered and industrial radio interference can disrupt signals. Some applications will require high bandwidth, others low latency and mission critical applications need clear prioritisation of data.

The trials are also exploring the role Wi-Fi 6 can play in the broader 5G ecosystem. The West Midlands region, under the leadership of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, was selected to be the UK's 5G Testbed for manufacturing and security by the UK Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.



It is critical that innovation continues despite the present challenges as it's key to ensuring the competitiveness of industries as they recover from the crisis. Digital technologies are increasing in importance and Wi-Fi 6 is set to be a key part of the future.

METTIS GROUP

Fastener heritage to Industry 4.0

Smith Bullough is the name given to the amalgamation of Thomas Smith & Sons and Bullough Fasteners who had both been manufacturing fasteners in the UK since the 19th century. Both based in Atherton, the Hot Forging centre for bolt manufacturing when Darlaston was the cold forging centre. In 2006 the business relocated to better premises on the nearby Hindley Industrial Estate in Greater Manchester with crucially all the staff moving to the new factory.

An experienced and knowledgeable workforce is a key ingedient to the success of a bolt business and this is something that Smith Bullough is proud to possess. The company supports the CBM, and is one of a very few current members who can boast membership of it's predecessor's the Black Bolt & Nut Association and British Industrial Faster Federation (BIFF).

Smith Bullough has developed it's production that now covers the widest range of non standard and special nuts and bolts to drawing up to M64 (2.1/2") diameter and in METRIC, UNC/UNF & BSW/BSF threads.

Onsite forging is followed by all the usual operations that would be expected in a fastener business and also undertakes grinding, milling and machining (CNC), drilling and welded assembly if required. A fairly unique process is the Wedgelock thread lock patch which minimises a bolt assembly loosening under vibration.

Materials worked include carbon and alloy steels, stainless steel, exotic steels etc. Materials grades from 4.6 to 14.9 and all surface treatments including Zinc, Galvanising, Sheradising, Geomet etc.

Staff training and performance is important and we ensure that time served knowledge is harnessed with academically trained engineers as we follow Industry 4.0 ideals and capture real time data (Kpi) and Quality performance to ensure on time delivery and customer satisfaction.

www.smithbullough.com

Heritage replication for national lottery funded jewellery quarter cemeteries project

Brooks Forgings specialise in the replication of decorative heritage ironwork components. By using a combination of physical original samples, photographs, and the latest digital design software we can create new tooling and reproduce components that are faithful to the original.

This service is common for many heritage restoration projects, replacing lost or damaged components, but is also used for modern builds or expansion projects that must incorporate ironwork designs used in the local area.

The Jewellery Quarter Cemeteries Project is the latest to utilise our heritage replication services. Funded through a partnership by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Birmingham City Council, and the Jewellery Quarter Development Trust, the £2.3 million restoration project focuses on the Key Hill and Warstone Lane cemeteries. Both are listed on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens in recognition of their historic importance.

The client was only able to provide us with a couple of old drawings, one for the main 'top' railhead design and another for the 'bottom' underbar design. Our skilled engineers were able to recreate them in a digital format using the latest CAD software. From here, new modern production drawings and physical 3D printed plastic samples were produced for customer approval against the original design, and forging simulation performed to ensure that the unique hexagonal bar transitioned correctly into the railhead design.

A total of 2600 railheads were forged directly onto hexagon bar in varying lengths from 1395mm up to 1930mm underhead.

The smaller underbar design, 115mm tall, was manufactured in 2350 quantity total.

If you are working on a similar project that would benefit from our replication service please do get in touch on 01384 563356 or via our website www.brooksforgings.co.uk

BROOKS FORGINGS
FORGING | MACHINING | FABRICATION

Is the manufacturing industry ready for Industry 4.0?

Driven by the need to access insights in real-time, Industry 4.0 is the name that has been given to the current phase of the industrial revolution. It's heavily focused on integrating smart technology, automation and machine learning, with current manufacturing practices.

We will be looking at whether the manufacturing industry is ready for these big changes. Are we ready to embrace industry 4.0, and more importantly, what role will it play in building a new strategy after Covid-19?

Is the manufacturing industry ready for I4.0?

Industry 4.0, sometimes abbreviated to I4.0, will bring significant change to the way our nation's manufacturing companies are run. Increased automation will mean that fewer production line jobs will be required, profits will be made from increased output and efficiency, and that this profit should initially be invested on training bottom line workers to successfully oversee and maintain mechanical operations.

The question of whether Industry 4.0 is happening is a moot point: the revolution is already in progress. The real question, then, is whether our nation's businesses are ready to take advantage of this new technology, and what will become of those companies that fail to invest in automation soon enough.

Overall, statistics report that our nation's manufacturers at large are ready and willing to embrace big changes. In fact, the Annual Manufacturing Report from 2019 found that 81% of manufacturing companies wanted to invest in new technology to boost productivity. Many will note, however, that there is a marked difference between wanting to invest and being ready to.

Are you ready for industry 4.0?

If you are one of the companies that are keen to invest in Industry 4.0, then there are a few things that you can do now to make sure that you are ready to implement this new technology as soon as you are able.

Here are some questions that you should be asking yourself:

- **Can I cover the potential costs of I4.0?**

  Installing the technology will have its own costs, so you will need to prepare a substantial amount of savings for your business before you can consider cashing in on the benefits of I4.0 technology. Finding this money starts with speaking to the creators of I4.0 technology and getting rough estimates on potential costs for your business. From there, it is a matter of making good savings until the equipment you need becomes available.

- **How will my staff need to change?**

  Understandably, your bottom line might feel a little intimidated by the eventuality of industry 4.0 technology, and as a good employer, this is an anxiety that you should try to address. Inevitably, the shape of your current board of staff is sure to change as efficiency improves and more technological maintenance is required. If you're sure that you are going to be implementing I4.0 technology in your business, then you should be considering costing up future training for your employees now.

- **Can and should i wait to implement this technology?**

  There are two different schools of thought regarding whether or not you should dive into new technology the moment it hits the market. On the one hand, this technology could help you to move beyond your current competitors as you improve your efficiency and gain more time to focus on staff retention, customer loyalty and marketing.

  On the other, if you are a little sceptical about how advanced logistics, immediate data reports and automatic inventory calculations will help your business – waiting a while to learn the truth of how this technology has benefitted other businesses may permit you to cost up the advantages of investing in this technology more effectively. Until the technology becomes more widespread, it is hard to judge the precise effects that this investment will have for you.

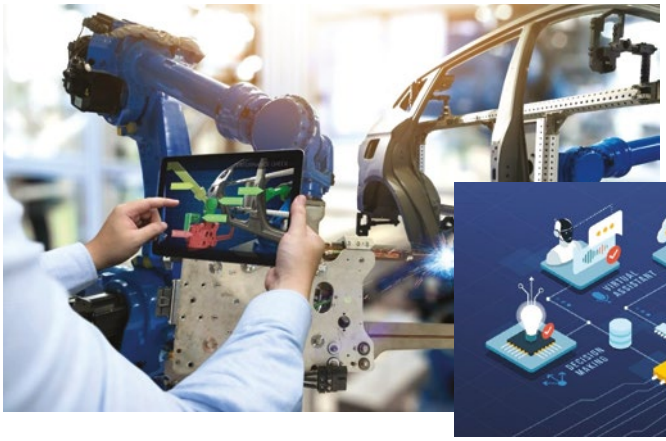
What Are the Green Benefits?

We are tension spring manufacturers who are interested in green responsibility, and we believe that I4.0 has the potential to reduce waste in manufacturing. With improved logistics, manufacturing will be able to better understand where waste is occurring and discover ways to reduce this. Doing so should have economic benefits for the company, too, so it's happy all round.

If you are in need of spring manufacturers for your next project, we're experts in the industry. We combine smart technology with decades of experience. For custom springs or opinions on the latest industry trends, you can rely on us.

www.europeansprings.com

Posted on October 6, 2020
by European Springs Web Team



EUROPEAN SPRINGS & PRESSINGS

GFG Alliance companies to play key role in £10m programme for smart technology in factories

- **Shiftec to provide LIBERTY Steel with sensor technology to enhance safety and efficiency**
- **Investment from government-backed Innovate UK's 'Manufacturing Made Smarter Challenge'**
- **The two-year trial forms part of LIBERTY's adoption of Industry 4.0 automation**

GFG Alliance, are partnering to deploy sensor technology with the potential to enhance safety and improve efficiency at industrial sites.

Under the two-year project, Shiftec will test and pilot its Aquila system, which uses a system similar to GPS to track the precise position of people, equipment and vehicles around factories in real time. The system reduces workplace accidents, enhances the efficiency of movement and – integrated with Shiftec's high-speed, long-range network solution – can allow for remote control operation of equipment. This control solution is building on Shiftec's Gemini system, which has already been proven in the film and television industry as well as defence.

The £10 million program is being funded by Innovate UK through its Manufacturing Made Smarter Challenge, which is part of the government's larger Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund.

Shiftec will trial the technology at partner companies in the metals, engineering and industrial sectors including LIBERTY's Speciality Steels' site in Stocksbridge and its Pipe Mill in Hartlepool. Also involved in the consortium are the Materials Processing Institute and TSC Simulation of Nottingham.

The technology falls under the umbrella category known as Industry 4.0, or the Fourth Industrial Revolution, whereby artificial intelligence is used to enhance the productivity of workplaces.

Anthony Blackwell, Chief Technology Officer, Liberty Engineering and Managing Director of Shiftec, said: "This is an exciting opportunity to further test the potential of technology developed at Liberty which could make a real difference across many different workplaces.

"This system can allow for a wireless method of controlling heavy equipment and vehicles. It can intervene automatically to prevent imminent accidents, and it can identify small ways to make processes more efficient which, over time, add up to a great deal."

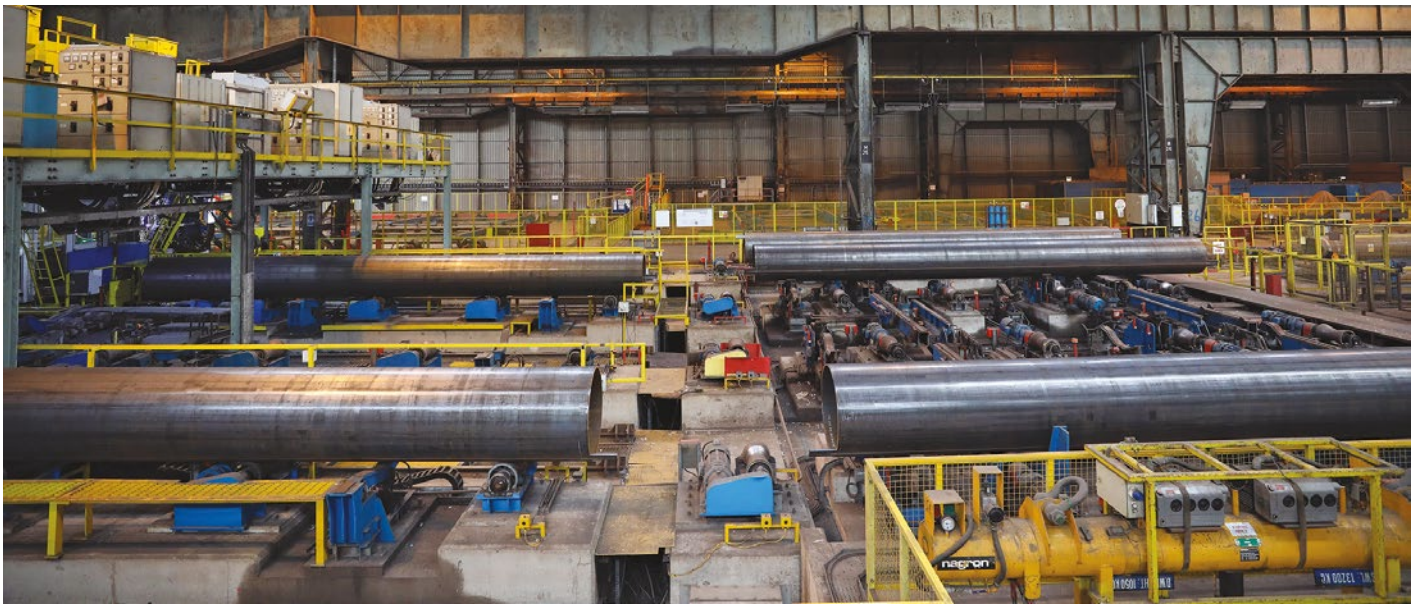
At LIBERTY Steel's site in Stocksbridge, the project will examine technologies for semi-autonomous cranes, improved mill measurement capability for the monitoring of product during rolling, and collect 3D scan data to create a working digital twin of at least one of the mill stands. At Hartlepool, the system will improve the measurement of pipe shape during forming.

Liberty Steel's UK Technical Director, Dr Simon Pike said: "This project, including the input from Shiftec is a significant step forward for both LIBERTY sites and will act as a test bed for the use of Industry 4.0 approaches and automation.

"In conjunction with digital camera technology and metallurgical models we aim to get more precise metallurgical information and dimensional control."

Shiftec, LIBERTY Engineering and LIBERTY Steel are all part of the GFG Alliance, the group of industrial businesses owned by Sanjeev Gupta and his family.

Aquila has potential applications well beyond steel – including applications in food plants, chemicals factories, aluminium smelters, marine, aerospace as well as the automotive and motorsport industry.



Corrosion protection with zinc flake systems – yesterday, today, tomorrow

Durability, flexibility and further development have been writing the success story of zinc flake technology since the 1970s. Numerous sectors employ this effective coating of steel components, with continuous research ensuring that they satisfy the constantly rising requirements of corrosion protection.

One especially significant step: with the availability of zinc flake systems is not that just small parts can be coated, but also increasingly large and heavy parts that cannot be heated in the furnace – a benefit for uses such as electromobility or bridge construction.

What are zinc flake coatings?

Zinc flake coatings are so-called dispersion coatings, they can be applied with a variety of procedures. For small parts, dip-spin coating in centrifuge baskets is common practice. After immersion in the liquid coating the excess material is spun off and reused. The remaining coat is then cross-linked to the part in a furnace - retaining a coat of approx. 60-70 % zinc and up to 10 % aluminium. When it comes to bulk parts, this process is typically repeated. The reason: agglomeration points from the first coating are reliably covered. The zinc flakes lie largely parallel to one another and the surface, arranged in a polymer film. This results in a primary barrier effect against moisture and oxygen.

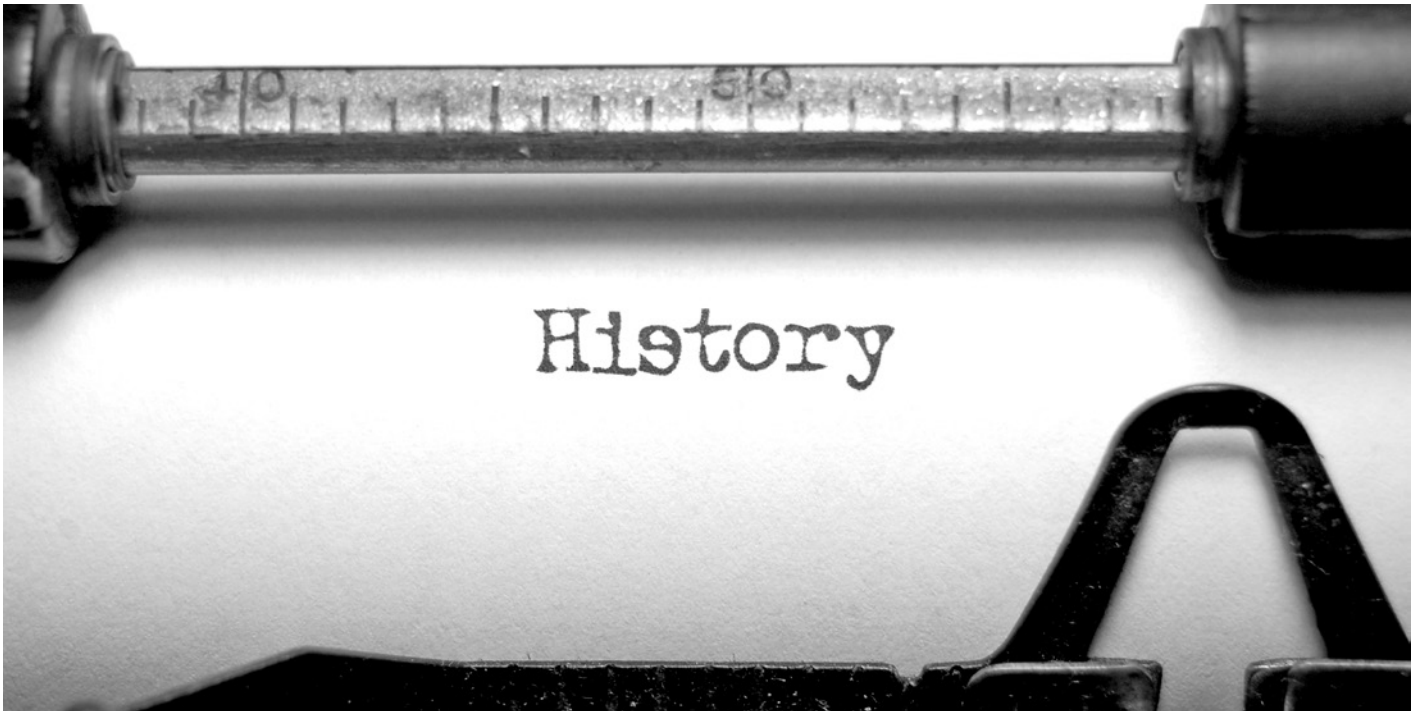
Compared to conventional industrial coatings, the zinc flake coatings are characterised in particular by the fact that extremely thin coats of approx. 8-20 µm achieve excellent active corrosion protection. This means, for example, that they are ideally suited for coating the thin flanks of nut and bolt threads, without affecting the fit. A further advantage is the inorganic binder system, which minimises setting behaviour below the head for screw and bolt coatings in particular. As zinc flake systems do not generate any hydrogen in their application[1]and consequently eliminate the problem of hydrogen-induced stress corrosion cracking that affects other coatings, these systems are used in particular for the corrosion protection of high-tensile bolts and spring steel. In addition to small parts (“bulk parts”), zinc flake technology now increasingly also protects larger components against corrosion.

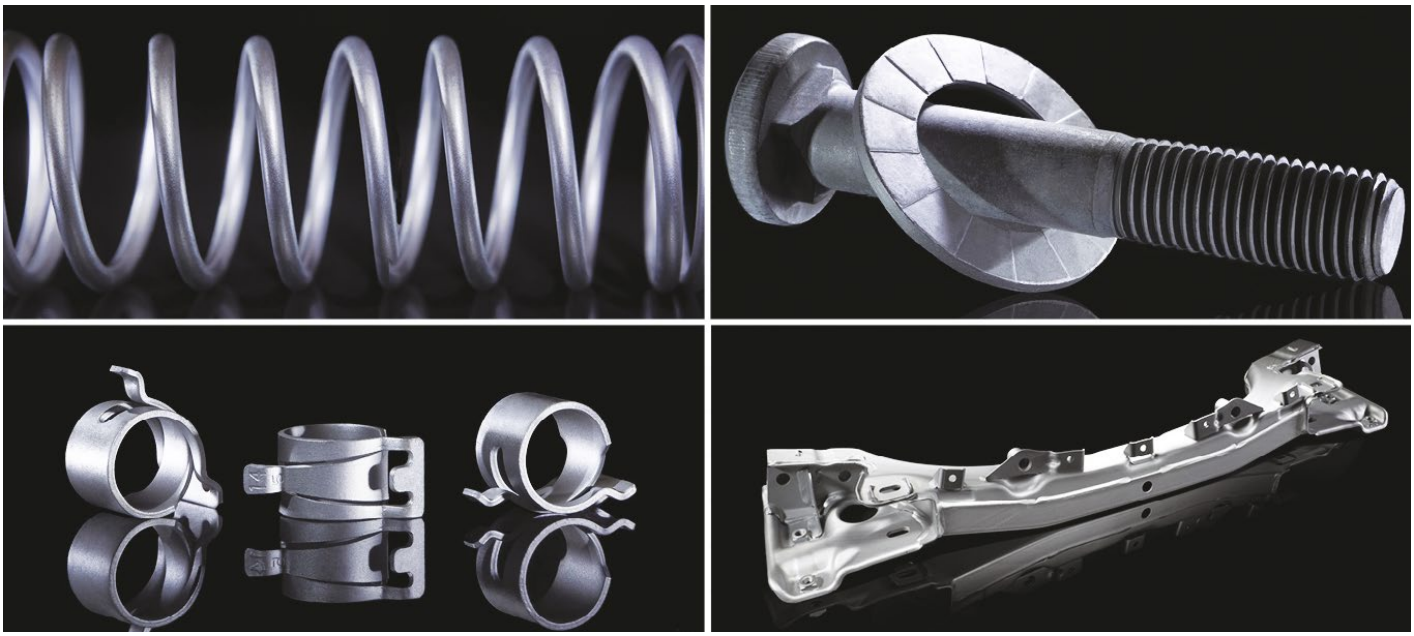
Zinc flake - a success story

The invention of zinc flake coatings originated in the early 1970’s from the US, and was further developed in Japan. This technology was subsequently brought to Europe and embraced in particular by the Automotive industry.

Initially Zinc Flake Coatings from Doerken were manufactured under licence from the Magni Corporation in America, but in early 2000 Dörken took over the Magni technology to adapt it to the requirements of the European market.

Since the invention of the system, zinc flakes have been used as pigment in coatings. Due to their “self-healing” or passivating effect, chromium(VI)-based systems were very successful in the early phase. They enabled significantly thinner coats to be achieved than the chromium(VI)-free systems, with the consequence that the chromium-based systems long enjoyed a monopoly in the coating of screws and bolts. However, the water-based system requires a very high annealing temperature, at 300°C. In contrast, the solvent-based, chromate-free Delta Tone system developed by Dörken only requires 180-200°C – an advantage that opened up the field of spring coating to the company. Four to five years prior to the entry into effect of the End-of-life Vehicles Directive (Directive 2000/53/EC[3]), around 2002, chromium(VI)-based coatings were gradually replaced by chromate-free systems.





Developments and areas of application

The zinc flake system is frequently adapted to new applications and developed further to satisfy changing market requirements.

These include:

Bolts and screws: Thin coats are a prerequisite here, in order to coat diverse sizes and dimensions. Zinc flake coatings have established themselves here over the course of many years and also offer good protection for smaller screws (<M6) and therefore very low diameters of threaded goods. In addition, the coating also satisfies the significantly increased requirements of corrosion protection. Where in 1980 240 h in salt spray testing were standard, today at least 720 h – 1000 h are expected.

Engine components: As the majority of motor vehicles have increasingly compact and encapsulated engines, an increasing level of heat resistance is required. The car industry has agreed on preconditioning of 4 days at 180°C with subsequent corrosion testing. In contrast to passivated galvanic systems, zinc flake technology satisfies this requirement and is therefore the preferred choice for the coating of components in the engine compartment.

Large components: After zinc flake had successfully established itself for small parts, the aim was to use it increasingly for larger and heavier parts as well. In the case of bolts, M14 is already too large for coating in the drum process. The own weight of the parts (typically 180 g for M16 x 80) leads to massive coating damage and hinders the formation of the coat. Against this background, the application process in particular was adapted. Whilst wind energy bolts (M24-M64) can still be coated with the spray procedure, more complex formed parts require a sophisticated approach to coating. As a result, for example, the square-metre-sized engine mount of a German luxury limousine with its complicated structures, perforations and undercuts was serially coated using the adapted dip-spin process in 2017. This enabled 700 g of weight to be saved compared to standard coating, for just one part.

Appearance of components: One of the most important requirements of OEMs in the motor vehicle sector was and remains an attractive appearance of black surfaces and components under service stress, or after corrosion testing. The contrast of the black topcoat to the white zinc oxide layer that forms with corrosion is noticeably disturbing. As damage to the black topcoat cannot be avoided with the coating of bulk products, the chemical make-up of the zinc flake base coat was altered to inhibit oxidation. This results in two benefits: less unsightly white corrosion and more effective use of the zinc quantity solely for the cathodic protection of the component. This is enabled by adapting the electrical resistance of the coat. The result is a dark black surface that after a long period of corrosive stress displays no more change than the “white haze” of a zinc-nickel coat.

Room temperature hardening systems: New developments of the zinc flake system from Doerken has seen the introduction of room temperature curing systems that still offer significant corrosion protection.

This means that a whole variety of parts can now be spray coated where curing temperatures that would normally effect the parts is no longer an issue. Also large components that do not fit in available furnaces or that cannot be heated using standard processes can be coated with zinc flake coatings. This also has significant environmental advantages that adds to the sustainability of the Zinc Flake coatings offered by Doerken.

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DÖRKEN

EV batteries are the future but we must drive improvements now

As the new 70-plate cars roll off garage forecourts across the UK, 2020 is predicted to be another record-breaking year for electric vehicles in this country.

A report by Statista published in May forecast that electric vehicles will make up more than 10% of new UK vehicle registrations this year – up from just 3.2% of vehicles in 2016.

It is vital now that all of us involved in the EV industry work collaboratively to help the sector grow in a sustainable way.

As electric vehicles become more popular, the number of EV batteries coming to the end of their usefulness on the road will soar. But whereas traditional lead-based car batteries are commonly recycled in the UK – so much so that the majority of a new lead-based battery is recycled material – that is not the case for EV batteries.

Last year a joint study published by researchers from the University of Birmingham, the University of Newcastle and the University of Leicester concluded that the rise in popularity of EVs had not been matched by a solution to the problem of recycling the end of life waste of their components.

The researchers argued that there was an opportunity for the UK to be at the forefront of a new sector in the recycling industry to meet that challenge – potentially not only handling UK EV waste but also profiting by importing and recycling EV waste from abroad.

In Japan, Nissan opened a factory for the refurbishment of used EV batteries for repurposing in electric cars as well as vehicles requiring less power, such as forklifts and golf buggies, and in street lights. Likewise, Toyota has linked units to solar panels to provide power to shops in Japan.

The Faraday Institution - the UK's independent institute for electrochemical energy storage research - has suggested that recycled material could be a key input for the eight Gigafactories it forecasts the UK will need by 2040 to meet domestic demand for lithium ion batteries.

Securing the raw materials these factories will need, could be a mammoth task in the face of a global rise in demand, and the fact the mines producing the minerals needed aren't exactly on our doorstep. Lithium and manganese production is dominated by Chile, Australia and China, but the majority of cobalt comes from less stable countries, in particular the Democratic Republic of Congo. Concerns have already been raised by some experts that mining output of some of these minerals will not be able to keep pace with the growth in demand for electric vehicles.

While the Financial Times reported recently (6/9/20) that a number of companies are investing in Cornish mines in the hope of sourcing low-cost lithium domestically, a secure supply from recycled sources of the minerals needed for EV battery production in the UK would provide assurance that output could continue no matter the political situation in other countries.

Work is already underway on joint projects organised by the Faraday Institute and involving scientists and industry to increase the efficiency of batteries and make them more environmentally friendly.

The aim of the ReLiB project (Reuse & Recycling of Lithium Ion Batteries run by The Faraday Institution) is to secure the recycling of close to 100% of the materials in lithium ion batteries in the automotive sector, by identifying and removing the technological, economic and legal obstacles to it. It includes developing new methods of isolating the minerals used so they can be recycled, identifying second life uses for the components, reviewing the regulations on battery recycling to ensure they are fit for purpose - and of course encouraging the development of new businesses to actually carry out the recycling process.

All of us involved in the EV industry have a role to play in improving the sustainability of the market. Some parts of a lithium ion battery are already reusable as are the fasteners and components within EV battery housings, busbar assemblies and electrical connectors within the battery, as well as in the charging sockets and facilities. The fasteners and components include silver plated copper or brass connector pins, brass inserts, stainless steel bolts, steel self-drilling screws, aluminium connections and compression limiters. At the end of the battery's functional life, these should be easily removable for separation and recycled for use in other products, whilst allowing easy recovery of the spent battery cells.

But if we are to move to batteries that are near 100% recyclable, we need to do more.

Those designing the next generation of EV batteries must consider at the start of the process - rather than as an afterthought, or not at all - how units will be disposed of. How can we make the product as efficient and effective as possible, but still ensure its constituent parts can be quickly and easily separated for recycling when it runs out of juice?

Putting Design for Manufacture at the heart of the system is key. Designers working with suppliers from the outset can reduce the number of components in their product and increase their efficiency. At TR Fastenings, for example, our specialist teams work closely with our customers from the very early stage of the design process, with our engineers able to develop, test and put into production innovative solutions to problems.

If we are to keep the cost of replacing and recycling units down, we need to develop greater standardisation of batteries so that a one size fits all system can be created for end of life disposal of all of the constituent parts.

In addition, unless there is a sustained focus on tackling the end of life situation for the current generation of batteries, the green benefits of the technology are at risk of being undermined.

Click links below for further EV references:

- TR's automotive animations, videos and EV fastener information
- Article: 'Getting a grip on fasteners and their coatings' – a focus on the EV market by Sven Brehler, Engineering Project Manager at TR Fastenings.

Growth opportunities in decarbonisation programmes

Market opportunities can come from new products and market growth; with the planned changes to achieve carbon neutrality on time, expect to see both in big numbers.

We know that OEMs are pressuring their supply-chains to reduce carbon footprints as they have to report ever better figures themselves. On the other side of the coin, these are opportunities for growth and many businesses have recognised them as such.

A recent report, The path to zero carbon heat concludes: “Achieving [Net Zero carbon emissions] will require a transformation of the UK’s infrastructure system at a scale and pace that have few historical precedents.” (by UK Net-Zero Infrastructure Industry Coalition).

Put to one side the alternative lifestyle the Greens propose and the only truly clean alternatives to carbon fuels are 1, switching to renewable electricity 2, burning hydrogen 3, higher levels of energy efficiency and 4, capturing the remaining carbon dioxide. The UK needs a mixture of all of these to reach net-zero.

What we can expect

Transport;. We can see that cars are changing to electric, hybrid first followed by more battery electric vehicles (BEV). However, batteries cannot give heavy transport the range and load-carrying capacity it needs and the favoured solution is on-board fuel cells (FCEV) for trucks and busses. Local, last mile deliveries can manage on batteries and overnight charging. Many mainline trains run on grid electricity and now the rest will be wired up where sensible or changed to on-board hydrogen fuel cells.

Growth areas; batteries for all those BEVs: electric charging points and local networks; fuel cells and hydrogen storage for buses, HGV and trains. Electric motors and power circuits. Recycling of batteries and fuel cell stacks. Conversion of diesel vehicles to dual fuel.

FCEV require less resources and energy to make than BEV, so they could replace them eventually.

Heating; industry and buildings will move to electric and hydrogen with added energy management and efficiency provisions. Domestic boilers since 1996 must to be able to burn 25% hydrogen. Several proving and demonstration tests at 20% replacement in distribution networks are underway right now. The gas industry claims it can convert the UK to 100% hydrogen by 2045.

Growth; solar hot water panels, thermal storage, thermal insulation and heat pumps. Passive Houses. High efficiency air conditioning units. District heating networks; Combined Heat and Power.

Electricity Generation; worldwide generation has to grow by an additional 25% to power the change to electrification. In the UK, changing to electric heating in buildings combined with the roll-out of electric vehicles, leads to a doubling of total electricity demand by 2050. Renewables naturally only produce power when the wind blows and sun shines so there is an in-balance with demand.

Growth; distribution and sub-networks; storage to balance the new supply and demand sides. Renewables are expected to be double from where they are now. On-site solar and storage. Small Nuclear Reactors.

Hydrogen; generation for grid distribution will be done at reasonably high pressures. Hydrogen will soon be shipped around the world like oil and LPG are now. Hydrogen generation must grow from its current low level very quickly to meet predicted demand.

Growth; electrolysers, storage and distribution systems; cryogenics, compressors and infrastructure like hydrogen service points. On-site hydrogen generation for bus fleets, trucks and cars. Watch out for brand-new technology to produce hydrogen from waste plastics.

Carbon Capture and Storage; the UK’s commitment is to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 because we will still produce some carbon dioxide. Therefore we need carbon capture and storage systems. collection networks have been approved for South Wales, Teesside and Humberside.

Circular Economy; recycling, reconditioning and up-cycling will increase as they reduce the overall amount of energy used.

Maybe Industry 4.0 and 5G have arrived just in time to help us adapt.

There is huge governmental support for green technologies around the world, including the UK. Maybe there is some for you.

See weblinks under Energy in the Members area of the CBM website www.thecbm.co.uk

CBM Energy Services - SECR

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting - a mandatory requirement for eligible businesses

Does your company or any other company in your group meet any 2 of the SECR criteria?

- Turnover of £36 Million or more
- Balance sheet of £18 Million or more
- 250 employees or more.

SECR requires that as part of the company's annual accounts (filed at company's house) you must disclose:

- UK energy Use including transport
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- At least 1 intensity ratio (e.g. Co_2 per ton output)
- Information about energy efficiency action taken in the organisation's financial year
- Methodologies of calculations
- Previous year's figures for comparison.

The CBM is offering a SECR service to all its members that fall under SECR umbrella. The expected members rate will be £2,500.00 per year which is far cheaper than the main external consultants. The items included within the service are:

- Data collection
- Assistance in putting systems in place to collect the relevant data e.g. transport
- Setting a base year and calculating the relevant Co_2 figures
- At least 2 meetings to discuss and finalise the energy efficiency narrative that forms part of the report
- Compiling a SECR report that can be added to the company's annual report.

For more information, please contact:
Louise.campbell@thecbm.co.uk

Enhancing energy efficiency in manufacturing

Enhancing energy efficiency is a key focus for manufacturers, with increasing pressures to reduce energy consumption and costs where possible.

As manufacturers continue to face pressures to reduce their energy costs and become more energy efficient, alongside navigating tighter restrictions due to an increase in Coronavirus cases, many are seeking opportunities to enhance their energy efficiency. With the UK Government's 2050 net-zero target looming, manufacturers need to start putting plans into action, as well as making sure profit margins are maintained. However, lack of available capital during the current climate is causing barriers for manufacturers looking to implement smart energy technologies.

As manufacturers within the metalforming industry consume high amounts of energy during day-to-day business operations, energy efficiency projects are seen as a worthwhile, yet non-essential investment, which often requires capital upfront. Due to the current climate, Powerstar is committed to supporting its customers with smart energy solutions, ensuring they remain cash positive from the outset, whilst still receiving the benefits of the technologies.

Powerstar recently held a webinar to help businesses understand the strategies available for them to reduce energy consumption and costs without spending upfront capital. If this sounds of interest to you and your business, the webinar is available to watch on demand on Powerstar's website: http://www.powerstar.com/finance-webinar.

If your business is interested in the benefits available from smart energy solutions, contact Powerstar today at https://powerstar.com/contact-us/ or on 0333 230 1327 for a no-obligation consultation.

powerstar

What does 2021 hold for energy prices?

Uncertainty, Brexit, changeable weather, plus a recovery from Covid-19 mean we are likely to see wholesale energy prices increase. Liam Conway from Control Energy Costs tells us why.

• Liam Conway, Control Energy Costs

2020 saw a huge reduction in energy demand, even before COVID-19, which, rather than driving prices down, held prices at an already low point.

The increase in renewable energy, which in the first quarter of 2020 accounted for 47% of UK generation, has also contributed to the demand-driven nature of pricing structure; it is no longer the case that generation can be ramped up or down easily when it is heavily reliant on weather conditions.

2021 is likely to see recovery from the current low rates, as has been evident in the past six to eight weeks. As economies recover and demands increase in all markets, this will have an impact on UK energy pricing.

2021 also brings with it much more uncertainty: the recovery of global economies, Brexit and the weather will be the determining factors for energy prices and, as all of these things are volatile, this means that wholesale prices are likely to increase as traders will always err on the side of caution when there is uncertainty.

The message from me is that reviewing your energy contracts is never bad idea, especially with the UK facing unprecedented circumstances. We can help mitigate this risk to an ongoing and unavoidable business overhead.

CONTROL ENERGY COSTS

Are businesses REALLY concerned about employees when it comes to HAVS?

By Satish Lakhiani, noise and vibration consultant, Essel Acoustics.

Over the last few months, concerned workers have been contacting Essel about Hand Arm Vibration syndrome (HAVS) after downloading informative content posted on our website.

A common thread amongst these calls was a description of symptoms consistent with the early stages of HAVS injuries from the regular use of powered tools. However, a disturbing trend emerged regarding their employer's attitudes to their concerns, which has prompted writing this article.

Head in the sand?

When the employees' symptoms were reported to management, it seemed that the complaints fell on deaf ears (no pun intended) and very little effort was expended in taking matters further, i.e. it was a "just get on with it" reaction. In one case the operative had to overcome his employer's reluctance to his requests for health surveillance, but then only because of his persistent complaints!

Despite the outcome of tests showing the early stages of HAVS, the process of managing the employee also appeared to be poor, therefore increasing the risks of an irreversible injury. The businesses seemed unaware (or undeterred) that they were on the wrong side of the law, risking prosecution and heavy fines. Employers are duty bound to protect employees with respect to the Control of Vibrations at Work Regulations (2005), which means a risk assessment, awareness training, control actions and health surveillance where necessary.

In another case, it was reported that a business had indeed gone to the effort of getting reliable vibration information (from a reputable tool database) but stopped at that point; the employee could not explain the reason for this abrupt halt? They failed to carry out a risk assessment and so seemingly not met their statutory obligations. Without a knowledge of the risks, an action plan for control could therefore not be established and so the business was none the wiser. Their initial efforts in gathering data was a total waste of time and money!

In a third case, an organisation was looking to carry out their own vibration measurements on their inventory of tools. When quizzed further, this employee lacked confidence in the capability of his business to carry out a competent risk assessment. In an unrelated case, measurements were undertaken using inappropriate instrumentation, where this kit was actually intended for condition monitoring and therefore measuring the wrong thing!

A false economy?

Now let's not tar all companies with the same brush, there are many examples of businesses that Essel has worked with, who put staff health and wellbeing as one of their highest priorities. These businesses fall well within the law when it comes to regulatory compliance.

But the main impression from our recent experience is that businesses are in denial about HAVS as a health risk in their workplace. With the regulations in place for nearly 15 years, surely any reputable business or health and safety manager should not be unaware of the risks of HAVS due to regular use of powered tools?

A further impression was that cost was regarded as a primary restricting factor when it came to carrying out a competent HAV risk assessment. With fines now in six figures and rising (the latest prosecution was a record £600k), plus the risks of compensation, think 'no win no fee', this is a false economy. Investing in competence training or alternatively getting external help has an obvious ROI.

But above all, is it not a MORAL responsibility for businesses to look after the health and wellbeing of their staff?

Contact: satish@esselacoustics.com

www.esselacoustics.com

The Crosby Group trains more than 2,200 people during Safety Week

The Crosby Group was a proud advocate of Construction Safety Week, September 14–18. This year, despite the restrictions and challenges surrounding the pandemic, we hosted a record number of training events, both in-person through live demonstrations and digitally through pre-recorded videos and a live webinar on risk management and assessment.

This was also the first year we expanded our Safety Week training to reach a global audience. In total, we provided a **488 hours** of training at more than **100 sites** and reached more than **2,200** people.

"It was extremely impressive to see the entire Crosby Group team step up and support our end users during Safety Week. It is a testament to our level of commitment to safety," said business development director Mark Filippelli who led the initiative.

\Every day, we walk onto construction sites with one goal in mind – get the job done safely. We take great pride in the role we play shaping the communities in which we live, work and play. But even more than that, we feel an unwavering responsibility to one another, our families and friends to make sure we all return home safe every day.

In our industry, safety is a value and belief we all share. That's why more than 70 national and global construction firms join forces for Safety Week with a single aim: to inspire everyone in the industry to be leaders in safety.

Safety Week is a show of force, an opportunity for people, companies, and even competitors, to work together and celebrate the incredibly hard work by people in our industry who make safety the foundation of everything they do.

Celebrate safety where you work and demonstrate your continued commitment to building a stronger, safer industry.

Mission

We will strengthen our industry's safety culture and performance by sharing best practices, tools and resources. We are focused on the impact our safe choices have on our team members, their families, and the communities in which we live and work. We are united in our commitment to continuously improve our safety culture and send each employee home safe every day.

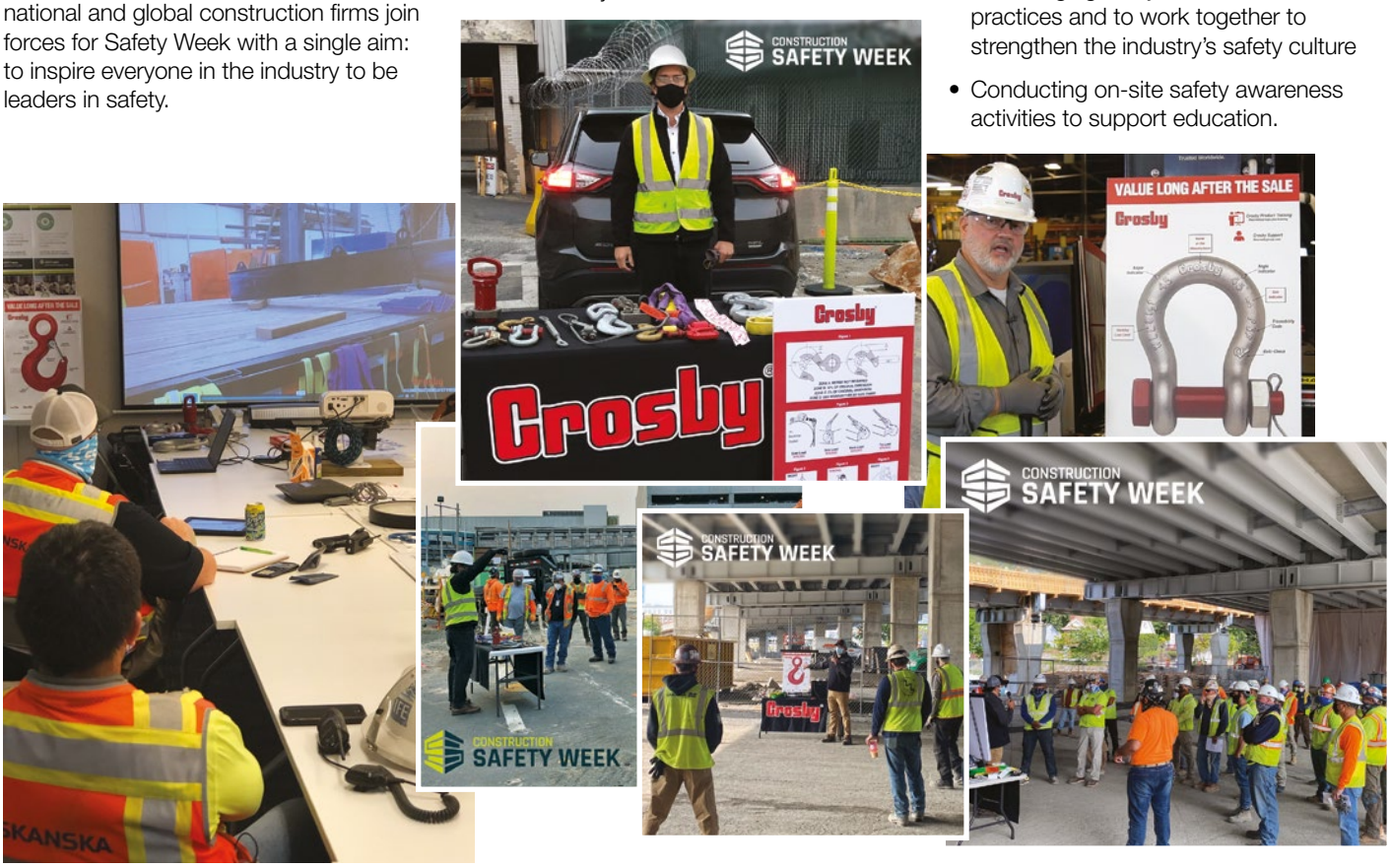
Together, we are building a stronger, safer industry.

History

Safety Week was initially started in 2014, when more than 40 national and global construction firms comprising the Construction Industry Safety Initiative (CISI) group and the Incident and Injury Free (IIF) CEO Forum joined forces with a single aim: to inspire everyone in the industry to be leaders in safety.

In 2016, Safety Week was more formally branded and started to take shape as the fully integrated annual campaign with a growing number of members and sponsors that exists today. We continue to focus on our original mission of:

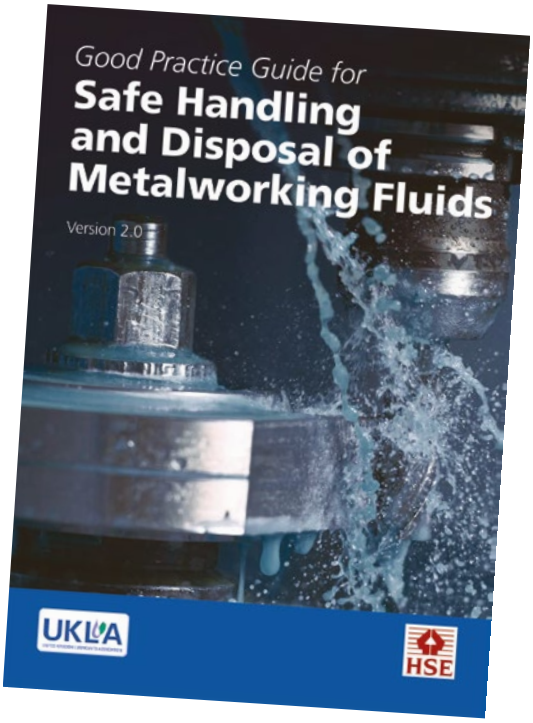
- Thanking workers for supporting safety and recognizing their efforts to be injury free
- Increasing awareness of the importance of being committed to safety, every day
- Encouraging everyone to share best practices and to work together to strengthen the industry's safety culture
- Conducting on-site safety awareness activities to support education.



Revised guidance for metalworking fluids

Updated: Good practice guide for safe handling and disposal of metalworking fluids

CBM are very pleased to see that this guide has been updated and it will offer guidance for metalworking workshops to provide comprehensive advice on the safe handling, use and disposal of metalworking fluids (MWFs). Ill-health can be caused by exposure to MWF, the guide provides practical advice on maintaining fluid quality and the control measures required to protect your workers. It is aimed at those with the daily responsibilities for managing MWF and also provides advice for operators.



Improvements to the revised version of the guide include;

- An updated introductory section on the requirement for occupational health surveillance for those working with MWF, that is aligned with current HSE guidance.
- Improved guidance statements on managing MWF based on peer review and end user feedback.
- Additional advice and illustrations to assist those undertaking checks on the quality of the MWF.

The publication and other information relating to metalworking fluids, can be downloaded from the HSE's website at www.hse.gov.uk/metalworking

These topics and many more are covered in the CBM's regular Health, Safety and Environment meetings, check out our events page on the CBM website for upcoming dates of our next meetings.

SME programme receives £6m extension

A £6m extension has been granted to a programme to help small manufacturing companies in the East and West Midlands.

The SME Group at WMG, University of Warwick, has secured the funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the High Value Manufacturing Catapult at WMG.

The programme will work with a further 250 manufacturing companies across the Midlands to solve challenges, to improve productivity and boost competitiveness.

The programme has helped more than 100 companies, develop 71 new products and processes over the last two years.

Dr Mark Swift, head small business programmes at WMG, University of Warwick, said: "We are thrilled to have the manufacturing competitiveness programme extended, and look forward to being able to help hundreds of small businesses across the midlands to transform their business and become more sustainable.

"The support we offer will be especially helpful in light of Covid-19, as after months of lockdown businesses can be helped to get back on their feet and thrive.

"We are here, ready to help our region's manufacturing companies; to make manufacturing technology and thinking work for you, to help our businesses to grow become more productive and sustainable and ultimately make more in the UK."

Combined authority partnership with bank funds £1.8m for new apprenticeships

By Rachel Covill, TheBusinessDesk.com

A partnership of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) with one of the UK's biggest banks is helping the region's economy to recover from the Covid-19 shutdown by funding £1.8m for apprenticeship training for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The WMCA set up the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund to cover the costs of training apprentices at SMEs in the West Midlands, through large employers pledging their unspent levy.

Lloyds Banking Group was one of the first large employers to join the scheme with a pledged spend of £1.8m.

Over the past year, this has funded the training costs of 250 apprentices at 135 SMEs in the region's fastest growing sectors including business and professional services, adult care, construction, digital and engineering.

Andy Street, the Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "It is critical that we support new jobs and training opportunities for people right across the West Midlands as we move through the economic crisis brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. This applies particularly to young people, who we know historically are disproportionately affected by economic downturns.

"Thanks to Lloyds Banking Group and other big employers who have contributed to the levy transfer fund, we are helping more and more local people find work by equipping them with the skills employers need. The region must do everything it can to keep people in work or support those who fall out, and our apprenticeship training is just one part of our wider employment work.

"I'd urge any SMEs in the West Midlands that are thinking about taking on new apprentices, or anyone out there looking for a job or change of career, to get in touch with us and find out how we can help."

Charged by HM Revenue and Customs on all businesses with a payroll of over £3 million, the levy is held by the Government for businesses across the country to utilise the funds to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment by bringing in new talent or plugging skills gaps with their staff. Any unspent levy is retained by the Government after a two-year period.

The WMCA uses its strong local knowledge and relationships to identify large businesses which can donate unspent levy to SMEs through the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund, covering 100% of their apprenticeship training and assessment costs.

This approach keeps levy money within the West Midlands region, boosting skills, job opportunities and productivity by supporting more young people and adults of all ages into work.

Jo Harris, Lloyds Banking Group ambassador for the Midlands, said: "Working with the WMCA to increase the number of apprenticeships and address skills gaps in the region is an important part of our support to drive the economic recovery in the West Midlands.

"Apprenticeships bring tangible business benefits, including increased productivity and performance; enhanced engagement and loyalty; and creating a more diverse workforce.

"It's great to see that our investment has opened up new apprenticeships for people like Curtis and is helping to boost employment opportunities across the West Midlands at such a crucial time. I would encourage other large businesses to help to boost the region's economic recovery by donating their unspent levy to smaller employers."

The WMCA is now calling on SMEs who may not have considered hiring apprentices to tap into the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund. Large organisations are also being encouraged to get in touch to discuss transferring their remaining levy.

Applying for the incentive payments

Follow these steps to apply for incentive payments for hiring a new apprentice. We'll let you know who's eligible for the payment, when you can apply and how you'll get paid, helping you to build valuable skills as the coronavirus outbreak continues.

1. Hire new apprentices between 1 August 2020 and 31 January 2021

Any organisation can apply for the payment, no matter the size or the sector. The important thing is that you hire an apprentice who

- is new to your organisation
- starts their contract of employment and their apprenticeship with you between 1 August 2020 and 31 January 2021

You could get the payment when you hire an apprentice who has been made redundant, as long as they're new to your organisation. You can search for apprenticeship training and training providers using Find apprenticeship training.

2. Apply for the incentive payment from 1 September

You'll be able to apply for the payment from 1 September 2020, after you've added new apprentices to your apprenticeship service account. You'll need to give us your organisation's bank details so we can pay you directly.

Your training provider will need to confirm the details you give to us so that we can make your payment.

3. Get paid up to £2,000 for each new apprentice

You'll be eligible for 2 equal instalments, after the apprentice completes 90 and 365 days of their apprenticeship. We're expecting to make the first payments in January 2021.

You could get paid up to £2,000 for each new apprentice you hire. You can find out more about how much you'll get paid and how you can spend it

University of Strathclyde at the forefront of projects helping small and medium sized manufacturing firms in Scotland

The University of Strathclyde is today announcing that it is set to be involved in six of the Scottish Government's Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund projects. Through the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS), the University will lead on two projects and colleagues across the University will support the development of four others.

Announced by the First Minister in May, the Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund projects will see £15.8 million invested in the development of free services across Scotland to help small and medium-sized companies develop their manufacturing capabilities and ultimately transform skills, productivity and innovation in Scotland's manufacturing and engineering community.

The Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund is a partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Projects are part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Scottish Government and match-funding from each project, with Scottish Enterprise managing the Fund.

The two projects being led by the NMIS team at the University focus on upskilling the workforces of SME manufacturers across the country.

The first focuses on the key technology area of additive manufacturing. The project is set to de-risk innovation by providing companies with the knowledge required to make the correct business, technology and investment decisions in additive manufacturing and ultimately grow the Scottish supply chain around the development of this emerging technology.

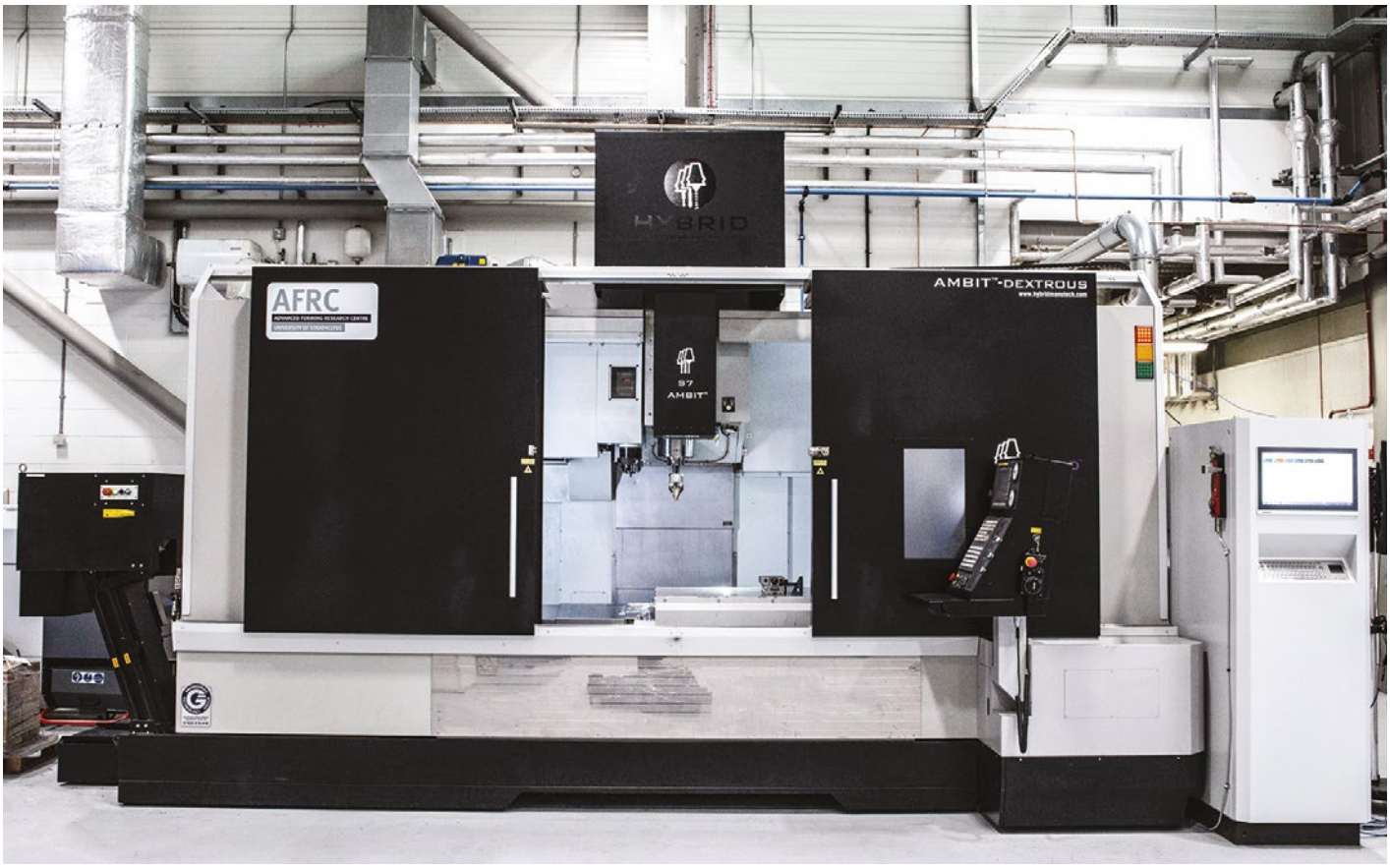
Additive manufacturing is a transformative approach to manufacturing that uses the layering of materials to produce complex shapes without limitations. It enables companies to develop lightweight parts and often repair components that would otherwise be scrapped.

With support from organisations around the country, the team, led by Stephen Fitzpatrick, lead for machining and additive manufacturing at NMIS, is developing nine different business and technology support packages. Using these packages, companies will be taken on a technology adoption journey that suits their specific needs and objectives. With the exception of one package, all can be delivered virtually meaning companies can start their journey immediately regardless of location.

Speaking about the project Stephen Fitzpatrick said: *"We aim to give the owners and directors of small manufacturing businesses in Scotland the confidence to invest in new additive manufacturing processes and technologies that will ultimately improve their business. This could be through improving the quality of output, increasing productivity, opening up new revenue streams or reducing waste."*

NMIS, through its Manufacturing Skills Academy, alongside colleagues in Strathclyde is also leading on a project to establish an online platform for the delivery of digital manufacturing and leadership courses for the manufacturing community.

• Stephen Fitzpatrick



Companies and their employees will be supported through a portfolio of content libraries and bespoke learning action plans that will be designed in collaboration with individual businesses.

The courses and learning plans will cover a wide variety of topics related to manufacturing in the digital-age including data science, visualisation technologies, cyber security, robotics and artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things.

Project lead, Jose Hernandez, said: *"Our ambition, through the online learning project, is to upskill the manufacturing workforce across Scotland by both using and building upon the expertise and skills that currently exist. This will lead to companies being more open to investing in and consequently benefiting from digital manufacturing technologies."*

NMIS and teams at Strathclyde are involved in three other projects alongside North Lanarkshire Council, New College Lanarkshire and South Ayrshire Council and Ayrshire College.

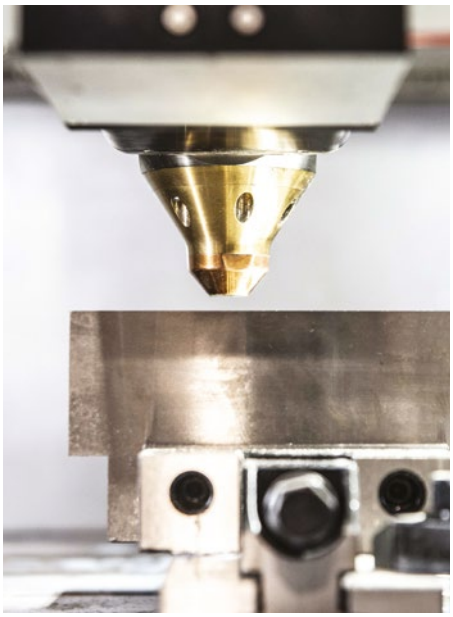
North Lanarkshire will see the creation of a manufacturing innovation hub that will link in with all that the NMIS Group has to offer. Meanwhile the South Ayrshire projects focus on the high-value aerospace sector with the development of a dedicated aerospace digital visualisation suite in collaboration with the NMIS digital manufacturing team and an aerospace supply chain development programme that will endeavour to break down the barriers to entry for smaller businesses.

Jamie Hepburn, Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills, said: *"The Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund is a key part of our efforts to create a successful, vibrant and diverse manufacturing sector that can continue to prosper despite the challenges of COVID-19. The expertise of the University of Strathclyde and NMIS will be crucial to help ensure the success of these six projects in supporting SMEs build their capabilities. I look forward to seeing the results of their work."*

Sarah Jardine, interim CEO of NMIS, said: *"The National Manufacturing Institute Scotland is all about working collaboratively with industry, academia and the public sector to develop Scotland's manufacturing businesses and the sector's talented workforce. The Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund projects are a great example of that in action at a local level across the country.*

"More than ever, it is crucial that businesses of all sizes, especially smaller companies that so often struggle to compete, are given the support they need to flourish – that is what the NMIS team is aiming to do through this cluster of projects."

Strathclyde is also working with the Centre for Process Innovation, through the Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre in which it is a partner, CMAC Future Manufacturing Research Hub and the Industrial Biotechnology Innovation Centre (IBioIC) on the SCOUT (Scottish Outreach) project. SCOUT will deploy technology to accelerate and de-risk the growth of Scottish SMEs working in the high-value chemical and biochemical supply chains.



Perhaps not since war time have UK businesses faced so much uncertainty.

After months, if not years, of being told to prepare for Britain's exit from the EU – a crisis with just as much potential to disrupt business arrived with no warning.

Here, FBC Manby Bowdler's Managing Director Neil Lloyd (right) looks at what businesses could be preparing for next…

Businesses were asked by the Government to Get Ready for Brexit. But no business anywhere received the memo telling them to Prep for the Pandemic.

Of course, UK businesses are known for their resilience. We are not a small island nation which has historically punched above its weight for nothing. But many business owners are still peeping out from underneath their tin hats, wondering what else 2020 can throw at them.

As we did in the early days of Brexit preparation, we have made it our mission throughout the Covid crisis to help and support businesses by giving them as much information as we could.

We created a dedicated free to access resource library where we offered expert advice on everything from available funding to furlough rules and ran our #AskFBCMB campaign to encourage businesses to seek our expert help.

But the businesses which we have seen survive and thrive have one thing in common – they were somewhat prepared for whatever was thrown at them.

No scrambling to check holiday entitlement allowances and sick pay arrangements for these super savvy companies. No out of date clauses in their contracts either. Some of them even had GDPR policies already in place should they need to move all their staff off-site and onto home working within hours.

And as we appear to be running headlong into the end of the Brexit transition period with prospects of a no deal ever more likely – we're advising all businesses to do the same. Prepare where you can.

A few months ago, we predicted that the Government's pledge to get a free trade deal done with the EU by New Year's Eve 2020 was an "eye-wateringly tight deadline, which will give it little room for manoeuvre during negotiations."

At the time of writing, there is no breakthrough in those talks.

So how can businesses prepare for the long-term without knowing what a new trade deal, if one is even reached, looks like? In short, make sure that what can be prepared for regardless is completed by the end of the year. Look at your supply chains and importantly, the contracts you have with them. Can they be revisited or renegotiated to limit potential damage from no deal or further uncertainty?

Ironically, there may be some room for manoeuvre in these particular negotiations. With stockpiles built up in preparation for Brexit being used to plug shortages during the coronavirus crisis, more flexible supply chains for the future may be the result.

Now check what regulatory or financial regulations need to be complied with… it could mean more paperwork and red-tape now but it could mean less playing catch-up in the future. And potentially less expense. When many companies are playing with fewer cash reserves due to Covid-19, no-one can afford to risk heavy fines.

Ahead of any deal, you can audit the countries you deal with and investigate what EU and international standards need to be complied with.

Most businesses which are trading overseas will have an Economic Operator Registration and Identification (EORI) number, but if you haven't yet, your goods aren't going anywhere. And if you import goods, you can register for Transitional Simplified Procedures (TSP) which helps registered importers to defer customs declarations and duty should the UK leave without a deal.

Whatever the next few months bring for businesses, it will be those which did more than just peer out from under the tin hat which will benefit. It is hard at a time when many businesses are struggling to survive, never mind plan for a future which is currently so uncertain. But fortune does indeed favour the brave and, I think, the prepared.

fbc manby bowdler.
SOLICITORS

November 2020

As part of your CBM membership, you have free and instant access to specialist advice to help your business navigate challenges brought by the pandemic and wider workplace matters.

Croner, our trusted helpline providers, give examples below of popular questions they are receiving from members.

For pragmatic guidance in these areas or other scenarios, call 0844 561 8133 and quote your association number to speak with an expert today.

What is the Job Retention Scheme and how does it work?

The Job Retention Scheme (JRS) was first put in place in March 2020 to provide employers, whose operations had been affected by coronavirus, with wage assistance. It involves designating some or all of your employees as 'furloughed workers'. This means temporarily changing the status of employees so that they do no work, or work for fewer hours than normal, but are retained on your books. It is an alternative to making employees redundant which may otherwise be required due to having no, or little, work to offer your current workforce.

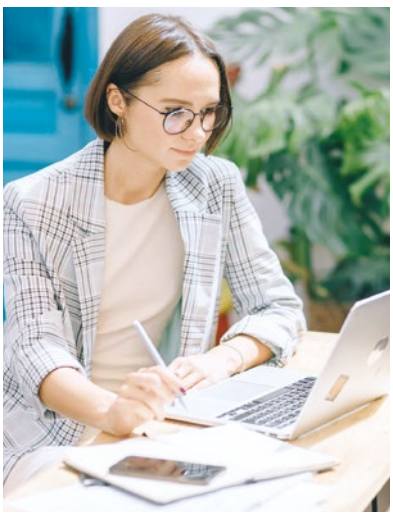
The JRS permits both full and flexible furlough. Full furlough is a period during which employers can provide no working hours to an employee; employers who are under instruction from one of the four UK Governments to temporarily close as a direct result of coronavirus restrictions are likely to need to put employees on full furlough.

Flexible furlough involves a combination of both work and furlough. Employers are likely to use this option when they are not under instruction from the Government to close but are experiencing a reduction in demand and are therefore unable to continue to provide normal working hours to employees.

Through use of the scheme, you are able to claim a grant from the Government to cover a portion of wage costs for hours not worked. From November, the Government will pay 80% of employee wages for the time they are furloughed, up to a cap of £2,500 per month per employee. You will, however, need to pay National Insurance and employer pension contributions

I thought the Job Retention Scheme was ending on 31 October, to be replaced by a new scheme from 1 November. Has this now changed?

Yes. The Job Retention Scheme was originally due to end on 31 October and be replaced by a new scheme, the Job Support Scheme (JSS). This new scheme was to also provide financial assistance to employers in paying their employees, aimed at businesses who continue to suffer financial difficulty as a result of coronavirus restrictions.



There were to be two different forms of support offered depending on whether your business could remain open or was told to shut by the Government. If a business could stay open, employees needed to work at least one-fifth of their normal hours and the Government were to cover 61.67% of wages for the time in which they did not work, up to a cap. If it needed to shut, the Government were going to cover two thirds of employee wages up to a cap.

As the Job Retention Scheme has now been extended to March 2021, the Job Support Scheme has been postponed. It is currently not confirmed when it will be launched.

How can I check I am eligible for the Job Retention Scheme?

All employers with a UK bank account and UK PAYE schemes can claim the grant. You will not need to have used the furlough scheme before in order to use it in November. However, all employees will need to meet eligibility requirements.

To be eligible to be claimed for under this extension, employees must be on your PAYE payroll by 23:59 30 October 2020. This means a Real Time Information (RTI) submission notifying payment for that employee to HMRC must have been made on or before 30 October 2020.

Employees do not need to have been furloughed before in order to be placed into the JRS during the extension. However, all employees will need to meet the eligibility requirements.

Employees can be on any type of contract and, if the JRS continues to operate in the same way as previously in respect of its scope, this will include workers, agency workers, office holders (including company directors) and salaried members of Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs).

I have already agreed with my staff to reduce their hours and place them on the Job Support Scheme. Do I need to get a separate agreement to place them on furlough?

As both the Job Retention Scheme and the Job Support Scheme involved a reduction in hours and pay, staff need to agree to be placed on either scheme. Due to the very late confirmation that the JRS was to be extended, and the JSS postponed, you may have already taken steps to agree with your staff's participation in either the now postponed Job Support Scheme Open or Closed.

If so, you should now re-visit those agreements to confirm to employees that, during their nonworking hours in November and for as long as the extended JRS lasts, or until working conditions change, they will be classed as being on furlough under the JRS, rather than the Job Support Scheme, and the payment arrangements of the extended JRS will apply. The overall result of this is that employees will receive a higher rate of pay under the JRS.

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How the hard market affects your business insurance

You may have heard that the insurance industry is entering a hard market period, but what does that actually mean?

Insurance is cyclical. Just like how the seasons change, the market fluctuates, with each insurance 'season' lasting anywhere between 2 to 10 years.

On top of that, there are two types of insurance cycle conditions – hard and soft – that can affect the status quo.

What is the difference between a hard and a soft market?

In a **soft market,** you are likely to see:

- Low premiums
- Broad appetite and availability of cover
- Increased capacity, meaning insurers write a high volume of policies
- Higher limits on policies.

In a **hard market,** you are likely to see:

- High premiums
- Reduced appetite due to stricter underwriting criteria
- Decreased capacity, meaning insurers write less policies
- Lower limits on policies.

Why are insurance premiums rising?

We mentioned above that in a hard market you typically see higher insurance premiums. Why? During a hard market, insurers place more stringent limits on the cover they can write, which automatically lowers their appetite. This in turn means they are writing less policies.

As the insurers' capacity is lower, it can be more in difficult to find insurance solutions and that leads to an increase in demand for cover, all of which drives the premium prices up.

Why is the market hardening?

There are many reasons why we're heading towards a hardening market, from natural disasters to rising rates. We've listed just a few of them below.

House prices were low at the start of 2020, meaning insurers were losing money on property cover. Then, storms Ciara and Dennis hit in February, which caused a rise in claims when insurers were already suffering a loss on property premiums.

As the Solvency II law continues to apply. This regulatory regime was introduced in 2016 to harmonise EU insurance regulation. Principally, it aims to make sure policyholders across the EU have the same level of protection, regardless of where they purchase their insurance. However, it has resulted in some insurers leaving the market, meanwhile others have reduced their capacity considerably.

Another factor is the Ogden Discount Rate has changed; this is a calculation used to work out how much compensation insurers should award someone who has life-changing injuries to cover them for loss of earnings and any care costs. The rate changed from 2.5% to -0.75% in 2017 and then from -0.75% in 2017 to -0.25% in July 2019 in England and Wales, which has resulted in insurers having to pay more compensation for big personal injury claims.

What is the effect of COVID-19?

Even before the Coronavirus pandemic hit, the tides were changing. COVID-19 has naturally had an effect on the market, compounding all the existing factors.

John Neal, CEO of Lloyd's of London, told the Financial Times back in April that the pandemic is "no doubt the largest insurance challenge the industry has ever faced". In May, Lloyd's forecast that COVID-19 will cost the insurance industry $203billion (£166billon) worldwide and has recently announced that it expects to pay out £5billion in Coronavirus-related claims. Meanwhile, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) still envisages the UK insurance industry will have to fork out more than £900million for COVID-connected claims, as well as £275million to travellers who had to cancel their trips as a result of the pandemic. It is, therefore, likely that COVID-19 will extend the length of the hard market, as the insurance industry tries to recover from the impact of the crisis.

What does this mean for your business?

During a hard market cycle, it can be more difficult for businesses to find wide cover at competitive premiums, and it's our role as the insurance broker for CBM members to guide you through the insurance landscape. We have longstanding relationships with many insurers, which allows us to have conversations with the right people for your business needs. We act as your champion out there in the marketplace, whether it is in a hard or soft cycle, to get you the best cover for your business at the most competitive premium.

For further information on how we can help your business please contact Richard Gibson at Gravity Risk Services on 0116 478 2999 or email CBM@gravityriskservices.co.uk

Manufacturer & Supplier Membership Directory 2020

Fasteners

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t: 01536 271 920
www.amcukfasteners.co.uk

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t: 01244 837 220
www.henrob.com

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www.cooperandturner.co.uk

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www.howmet.com

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www.jcshi-torque.co.uk

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