

# METAL MATTERS



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# BROOKS FORGINGS

THE NON STANDARD SPECIALISTS



**FORGING, BENDING AND FABRICATION SERVICES**

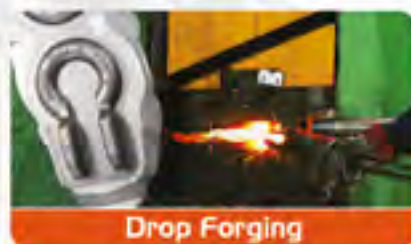
**OVER 20 MANUFACTURING PROCESSES**



Robot Forging



Upset Forging



Drop Forging



Counterblow Forging



Open Die Forging



Hand Forging



Hot & Cold Bending



Hot & Cold Pressing



Swaging & Pointing



Machining



Fabrication & Assembly



Flash Butt Welding



Forging Simulation



Quality Control



Warehousing



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*Front cover image Unsplash*

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**FASTENER FAIR STUTT GART**

25-27 March 2025

**CBM ANNUAL DINNER AND AWARDS**

3rd April, Birmingham Council House, Birmingham Register with Melinda Jean at CBM (melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk)

**EUROFORGE SPRING FORUM:**

9th & 11th April, UK

**CBM MEMBERS DAY**

21st May, NMC Venue

**SMART MANUFACTURING EXPO**

4th & 5th June, NEC Birmingham

**UK METALS EXPO:**

10th & 11th September, NEC Birmingham

**CBM FASTENER EXPO**

15th October, NMC Venue, please contact Rachael Bromley at CBM Rachael.bromley@thebcm.co.uk

**METALLURGY FOR NON METALLURGIST:**

November 2025 Register with Melinda Jean at CBM (melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk)

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# The Challenges Facing SMEs in Manufacturing and Downstream Metal Industries

Towards the end of 2024 we produced a briefing document 'CBM Manufacturing Update' which gave a brief overview of CBM, its engagement with government and some key UK Manufacturing facts, showing the importance of the sector.

It also contained some key points on our lobbying and work to date. One of the main purposes of this document was to brief new MP's and key stakeholders in the work we are doing to support members and where we will need help ourselves. It was well received and our local MP has proceeded to ask two questions in parliament.

Now at the end of February, we've just updated it, which has coincided with me writing my review. What really struck me was the way things had changed in such a short space of time and how much the landscape has made it more difficult for SME's and especially in downstream metal industries, not only in our membership but beyond and we haven't even had the full impact of the budget proposals yet.

## So lets' set the scene

The UK is home to approximately 5.5 million SMEs, making up over 99% of all businesses and contributing significantly to employment and economic output. Within this, manufacturing SME's, particularly those in downstream metal industries, play a crucial role in the UK's industrial supply chain. Despite their importance, these businesses face significant challenges in influencing legislation and securing the support they need to remain competitive. I would go as far as to say it feels like almost zero, I know its not, but the hurdles, hoops and the feeling of banging your head against a brick wall you have to go through to get any support it feels that way!!

## Legislative Challenges and the Lack of Representation

One of the most pressing (pun not intended) issues for manufacturing SMEs, and particularly downstream metal manufacturers, is the lack of representation in key industry and government decision-making bodies, which has come to light. For example:

- **The Steel Council** is a critical forum for discussions on UK steel policy. It currently has no representation from downstream metal manufacturers, despite their reliance on steel supply, pricing structures, and trade policies.

### What we've said:

- Whilst CBM largely welcome this proposed steel strategy, it presents a multifaceted plan that could enhance the resilience and competitiveness of the UK's steel supply chain. However, to be of benefit to all its critical that active engagement from downstream metal users during the consultation phase will be essential to tailor the strategy effectively, balancing the objectives of revitalising the steel

industry with the practical needs of its diverse clientele.

- **The CBAM Working Group** is another key body influencing industrial policy, similarly the WG excludes downstream metal industry voices.

### What we've said:

CBM questioned the representation and stressed that we did not see the working group as having balanced representation. We also stated that member concerns could be assuaged if minutes/outputs from the working group were made available. However, this request was point blank refused on grounds discussions were not policy and would not be until signed off by ministers.

- **Broader legislative processes** frequently overlook SMEs, as most regulations and policies are drafted without consultation or input from small and medium-sized enterprises - despite these businesses being the backbone of UK manufacturing.

This lack of representation means that legislation often fails to account for the specific needs and challenges of SMEs, resulting in policies that disproportionately favour larger corporations while making it harder for smaller firms to compete.

## **A System Weighted Against SMEs**

In all areas, whether it's funding, regulation, trade agreements, or energy policy, SMEs are often at a disadvantage. The legislative and lobbying process tends to favour large businesses with dedicated resources for advocacy, while SMEs lack the capacity to influence key decisions effectively. The challenges include:

- **Unfair trade policies:** Many trade agreements and tariff structures benefit large-scale manufacturers and importers, often disregarding the impact on SME supply chains.
- **Complex regulations:** SMEs are frequently burdened with disproportionate compliance costs, which are easier for large firms to absorb but can be crippling for smaller businesses.
- **Limited financial support:** Government funding schemes and tax reliefs are often structured in a way that makes it harder for SMEs to access critical financial support, despite their essential role in the economy.
- **Energy and sustainability policies:** Policies such as CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) will have significant cost implications for UK manufacturers, yet SMEs have little say in how these frameworks are designed or implemented.



• Steve Morley,  
CBM President

## **The Need for a Stronger SME Voice**

If UK manufacturing and downstream metal industries are to thrive, there must be a fundamental shift in how SMEs are included in policy discussions. This means:

1. Ensuring SME representation on industry councils and working groups is paramount. Bodies like the Steel Council and CBAM Working Group must include SME voices, especially from stakeholders such as downstream metal users, to ensure fairer decision-making.
2. Developing SME focused policies. Legislation should be tailored to recognise the unique challenges SMEs face, rather than applying one-size-fits-all policies that favour large corporations.
3. Strengthening lobbying efforts. CBM and other trade associations must work together to push for meaningful policy changes that reflect the realities of small business operations.
4. Targeted government support. Financial aid, grants, and tax incentives should be designed to actively support SMEs in manufacturing rather than being dominated by large corporations. How much of the £2.5 billion for steel will reach SME's?
5. Greater consultation on new regulations. Before implementing major industry-wide changes, the government should conduct mandatory SME impact assessments to prevent unintended consequences that harm smaller businesses.

## **Conclusion**

The future of UK manufacturing depends on a strong and diverse industrial base, where SMEs are given a seat at the table in shaping policy and legislation. Without this, the UK risks losing innovation, supply chain resilience, and industrial competitiveness. It is imperative that downstream metal manufacturers and other manufacturing SMEs receive the representation and support they need to drive growth and sustainability in the sector.

**Now is the time for change - before it's too late.**

**Steve Morley**  
President of the Confederation of British Metalforming



# The UK's only specialist manufacturers' organisation for experts in metalforming

## Why Join the CBM

**You get valuable influence, business support, technical expertise and market insight as a CBM member.**

## Lobbying & Promotion

Get your voice heard within Government and the wider manufacturing industry

- Benefit from our active lobbying support, which has played a key role as post-brexite trade negotiations accelerate and business conditions continue to be challenging.
- We collaborate with the Department for Business and Trade on a weekly basis, covering issues ranging from Rules of Origin, energy prices, Steel Safeguarding, Labour & Skills to name but a few.
- We collaborate with the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) are required covering energy related issues ranging from cost, supply issues and the role of OFGEM.
- Our mission is to represent UK in those industry discussions – and help you access opportunities through collaboration with a broad stakeholder group.

## Compliance & Cost Management

Save money through your CBM membership

- As a CBM member, you get access to a range of practical services that save money and make operations easier.
- Our accredited energy tax rebate service is a key benefit – it's saved members £4 million+ annually in Climate Change Levy Tax on their energy bills.
- You can boost your savings with our cost-effective Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting compliance service and Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme assessments – as well as discounted meeting room hire, our free business support helpline and more.

## Marketing & Business Development Support

- Build relationships and develop opportunities
- CBM members come from across the supply chain – and work across automotive, aerospace, rail, defence, energy and Construction. We help you build relationships with potential customers and partners.
- You can also use our platform to promote your business – in Metal Matters magazine, at industry events and among our growing social media audience. Our popular website directory and Buyers' Guide is a popular way to get noticed by supply chain managers.

## Technical Support

Leverage expert knowledge of metalforming techniques

- Whether you have a problem or want advice on a new process, our sector specialists are here to help. With your CBM membership, technical support is quick and cost-effective.
- Over 130 years' experience with our Sector Specialists who cover Forging, Fastening, Press work and Sheet Metal

## Innovation & Knowledge Sharing

Keep your business on the front foot

- CBM events give you opportunities to share knowledge and best practice. Thanks to member days, sector group meetings, monthly market reports and more, it's easy to learn about developments that will help your business.
- Through your membership, you also benefit from our established links with universities and innovation hubs like Warwick Manufacturing Group, Advanced Forming Research Centre, Imperial College and Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre.

## Training & Skills Development

Fill skills gaps and boost retention

- We offer training opportunities for technical and non-technical roles, so you can fill gaps in your business.
- In response to CBM member feedback, a level 6 Apprenticeship (degree level) programme was developed by the CBMs Trailblazer group.
- The level 6 Tool Process Design Engineer Apprenticeship was specifically created for the metal forming sector in recognition of increasing skills shortages. It is the only Apprenticeship that recognises the unique and specialist skills for this senior technical role. This apprenticeship is available to enrol on now.

## Health & Safety

- Our popular Health & Safety Group meetings provide a vital forum for sharing successes and getting advice on overcoming challenges.
- You have access to our HSE helpline, as well as discounted private healthcare and occupational health services.

## HR Support

- Exclusive access to a CBM dedicated website
- Designated Client Relationship Manager
- Discounted rates for litigated matters in any Employment tribunal

**CBM membership pays for itself thanks to the opportunities, access and cost management benefits you receive. Contact us to discuss your business needs and the best membership**

**CONTACT CBM NOW ON  
0121 601 6350 or  
email [Melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk](mailto:Melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk)**



# CBM urges manufacturers to take advantage of Climate Change Agreement that has delivered £100m cost savings

Confederation of British Metalforming members are being encouraged to take part in a Climate Change Agreement (CCA) that has saved metalformers £100m over the last twenty-five years.

CBM has successfully passed this major milestone based on the money claimed back against the climate change levy tax that is applied to all gas and electricity bills.

It has now reopened its window for new applications to come forward to be considered for the next phase that is currently being negotiated and will run from January 2026 until 2033.

This means that firms can sign-up to become part of the CBM agreement, and then, by declaring that they are willing to work towards environmental improvements, will be able to access the 100% tax rebate on costs associated with metalforming (forging, drop forging, stamping, punching and precision bending for example), heat treatment and coating of metals processes.

'Directly associated activities', which include air compressors, area heating, lighting and process cooling, are also covered.

"Our CCA is a fantastic resource for high energy use manufacturers, who want to save money that they can channel into making their operations greener and more efficient," explained Geraldine Bolton, Chief Executive of the Confederation of British Metalforming.

"The CBM agreement has been in place for 25 years and, on average, saves our members between £3.5m and £4.5m every year, that they would otherwise be paying in CCL tax.

"This has often been a 100% rebate for metalformers! And the good news is that we have a specialist team in place who can walk you through the application process and the other steps you need to take in order to make a successful submission."

She went on to add: "We are currently negotiating with the Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero for the next phase, which means we can open it up to new entrants from 1st May 2025 for submission.

"If you are not already a member of CBM, and operate the qualifying processes, then please speak to us about this opportunity and take advantage of our expertise and the savings."

By way of additional updates to the scheme, the Confederation of British Metalforming is helping to shape the eligibility processes for the next Climate Change Agreement and is working with the Environment Agency to establish new additional criteria.



This will focus on expanding the process so companies involved in roll forming can apply along with other additional areas of eligibility.

Discussions are progressing well on this front and the CBM believes that the new energy target calculation matrix being suggested will provide companies with additional benefits to being in a Climate Change Agreement.

Geraldine concluded: "For current participants, there will be a requirement to self-accredit that you are still eligible for the scheme and that measuring and eligibility percentages are accurate and reported annually. We are experts in this field and can assist you to do this.

"If you haven't taken advantage of the CBM's CCA previously, then get in touch with one of our team quickly. The window opens in May and closes on August 31st.

**To be considered for the next phase of the Climate Change Agreement, and to make use of the CBM's specialist energy services please email [louise.campbell@thebcm.co.uk](mailto:louise.campbell@thebcm.co.uk).**





# National Metalforming Centre proves home sweet home for West Bromwich MP

**The National Metalforming Centre (NMC), which is home to and owned by the Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM), has made a political appointment by welcoming its latest tenant.**

Located just off the A41 in the Black Country, the modern office space is the new home for Sarah Coombes, MP for West Bromwich, as she looks to build stronger links with local industry.

She has already developed a proactive relationship with the CBM to help her understand some of the challenges and opportunities that exist for its members in 2025.

This has included contributing to the organisation's paper on the proposed Industrial Strategy and asking a critical question in the House of Commons, the latter regarding onerous claims from the HMRC for backdated steel safeguard tariffs impacting Confederation of British Metalforming members and others across the UK.

CBM's Chief Executive Geraldine Bolton is delighted with the move: "Sarah has already shown in seven months that she is a passionate advocate for manufacturing, and we have built strong lines of communication with her so she can take our message and the views of our members back to Whitehall.

"Basing herself at the National Metalforming Centre puts her in the heart of the action and gives firms access to her team to raise issues, highlight positive achievements and discuss the support they need to be competitive."

She continued: "The NMC is ideally located in her constituency and just a few seconds from a major motorway network, whilst the state-of-the-art audio-visual technology and flexible meeting space make it ideal for hosting different meetings and public surgeries."

Sarah, who previously worked for Tom Watson as his head of policy and communications for three years, has already visited four local manufacturers to see firsthand the industrial capabilities we have in the area.

This has included meetings with Steel & Alloy Processing, Robinson Brothers, William King and Fred Smith and Sons, four companies that offer different capabilities but are all critical supplies to the automotive, aerospace and renewables sectors.

"West Bromwich and the wider Black Country has a strong manufacturing history dating back centuries. It has been brilliant working alongside the CBM and local businesses in the constituency," added Sarah.

"The NMC is local to our constituents, accessible by public transport and has brilliant facilities. I look forward to working closely with the Confederation of British Metalforming and the manufacturing sector in West Bromwich, securing a positive future for more jobs, opportunities and growth."

The National Metalforming Centre has become a popular base for local businesses and one of the Black Country's leading venues for hosting training sessions, workshops and meetings.



Caption for image: (l-r) Sarah Coombes (MP for West Bromwich) with Steve Morley (President of the CBM)

Operated by the CBM, its secure private parking and flexibility of rooms, coupled with the latest technology, air conditioning throughout and fabulous catering, has proved a big hit with both SMEs and larger multi-nationals, plus business support groups looking to engage with companies.

Geraldine concluded: "Sarah and her team will now be sharing the same home as the CBM and this will help us to forge strong links with them to support our local members, whilst also providing a close and personal insight on how policy decisions are impacting our firms – both positively and negatively.

"We have seen how much she wants to support manufacturing and our evolution into a world leading, sustainable industrial power and we look forward to working with her to make a difference.

"One of our key priorities this year is to bring more like-minded organisations into the shared space at NMC, organisations who can support the local business community by pooling expertise, resources and knowledge. A series of targeted events will be held to promote this drive."

For further information, please visit [www.nmcvenue.com](http://www.nmcvenue.com) or [www.sarahcoombes.co.uk](http://www.sarahcoombes.co.uk)



[www.nmcvenue.com](http://www.nmcvenue.com)

## CBM makes important sheet metal specialist appointment

**The Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM) has strengthened its offer to its 200-strong membership base with a high-profile industrial appointment.**

Maurice Spooner, who has over forty years' experience in manufacturing, has joined as the organisation's sheet metal specialist and will help companies involved in pressings and roll formed products to navigate an increasingly complex business landscape.

It will be a vital role considering the ongoing issues around the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and the possibility of rising energy prices again, with the former Sertec Group and Lear Corporation expert also keen to explore new opportunities for diversification and new technology.

"2025 promises to be a very interesting year for our members and the CBM will have an important role to make sure their voices are heard and the challenges they are facing are understood by the powers that be," explained Maurice.

"Sheet metal is our biggest sector of membership, and it will be my role to support these firms by helping with issues they face and ensuring they are aware of the full range of services we offer."

He continued: "I'm keen to visit as many as I can and have already been to three companies in my first three weeks. It's great going inside factories, meeting the management teams and listening to what they need to be successful - both at home and abroad."

"There are plenty of challenges to navigate, but there are also significant opportunities for our members – we really do have some wonderful companies, innovating and producing components that help make the world go round."

Maurice Spooner started his career on the shopfloor in 1981 and has been self-taught throughout, progressing to new model introduction engineer, into project manager and then commercial manager.

This has predominantly been spent in the automotive sector working for Triplex Safety Glass, ITW Profit, Metal Pressings Group and QFS.

Two of his biggest achievements have been supporting the relocation of Lear Corporation's manufacturing facility to the Black Country with zero quality defects and overseeing the introduction of the new Discovery model at Sertec Group, involving 190+ different part numbers.

"The CBM offers so many different services, from IT support and health and safety guidance to expert assistance on utility purchasing from Greenfields Energy Group," continued Maurice.



"One of my key roles will be making our sheet metal members fully aware of all the different things they can tap into and encouraging them to support our lobbying by adding their voice to the work we are doing in Whitehall and with influential local MPs like Sarah Coombs."

Steve Morley, President of the CBM, added his support: "Maurice is a hugely experienced manufacturing specialist, who understands what it is like at the coalface.

"He will be a massive asset to our members and has the ability and contacts to bring more OEMs and tiers 1s into the conversation, so we can ensure that the downstream supply chain is better connected and represented."

The CBM is the UK's only specialist manufacturers' organisation for experts involved in metalforming.

Operating from the National Manufacturing Centre in West Bromwich, it represents over 200 manufacturing companies across the UK, covering sheet metal, fasteners, forging, cold head forging and cold rolled sections. Together, they employ 70,000 people and boast a combined turnover of £26billion.

**For further information, please visit [www.thecbm.co.uk](http://www.thecbm.co.uk) or follow the organisation across its social media channels.**





## King's Award presentation marks record year for one of Birmingham's oldest manufacturers

A new micron precision tooling capability has put a Birmingham manufacturing specialist on course for its best performance in 164 years.



Brandauer, which exports 75% of the components and tools it makes to 26 different countries, made the announcement during the presentation of its King's Award for Innovation by Derrick Anderson CBE, the Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands.

Caption: The Brandauer team celebrate the King's Award with Derrick Anderson CBE, the Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands.

CEO Rowan Crozier MBE told the 61-strong workforce and high-profile guests that the accolade had helped them secure more than £1.2m of new orders, including its first 4-module progression tool, a first tooling design advisory contract and a first scalable e-motor lamination stack bonding tool – the latter ideal for exploiting electrification.

pieces of equipment moved to create a fit-for-purpose, world class manufacturing hub that will support the company's growth for the next three to five years.

Together, they will help the Newtown-based business touch £9.5m in annual sales, with the increasingly realistic target of achieving £11m in 2025/26.

Initial data suggests a 15% efficiency gain, with certain lines running at up to 250% quicker outputs.

"For a West Midlands SME to win a Queen's Award for international trade was special, to follow it up with a King's Award in innovation is an unbelievable achievement from the team," explained Rowan.

Rowan, who is a passionate ambassador for getting more young people into engineering, went on to add: "Whilst investment in new technology is important, so is spending more on your team and ensuring you have the right skills and the right personalities to execute the strategy.

"The process is so rigorous, but an ideal opportunity to take the pulse of your business and recharge your future strategy for the next five to ten years and that's exactly what we've done."

"We've got so much talent at Brandauer, talent that is not readily available in industry currently. We're trying to leverage this through our apprenticeship scheme and bringing in young and eager engineers of the future, who are keen to learn from older mentors and experienced professionals."

He continued: "Our micron precision tooling offer has been a real labour of love. However, we now have processes in place that de-risk the modular tooling route for customers, giving them the capability to produce their tools to the finest of margins and at a cost price (25% less than anywhere else in the world) that works.

He concluded: "It's working really well, and this year has been our biggest ever intake, with six apprentices joining the business."

"Days have also been taken out of production lead times and I'm delighted to say that 15 customers - from eight different sectors - have already signed up and are using tools made in this way."

The technical IP created through the micron precision tooling processes has also been captured as part of Brandauer's involvement with In-Comm Training and the UK's first ever Precision Toolmaking Academy.

2024 has been a whirlwind period for Brandauer, with more than £4m invested in new high-speed Bruderer UK and Yamada presses, an additional, new 1-micron capable wire EDM machine, a state-of-the-art laser micro-cutter and a new rapid prototyping area.

This groundbreaking venture has enjoyed a successful first year, completing a cohort for JLR and laying the foundations for the roll-out of funded modular courses for SMEs in the supply chain.

There has also been a complete re-organisation of its 50,000 sq foot production facility. This is one of the most transformational projects ever completed, with over 45

For further information, please visit [www.brandauer.co.uk](http://www.brandauer.co.uk) or follow the company on its social media channels.



# DAYComp Sets New Standards in Metal Forming – A Revolution in Service Life and Cost Efficiency

“I’m proud that we’ve been able to prove, alongside our customer, that our composite material, DAYComp, delivers a service life at least 4.9 times longer, cutting costs by over 50%,” says Frederick Wilkinson, Managing Director of Dayton Progress Europe.



With DAYComp, an innovative composite material for sliding elements, DAYTON PROGRESS is raising the bar in metal forming technology. A recent project with a leading Tier-1 automotive supplier highlights how DAYComp excels in demanding applications involving high-strength steel with a thickness exceeding 3 mm.

### Impressive Results from Comparative Testing

- **177,916 strokes:** DAYComp endured nearly five times longer than traditional bronze sliding plates with solid lubricants, which lasted just 36,100 strokes.
- **Over 50% cost savings:** Achieved through fewer maintenance intervals and an extended service life.

The Tier-1 supplier faced significant challenges with the wear and limited lifespan of conventional bronze sliding plates. Thanks to DAYTON PROGRESS’s expertise and the advanced properties of DAYComp, these obstacles were overcome with remarkable success.

“DAYComp is more than just a material – it’s a game-changer that combines efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. Together with our customers, we’re solving tough challenges and driving long-term success,” Wilkinson adds.

A Breakthrough in Sustainability and Efficiency Beyond its outstanding durability, DAYComp offers sustainable benefits, including full recyclability and a reduced CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. Its lightweight composition – eight times lighter than bronze – and local European production help lower transport costs while supporting the industry’s sustainability goals.



a MISUMI Group Company

## Supplying lubricant technologies to the forging industry for over 30 years

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Open & closed die forging                   | Hot forging                                |
| Hammer forging                              | Heavy duty forging                         |
| Extrusion                                   | Precision forging                          |
| Billet coating                              | Complex pieces                             |
| Aluminium, titanium, cobalt, copper & brass | Aerospace, medical & automotive industries |



### Our Durcol forging lubricants...

- ➔ Are developed using our exceptional **research and development facilities**
- ➔ Improve **metal flow**
- ➔ Provide optimal **surface finish**
- ➔ Extend **die life**
- ➔ Provide excellent **cooling effects**
- ➔ Benefit from our **150+ years experience in graphite processing**
- ➔ Are **bespoke** to suit your forging needs

[www.durransgroup.com](http://www.durransgroup.com)



UK Agents for James Durrans & Sons Ltd  
[enq@oilandwatermanagement.com](mailto:enq@oilandwatermanagement.com)



# Gestamp sets new benchmarks for automotive components at Bharat Mobility Global Expo

**Gestamp Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 - Gestamp prioritizes innovations that enable the manufacturing of lighter and safer vehicles, with lower energy consumption, costs, and more sustainable.**

Gestamp, a leading global automotive technology company specialized in the design, development, and production of highly engineered metal components, unveiled its innovative product lineup at Bharat Mobility Global Expo which began in New Delhi from January 17-22.

With the automotive industry increasingly focused on electrification, connectivity, sustainability, and safety, the demand for lightweight, eco-friendly materials and top safety standards presents both challenges and opportunities. Gestamp is addressing these needs with solutions that help automakers worldwide meet the requirements of the mobility of the future. With a focus on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions without compromising cost efficiency, Gestamp's innovative technologies are designed to support the mobility of the future. The company is committed to creating lighter and safer vehicles that consume less energy and have a smaller environmental footprint.

Gestamp is leading the development of solutions for a new mobility where multiple powertrains coexist, from combustion engines, hybrids, and plug-in hybrids to pure electric vehicles. By harnessing its engineering expertise and advanced technologies, Gestamp is driving the shift to electric mobility. The company is creating key components for new EV architectures, focusing on lightweight components to enhance vehicle range, advancements that meet evolving safety standards, and designs that streamline assembly processes.

## **BiW: GES-GIGASTAMPING® a new dimension for future mobility**

The GES-GIGASTAMPING® family is a pioneering innovative product family of large-format components that combine multiple body parts into a single unit. These extra-large parts not only reduce weight but also enhance safety. Additionally, GES-GIGASTAMPING® significantly reduces production and assembly times, minimizing material usage. The combination of enhanced safety, reduced weight, lower costs, and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction in a single product sets new standards, offering manufacturers a cost-efficient solution for the mobility of the future.

## **Hot stamping**

Gestamp, a global leader in hot stamping, is advancing product strength and durability with cutting-edge materials and processes that support circular economy principles and lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Its hot stamping technology, which utilizes ultra-high-strength steel (UHSS), enables the production of lightweight, energy-efficient vehicle components with outstanding crash performance. With nearly 100 hot stamping facilities worldwide, Gestamp continues to set benchmarks in this field.

**At the Bharat Mobility Global Expo, Gestamp will introduce its Door Ring, a key development in the GES-GIGASTAMPING® range. This one-piece component replaces multiple cold and hot-stamped**



**parts, simplifying assembly and reducing costs. It offers significant advantages, including improved safety cell integrity in the event of a crash, lighter components, easier integration, and a more sustainable solution.**

## **Chassis: Highpertubes improving overall crash performance**

At the Bharat Mobility Global Expo, Gestamp will showcase its expertise in high-strength tube materials that improve vehicle safety and crash performance. Longitudinals, essential components of chassis subframe assemblies, play a pivotal role in crash behaviour thanks to their contribution to safety and occupant protection. With cutting-edge toolmaking capabilities, these high-engineered products are created through a combination of hydroforming technologies, achieving the best results in CO<sub>2</sub> efficiency and cost. Highpertubes, crafted from high-strength materials, enhance stress response, improving overall crash performance, while reducing weight due to lower tube thickness.

## **Mechanisms: Edscha Gestamp's Active Frunk for greater pedestrian safety**

In the mechanisms division, Edscha Gestamp will present the Active Frunk designed specifically for electric vehicles. This technology combines a powered system for fully automatic opening and closing of the front lid with a hinge for active pedestrian protection.

## **Sustainability and Circular Economy as core business strategies**

Sustainability has always been a strategic pillar for Gestamp, with the goal of achieving carbon-neutral production by 2050. By using recycled materials and transitioning to 100% green electricity by 2030, Gestamp significantly reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and resource consumption. The company embraces a circular economy approach by recycling steel and other materials, greatly reducing emissions and water usage. Gestamp ensures the availability of high-quality scrap steel to support the increased use of low-emission steels in automotive components.

The integrated scrap management system allows full lifecycle traceability, from collection and sorting to the reuse of quality scrap steel. This process reintroduces recycled steel as a secondary raw material, promoting a sustainable materials economy that reduces the need for primary resources and helps steer the automotive industry toward a climate-friendly future. Gestamp also collaborates closely with partners to advance sustainable innovations such as low-emission steel for vehicle components, strengthening its role as a leader in promoting environmentally responsible mobility within the automotive sector.

## Specialist Production Of M80 U-Bolts For Methil Dock Gate Restoration Project

Brooks Forgings' latest project was for an engineering company involved in managing and conducting works on an upcoming refurbishment project at Methil Docks. The docks are situated in Methil, Fife, Scotland, on the northern shores of the Firth of Forth.



We were asked to manufacture the specialised and fully bespoke M80 U-bolts that are positioned at the top of each lock gate. These are commonly referred to as anchor collars and are a critical component of the top hinge/pivot assembly.

Each U-Bolt is produced by starting with a straight blank from fully certified S355 mild steel measuring 80x80x3520mm, each weighing 175kg. These were turned and threaded M80 x 260mm at each end.

A hot bending process was required to form the bend and a furnace was specially constructed that allowed us to isolate heating at the center point. Using bespoke tooling, jigs, and equipment, our specialist team of operators successfully bent the U-bolts to an inner radius of 311mm. Following inspection of the bend, a wearing plate was welded in place to complete the project.



Brooks Forgings is highly recognised for its extensive manufacturing capabilities that enable the production of fully bespoke components to customer requirements. If we can assist with your latest project don't hesitate to get in touch with our team by telephone at 01384 563356 or by email at [sales@brooksforgeings.co.uk](mailto:sales@brooksforgeings.co.uk)

## Brockhouse Group: Six-figure investment helps steel business forge a strong future

**A West Midlands manufacturer of steel forgings is looking to the future as it enters its 140th year following funding from business investment specialists UKSE.**

Brockhouse Forgings, based on Howard Street in West Bromwich, has secured a six-figure funding package from UKSE to support the company's top line growth and expansion into new markets.

Established in 1885, Brockhouse Forgings manufacture and supply high quality, forged steel components to a range of industries including mining, oil & gas, railway, nuclear, automotive, and defence.

Boasting the largest range of forging equipment in the UK, the business will use the funding to generate new business of its closed die hammer and upset forgings.

The business employs 43 members of staff, with many generations of family members employed by Brockhouse Forgings over the last 140 years.

UKSE provides finance of up to £1m to support local businesses in the West Midlands area. UKSE's equity finance package leaves the management team in control, patient capital from a supportive partner.

Rather than obtain funding from mainstream lenders, Brockhouse Forgings was introduced to UKSE by Select Business Finance.

Established by Chris Jones in 2008, Select Business Finance is an independent commercial finance broker, helping business source a range of finance products, as well as equity investment and grants.

Brockhouse Forgings director Steve Walters said: "UKSE have been very supportive throughout the whole process. It's great to know that there is funding out there for the steel related industries.

"Whilst we have deep roots in the region, our business is known globally and as we enter our 140th year in business we look forward to utilising the funding to grow our customer base to secure the business for another 140 years."

UKSE area manager Steve Grice added: "Brockhouse Forgings are a great example of a traditional manufacturing business looking to innovate and grow. We wish them all the success in their 140th year in business and delighted to support Steve and the team with their growth plans."

Providing strategic loan and equity packages of up to £1m to generate growth, UKSE's West Midlands team create local job opportunities and bolster the economy by supporting SMEs across Birmingham, the Black Country, Coventry, Staffordshire and Shropshire.

UKSE supports the local economy by making equity investments, ensuring management stays in control of the business and offers a flexible exit policy. Unsecured loans are also available, often without the need for personal guarantees.

To date, UKSE has invested over £115m, supporting 8,000 businesses, stimulating the creation of an estimated 83,000 new jobs.





## Carlo Salvi embraces Industry 5.0

Carlo Salvi has announced its transition into Industry 5.0, marking a pivotal evolution that integrates human ingenuity with advanced technologies to redefine the future of industrial production. Thanks to the introduction of the new 5.0 Transition Tax Credit in Italy, Carlo Salvi has been empowered to advance its journey towards more sustainable, efficient and customised production.

Carlo Salvi views Industry 5.0 as a natural extension of its mission, centred on the interaction between humans and machines and sustainable innovation. The new directive provides resources to enhance support for innovative technologies, delivering tangible benefits Hall 3, Stand 2256 to clients, such as increased productivity and faster response times.

“This transformation presents an unprecedented opportunity for Carlo Salvi and our clients – giving us the ability to optimise processes, address new challenges in the global market, and reduce environmental impact,” explains John Razza, sales area manager for the Italian market at Carlo Salvi SpA.

Carlo Salvi points out that thanks to the 5.0 Transition Tax Credit, companies can receive up to 45% incentives on investments aimed at energy efficiency and digitalisation, with a maximum cap of €50 million per enterprise. Carlo Salvi has therefore seized this opportunity to modernise its machinery, improve energy consumption management, as well as enhance the sustainability of its production processes. These investments not only lower operational costs but also contribute to eco-friendly production and a significant reduction in emissions.

Another critical aspect of Industry 5.0 is skills development. Employee training is a strategic asset to meet the challenges of the transition and ensure the company remains highly competitive. That is why Carlo Salvi is investing in both workforce training and



A HATEBUR COMPANY

technological development, to make its machines user-friendly for clients and to assist them in making technical and operational choices.

“The focus on Industry 5.0 has brought a sharper orientation toward technological innovation and data management, with the goal of accelerating digital transformation and optimising production,” states Carlo Salvi SpA. “This approach enables us to gradually integrate new technologies, minimising production interruptions and maximising benefits for customers. Industry 5.0 thus represents a promise of long-term competitiveness for Carlo Salvi.”

The company adds: “Over the next 5 to 10 years, industrial production will evolve toward unprecedented customer centricity, offering customised products, greater automation and shorter delivery times. This new industrial paradigm will provide Carlo Salvi not only with efficiency but also with a strategic edge to tackle the demands of an increasingly challenging market. This moment signifies an acceleration toward a productive future that places humans, technology and the environment at its core.”

Article first printed in Fixing and Fastener magazine

## CBM welcome new members Miltorn Precision

NEW MEMBER

Miltorn Precision brings together expertise in design, machining, assembly, finishing, and purchasing under one brand. Offering precision engineering and metal finishing services, Miltorn Precision provides high-quality, reliable components for industries requiring custom manufacturing and finishing solutions.



The company specialises in CNC milling, turning, and 5-axis machining, delivering precise components tailored to customer specifications. Its metal finishing services include sulphuric anodising, hard anodising, powder coating, wet spray painting, laser engraving, vapour blasting, bead blasting, and masking, which improve both functionality and appearance.

Miltorn Precision uses advanced machinery and skilled technicians to ensure high-quality results and on-time deliveries. It continuously invests in advanced technology to refine its processes and remain competitive while meeting client needs.

As part of the Vision Engineering Group, Miltorn Precision offers a complete manufacturing solution, expanding into subcontract machining and metal coating services. Recent investments include CNC machining in Surrey and a new anodising plant in Measham, North West Leicestershire. Miltorn Precision delivers tailored, high-quality engineering and finishing solutions to a wide range of industries. Learn more at [miltorn.co.uk](http://miltorn.co.uk).



# Cooper Turner Beck Group Achieves DIBt Certification for Large Diameter Fasteners in Record Time

**CTB completes certification 70% faster than industry average, reinforcing its commitment to delivering world-class fastening solutions for critical infrastructure projects.**



**Sheffield, 28th November 2024** – Cooper Turner Beck Group (CTB), a global leader in safety-critical fastening solutions, is proud to announce its successful achievement of the Deutsches Institut für Bautechnik (DIBt) certification for its large diameter direct tension fasteners ranging from M36 to M72. CTB Group achieved this certification - a process that typically takes three years - in just nine months, demonstrating its technical expertise and dedication to quality.

## Setting a New Standard in Certification Efficiency

DIBt certification, administered by the German Institute for Construction Technology, is considered the gold standard for construction product compliance across Germany and Europe. This prestigious certification ensures that CTB Group's fasteners meet stringent safety, durability, and environmental standards, aligning with both national and European regulations.

With this certification, CTB Group is now authorised to supply its large diameter fasteners to critical infrastructure projects in Germany, including those in German waters. From bridges to wind turbines, CTB Group's products will be key to ensuring the safety and longevity of essential construction projects.

## A Rigorous Journey Condensed Into Nine Months

The path to certification was rigorous, beginning with CTB's submission of an initial 30-page technical specification document outlining every aspect of their product design and manufacturing process. Following this, the CTB team worked diligently to prepare for onsite audits conducted by DIBt's technical experts. These audits involved a thorough examination of the entire manufacturing process, from material sourcing to the assembly of fasteners.

Throughout the process, the CTB team carefully documented every detail, ultimately compiling a 1,000-page submission. From technical specifications and safety measures to the results of extensive testing on the fasteners' strength and durability, this comprehensive document covered every aspect of the certification requirements. CTB's dedication to detail and quality ensured that every stage of production met the rigorous DIBt standards.

Achieving certification in such a short time frame is a testament to the engineering team's expertise and CTB Group's dedication to precision and quality. "This accomplishment sets a higher standard for efficiency in technical audits," said Dave Briggs, Chief Technical Officer at CTB Group. "We are incredibly proud of our team's dedication to delivering top-tier products that meet the highest international standards."

## Impact on the Industry

Large diameter fasteners are essential in critical infrastructure projects where safety and reliability are paramount. By achieving DIBt certification, CTB Group has positioned itself among an elite group of global leaders in the construction industry such as BASF and Saint Gobain. This certification not only reinforces CTB Group's reputation for quality but also assures clients that they are investing in the best products available on the market.

## Looking Ahead

With this certification, CTB Group is well-positioned to expand its presence in major infrastructure projects worldwide. Whether supporting renewable energy installations or enhancing the safety of bridges and high-rise buildings, CTB Group's certified fasteners will play a crucial role in shaping the future of global construction.

## About CTB Group

Cooper Turner Beck Group (CTB) is a global leader in the manufacturing and supply of safety-critical fasteners and bolting solutions, serving industries such as wind energy, oil & gas, power generation, and construction. With over 100 years of combined expertise across its subsidiaries - Cooper & Turner, Beck Prosper, and Beck Industries - our dedication to quality, sustainability, and customer satisfaction underpins our end-to-end, comprehensive service. From development to manufacture and distribution, we ensure quality and reliability in the world's most demanding environments and complex structures. For more information, visit our website.

For more information about CTB Group's DIBt certification and how its products can elevate your next project, get in touch with our sales team, and for more industry news and insights, follow The Cooper Turner Beck Group on LinkedIn.



# Digital Transformation in Manufacturing: From Data Collection to AI - CBM's latest Technology Transfer Group

Discover how real-time data collection and AI-driven solutions like KFactory®'s Virtual Engineers transform manufacturing, optimising productivity, reducing costs, and ensuring a competitive edge.



At the recent workshop held for CBM members, discussions focused on the importance of a proper approach to the digital transformation process in factories and workshops. The first essential step for any company aspiring to become more competitive is collecting real-time data. Without accurate, up-to-date information about internal processes, any optimisation strategy risks being ineffective.

In this context, we highlighted the benefits that KFactory®-type solutions bring to the industry. By implementing a platform for on-site monitoring and data analysis, companies can increase productivity and reduce operational costs, while also shrinking their CO<sub>2</sub> footprint. Furthermore, KFactory® provides enhanced visibility into every operational process by interpreting and

compiling essential information in a way that is easily accessible to decision-makers.

Looking to the future, the discussions underscored the increasingly important role that Artificial Intelligence-based technologies play in manufacturing. Virtual Engineers—or AI agents—represent the next step in advanced process automation and proactive decision-making. The need to remain open to adopting these solutions was emphasised, given that no company can avoid digitalisation if it aims to stay relevant and competitive in the market.

In conclusion, engaging in a well-grounded digital transformation—starting with real-time data collection and continuing with the adoption of AI technologies—is key to continually optimising operations, reducing costs, and developing a long-term strategic advantage.

The KFactory® team is fully prepared to support all CBM members in their journey toward digital transformation. As an initial step, KFactory® is offering a proof-of-concept to interested members, providing a firsthand experience of its innovative solutions.

Interested in KFactory®? Contact us at [vlad.cazan@kfactory.ai](mailto:vlad.cazan@kfactory.ai) or visit [kfactory.ai](http://kfactory.ai) and drop us a message.

## Cost Effective Insurance Solutions exclusively for CBM Members.

**In the current worldwide conditions, firms have been struggling to obtain competitive insurance cover due to their complex nature, elevated risk activities or deteriorating claims record.**

These businesses are the target for our CBM appointed Insurance Broker – Gravity Risk Services (NFP). Now in its fifth year, this service is exclusively for members of the Confederation of British Metal forming (CBM). If you have not spoken to Gravity yet, we recommend you do in advance of your forthcoming renewals.

Gravity Risk Services work with companies who present a complex risk and are, therefore, difficult to place in the conventional insurance market. Many of these firms have found traditional methods of obtaining appropriate insurance cover prohibitively expensive or troublesome, especially in the current market. The crux of the strategy is to change the risk profile and perception of the organization within the insurance market. This is done by spending time understanding the company and the operating risks, investigating the controls and procedures, reviewing how the insurance program is arranged, and working in partnership with clients and underwriters to control insurance cost in the short, medium, and longer term.

**To do this, Gravity would provide:**

- A **FREE** Due Diligence Audit of your current covers to ensure your present policy meets your requirements. We do not need to be at your renewal date to do this.
- A **FREE** Health and Safety Review of your current procedures through our own specialist H&S partners.

The benefits of a successful review would include:

- Competitive premiums. We aim to beat your commercial combined premium by at least 10%.
- Options to stabilize premiums over the next 3 year by entering a long-term agreement where premiums will not increase any more than 5% each year.
- Wide Policy Wording to ensure we provide comprehensive coverage for your business.

For further information please contact Richard Gibson on 0116 478 2999 or Samantha Halden on 07791 578900. Alternatively, you can email [CBM@gravityriskservices.co.uk](mailto:CBM@gravityriskservices.co.uk).



## Greenfields powers to £1m revenue and 100 customer milestone

One of the UK's fastest growing energy management consultancies has hit the £1m revenue figure - just 18 months after launching.

Greenfields Energy Group is six months ahead of the schedule set by founders Liam Conway and Rich Clark after winning a string of new clients from the manufacturing, retail, hospitality and education sectors.

The duo's commitment to personalised service and strong account management has been the decisive factor for businesses battling to come to terms with a complex utilities market and rising energy prices.

Just this week, the firm - with offices in the Black Country and Sussex – confirmed the high profile hire of Kim Haddock as Account Director, following in the footsteps last year of Neil Freeman and Lindsay Williams, the latter joining as Head of Energy Bureau.

“Businesses are facing cost challenges on every front and are keen to explore how they can make their operations more efficient, gain a bit of certainty in the market and reduce costs if that's possible,” explained Liam, who has worked in the sector for fifteen years.

“Uncertainty and bad deals have left management teams looking for a trusted consultant, who can be a constant source of advice, reassurance and insight. They don't want someone to speak to them once, fix a deal and then go silent on them until it's time to sign a new contract.”

He continued: “And that's where we come in. From the very start we've wanted to be client focused and all our Account Directors will have no more than 50 companies they are looking after at any one time. This means they can spend time with them, visit them in person, identify potential savings or explore ways where they can implement green energy solutions.

“It's an approach that is paying off, with the £1m revenue milestone passed ahead of schedule and Kim Haddock's appointment giving us even more capacity to add another £500,000 of sales on over the next twelve months.”



Caption for pic: Rich Clark, Kim Haddock and Liam Conway (all Greenfields Energy Group).

Greenfields Energy Group provides procurement consultancy on electricity, gas and water, combining extensive risk management and trading expertise with personalised service and modern tools and tech.

The business, which has fostered strong partnerships with the Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM) and the Surface Engineering Association, has just signed up its 100th company - another major milestone.

Geraldine Bolton, CEO of the Confederation of British Metalforming, said: “We are always looking to partner with organisations who ‘get’ industry and can add real value to our members.

“Issues don't come much bigger than energy and Greenfields has proven time and time again that they have solutions that can help our companies manage their utilities better, with several interventions actually resulting in short and long-term cost savings.”

Liam concluded: “18 months after launching and we're looking after £130m of utilities spend, which shows the faith and trust our clients have in us.

“With the plans we've got in place and the further recruitment of another two people, I think we could easily grow by a further 50% by the end of 2025.”



For further information, please visit [www.greenfieldsenerygroup.co.uk](http://www.greenfieldsenerygroup.co.uk) or follow the company across its social channels.





# Sense Check Your Energy Contracts Before Signing

Energy remains a key business priority and cost to our members. With the help and support of **Greenfields Energy Group** we are offering a no-obligation review of existing energy contracts and advice covering future contract decisions.

CBM members will be familiar with **Greenfields Energy Group** from recent co-hosted energy webinars. Their advice is well received and to the point.

It's crucial for CBM members to sense check energy contracts before signing as once a contract is signed there is no going back.

## Get in Touch



**Liam Conway**

Co-founder

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## CBM primed to give manufacturers a bigger voice as industry aims to defy economic gloom

A trade body that represents 200 manufacturers has placed a Minister for Manufacturing, greater SME involvement in the Industrial Strategy and ongoing lobbying around the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) at the top of its action list for 2025.



Steve Morley and Geraldine Bolton of the Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM) are unified in their desire to give their members an even greater voice on key issues impacting their ability to compete over the next twelve months, vowing to enhance their own organisation's offer even further.

Despite the challenges of recent tax increases in the budget and ongoing geopolitical uncertainty of US tariffs and global conflict, the duo believes there are still plenty of opportunities for manufacturers if there is more stability in the automotive sector and if the ongoing resurgence in aerospace continues.

They also believe that serious government backing and funding towards 'Made in Britain' could dispel some of the economic gloom and generate numerous possibilities.

"It's a positive that we've got an Industrial Strategy after so long and that we and other trade bodies have been given the chance to have our say," added Steve, who is president of the CBM.

"We do have concerns, however. The make-up of the 'IS' council has no SME representation and that doesn't bode well for getting our voice across. I also have a big worry that many of the big decisions will be made early thus taking up any investment opportunities for small to medium-sized firms."

He continued: "There will be a major piece of lobbying to do around CBAM and there's an ongoing discussion to be had about skills, energy costs and how we can reshore more work.

"Another major issue for our members is HMRC back duty claims on steel safeguarding and, through our relationship with West Bromwich MP Sarah Coombes, we now have this back on the table with the hope of a successful outcome for manufacturers unfairly punished."

The Confederation of British Metalforming is the leading trade association for UK manufacturers of fasteners, forgings and pressings, cold-rolled and sheet metal products.

It currently provides lobbying services to more than 200 members across the country, as well as providing access to specialist technical experts in metals, forgings and fasteners.

Each year, CBM companies also save £4m by having their Climate Change (CC) Levy administration completed on their behalf, with firms urged to register before May 1st to be eligible for support for next year's claim.

Geraldine Bolton, CEO of the CBM, continued: "We are currently in the process of working up a new six-year climate change agreement taking us to 2033, with a new base line year and new targets.

"There is a chance to include new eligible processes in these agreements and our experts are working on this at the moment, The Government is tightening up on the energy reporting that firms have to do with annual reports now being required for both CC agreements and ESOS."

2025 is going to be an extremely busy year with the Confederation of British Metalforming attending EIFI in Seville, Euroforge in France and the UK and ICOSPA in Tokyo - all important trade events that help it keep on top of the latest international developments.

There will also be a vital opportunity to build on the new CBM Corporate Membership, with JLR and the Advanced Forming Research Centre already signed-up. A third big name from the financial services sector should be announced shortly.

Geraldine concluded: "Like our manufacturers, we must keep improving in all areas - there's no room to stand still or be complacent. The use of AI is something we will embrace so we can improve our analytics and improve our documentation and content."

For further information, please visit [www.thebcm.co.uk](http://www.thebcm.co.uk) or follow the organisation across its social media channels.







## Introducing **Gemma Huynh!**

Croner Associations & Partnerships Advisor

"Through my commitment to helping businesses thrive while ensuring legal compliance I have earned a solid reputation with my clients, built on a foundation of trust."

[Get in touch](#)

### Dedicated professional advice and guidance

A professional HR employment law advisor, Gemma has a diverse background in HR and a keen understanding of the intricacies of the legal landscape, dedicating her time to providing invaluable advice and guidance to businesses of all sizes.

Overall, Gemma's impactful contributions and unwavering dedication make her a driving force in employment law, setting a high standard for professionalism and integrity.



### How Gemma can support your members

Gemma's specialist areas of knowledge means she is able to support your members with the following:

- 24/7 Employment Law Advice - Covering existing legislation in the UK and upcoming changes that impact your business.
- Health & Safety Assistance - Helping you with compliance, effective safety management, and reporting.
- Commercial Legal Support - Assisting with data protection, property disputes, leases and access rights.
- Free Webinars & Regional Events - Regional seminars across the UK for members, and live webinars presented by industry experts.

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**0844 561 8133**

### Quote :

*Having honed my skills through years of experience in various industries, I am ready to support members in navigating the complex terrain of employment law, and beyond.*

## HR for Small Business

**Whether you're just starting out or you're already established, you'll no doubt already be aware of the challenges that running an SME business can present. With everything from developing a sound business plan and directing the business towards profitability, you also have to manage people, especially if your vision of growth includes expansion.**

If you are looking for growth and expanding your workforce, then understanding employment law is a must, especially given the recent changes that the new Government has introduced. It can be daunting navigating this landscape; however, in the long run it is highly advisable, even if you are a small operation, as falling foul of employment legislation can be extremely costly, both financially and in reputational terms.

Take the guesswork out of implementing compliant HR policies and procedure, talk to the expert team of HR advisors at Croner today.

### **Consider outsourcing your HR if 'In-house' is not a viable option**

Running a business inevitably means that your day-to-day is taken up with managing overheads, invoices and maintaining relationships with suppliers and affiliates.

Hiring an HR professional, especially if you have a small team, probably seems like an unnecessary expense. In this instance outsourcing your HR needs would be a much more viable option.

This means you will have all the correct, legally compliant documentation, as well as advice should you encounter issues.

Remember, getting processes wrong in cases regarding dismissal and redundancy, etc. can easily land your business in hot water, resulting in employment tribunals that can result in monetary and reputational penalties.

### **Research your industry for legislative updates and legal compliance**

Keeping up to date with your industry not only helps you tap into markets that, till-now, were overlooked. It can help you understand the regulatory landscape when it comes to things like health and safety and new laws and legislation.

Missing new additions to legislation can easily catch a business out, so ensuring you are aware of legislative changes and the dates that they will be implemented is key to staying compliant. Better yet, ensure that your documentation, workplace policies and training are in place well before the changes come into play.

This way there are no potential gaps that could see your business vulnerable to a potential employment tribunal case.

Ensure that your business is compliant with Labour's Employment Rights Bill

Labour's plan to expand worker's rights is set to be the biggest change to employment law in a generation. Ensuring that your business adapts employee contracts, workplace policy and practices is paramount to staying legally compliant and avoiding getting ensnared in costly legal cases should an employee raise a case to tribunal.



### **What are the changes to employment law?**

As part of their "Make Work Pay" plan, the Government have put forward 28 individual reforms to employment rights for workers, including:

#### **Day one rights for workers**

The new legislation removes the two-year qualifying period that an employee can currently make a claim for unfair dismissal, as well as removing the qualifying periods for statutory parental leave. The bill also repeals the restrictions on paternity leave, after a period of shared parental leave.

Statutory sick pay will also see the lower earnings threshold removed, as well as the three-day waiting period in order to qualify.

#### **Changes to flexible working**

Flexible working will become a day-one-right, and employers are now mandated to accommodate flexible working requests as is reasonable.

Under legislation refusal of a flexible working request must state the reason for the refusal and why the employer considered the refusal reasonable.

#### **Ending fire and rehire**

The Employment Rights Bill puts an end to the practice of fire and rehire via changes to unfair dismissal regulation. Workers now have protections from changing terms and conditions under threat of dismissal.

#### **Extended probation periods for new starters**

Probation periods are due to be extended meaning that employers can carry out proper assessments for employee's suitability, whilst maintaining their day-one-rights.

#### **New rules for zero hours contracts**

The bill seeks to level the playing field as far as zero hours contracts, removing one sided flexibility and making a 'guaranteed hours offer' to workers who qualify.



There will also be provisions for workers regarding a reasonable notice, changes and cancellation of shifts, with compensation being offered in the event of this.

### Repeal restrictions on trade union recognition and strike action

The new Government's plan undoes the restrictions introduced by their predecessors, as well as introducing electronic balloting, right of access in workplaces for trade unions and

requirements for employers to notify employees of their right to join a trade union.

This update is designed to help improve industrial relations, based on good faith, negotiations and bargaining.

### Protection from harassment

Part of the changes being implemented include a proactive duty for employers to prevent sexual harassment towards their employees.

This also brings into play employer liability for harassment via third parties as well as now no longer requiring at least two instances of harassment (that the employer is aware of) before being liable.

A claim of sexual harassment may qualify for protection under whistleblowing legislation. This is just a small portion of the changes that are set to be introduced within the next few months and the changes aren't set to stop there, with the 'Next Steps' document outlining further changes in the future.

With the changes coming thick and fast even a well-equipped HR department will have to review their company documentation thoroughly to ensure compliance under law.

### Need advice on the new legislation or outsourcing your HR?

Talk to the HR experts at Croner and get awardwinning HR support for your small business today.

We have over 80 years' experience in helping business owners with their HR, Employment Law and Health and Safety challenges, so we can help your business find the ideal solution to effectively manage HR and ensure compliance, with the new legislation before it becomes law.

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# CONTRINEX LAUNCHES SMART DOUBLE-SHEET DETECTION SENSORS

**Contrinex sets a new standard for Double-Sheet Detection Sensors, delivering precision, durability, and ease of use.**

Double-Sheet Detection Sensors aim to eliminate costly tool damage in press lines by ensuring that only single-sheet blanks are fed to the presses. Contrinex's innovative, robust Smart Inductive sensors were soon introduced to the challenges of double-sheet detection on press lines. At the end of 2023, the CBM's Metal Matters magazine carried an article describing their use by a press tool engineer to create a low-cost and adaptable double-sheet detection system.

In response to customers' requests, Contrinex has simplified things by launching dedicated Double-Sheet Detection Sensors and a specialised configuration app. The setup is now straightforward, and it takes less than 90 seconds to follow the app prompts on a phone or tablet. For example, setup can now be done within the remit of a setter/operator rather than needing the deeper knowledge of a maintenance engineer.



A typical application would see a Smart Double-Sheet Detection Sensor integrated into the blank sheet material vacuum picker, looking down 'through' the metal blank to ensure that there isn't a second sheet below it.

Suppose the sensor detects the presence of a second sheet, perhaps attached due to the stickiness of the protective oil coating; the press line operation will be suspended, and an alarm is triggered before damage can occur.



The SMART Double-Sheet Detection Sensors are uniquely robust, with the sensor's front face and sides being machined from a single piece of V2A (AISI 304) stainless steel. To further protect the sensors from damage, they can detect sheet materials between 3 and 5 mm away. Providing a contactless solution extends sensor life and can also provide advantages in reducing potential contamination.

Available as either M18 or M30, the sensors can detect steel, aluminium, or stainless steel sheets. Material thickness can vary from a minimum of 0.2mm to a maximum of 4mm for aluminium or a range of 0.5 to 2mm for steel, for example.

Fast configuration using the hand-held PocketCodr communication module and a phone or tablet enables the sensors to work with multiple materials and sheet thicknesses. Contrinex's SMART Double-Sheet Detection Sensors offer a flexible and easy-to-use solution at a much lower cost than other systems, perhaps enabling double-sheet detection to be applied where it was not previously affordable.



Configuring the sensor is fast and straightforward, requiring a guided set of intuitive selections on the PocketCodr app. The sensor's status is clearly shown, as per the above screenshots, where the first output switching signal (OSS1) indicates the presence of the sheet material, and the second (OSS2) shows the presence of a second sheet. Once configured, the sensor is reconnected to the machine's control system, and production can begin.

Robust and reliable detection is assured with features such as a short delay being built-in before triggering the output to prevent false positives from occurring in the event of a momentary change in either of the internal signals.

A flyer can be downloaded at [www.double.PLUSAx.co.uk](http://www.double.PLUSAx.co.uk)

CBM member PLUS Automation is the UK importer for Swiss sensor manufacturer Contrinex and offers special discounts to fellow CBM members. Call them on 0121 58 222 58 or email [Sales@PLUSAutomation.co.uk](mailto:Sales@PLUSAutomation.co.uk) to arrange a visit to see how they can help you #MakeSenseofSensors using Inductive, Machine Safety, Photoelectric, Pressure, Process, RFID & Ultrasonic sensors from Contrinex, ReeR & Satron.

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## AMRC Training Centre opens doors to future makers on National Manufacturing Day

In celebration of last year's National Manufacturing Day, the University of Sheffield AMRC Training Centre welcomed students from local schools to take part in exciting STEM activities and explore opportunities in manufacturing.



A total of 60 students and staff from three schools – Sheffield Springs Academy, Wales High School and Doncaster UTC – participated in interactive, hands-on activities from AR/VR welding to additive manufacturing technologies. The students were also introduced to the apprenticeships on offer at the AMRC Training Centre to help them learn about the pathways to get into the thriving world of manufacturing.

Lisa Wyld, a teacher of engineering at Doncaster UTC said: “Days like this are really inspiring for our students. They're able to link all the things we're telling them, the theory and the lessons, and seeing it first hand. They're able to see it in a job setting and in a training setting within multiple areas of engineering and all the different sectors.”

As part of the tour facilitated by the Work-wise Foundation, the students also visited two local businesses in the region, CMD and MagTec, along with the UK Atomic Energy Authority's Fusion Technology Facility in Rotherham – for a behind the scenes view of the exciting work they do.

Make UK's National Manufacturing Day 2024 was open to all age groups, from school leavers to more experienced workers looking at reskilling to consider the possibilities of a career in manufacturing and also gave companies the chance to let their whole community understand more about the businesses on their doorstep.

Stephen Phipson, CEO of Make UK, the manufacturers organisation said: “This is a really exciting day where the manufacturing sector came together to celebrate the amazing things that Britain designs and makes.

“Britain's manufacturing companies are at the forefront of global renewable technology development and some of the most innovative engineering developments seen anywhere around the world. This is a sector with amazing opportunities and we hope National Manufacturing Day has given people who have never had the chance to see inside their local businesses just what is going on and the opportunities available to them.”



# The Critical Role of Temperature Measurement in the Metal Industry

As we are sure you know accurate temperature measurement is essential in metal manufacturing and processing. It impacts product quality, operational efficiency, and safety. Understanding reliable temperature monitoring is crucial to avoiding downtime and maintaining high standards.



Temperature affects various processes, from smelting and casting to rolling and heat treatment. Precise control is vital for metallurgical transformations, where even small deviations can compromise material integrity. Inadequate monitoring can lead to equipment damage, extended downtimes, and hazardous conditions.

## Key Challenges in Temperature Measurement

Measuring temperature in the metal industry is especially challenging due to extreme conditions. It can be difficult to obtain accurate data on molten metals or hot surfaces, especially with slag, fluctuating surfaces, or moving targets. These challenges can result in inaccurate readings, leading to defects or machine failures.

Additionally, metal processing spans a broad temperature range. For example, steel mills can reach up to 1800 °C, requiring tools that work in extreme heat. Traditional contact thermometers often fail in such harsh conditions, making non-contact methods a better solution.

## Infrared Technology: A Reliable Solution

To overcome these challenges, infrared (IR) temperature measurement is increasingly being used. IR technology measures thermal radiation without touching the object, making it ideal for high-temperature applications where contact sensors would degrade or provide inaccurate results.

Infrared cameras offer precise, reliable measurements over wide temperature ranges. One advantage is their ability to measure temperature across entire surfaces, capturing thousands of data points. This provides a comprehensive view of temperature variations, unlike traditional point-based methods.

## The Benefits of Spot Finder Technology

A key advancement in IR technology is spot finder functionality, which automatically detects the hottest point in its field of view. This is especially useful in metalworking, where molten metal may be partially covered by slag. Spot finder technology ensures accurate readings even in these challenging environments.

In high-temperature settings like blast furnaces or molten metal handling, precision is critical. Spot finder technology allows engineers to monitor key areas and fine-tune processes to avoid overheating, which can lead to defects or equipment damage.

## Customisation for Diverse Applications

Infrared cameras and sensors can be customised for different applications, with adjustable optics and settings. Multiple temperature zones can be monitored simultaneously, ideal for environments where materials move rapidly through stages of production.

Modern IR systems integrate easily with industrial control systems using digital protocols like Ethernet and Modbus, enabling real-time monitoring and analysis. This allows you to make immediate adjustments, reducing inefficiencies and improving process control.

Switching from traditional tools like thermocouples to advanced infrared systems may seem daunting, but the advantages of improved accuracy, reduced maintenance, and enhanced safety are clear.

## A Solution Worth Considering: The Optris Xi 1M

The Optris Xi 1M spot finder infrared camera offers a tailored solution for the metal industry. With a wide temperature range of 450 °C to 1800 °C, it's ideal for high-temperature applications, including molten metals. Its spot finder functionality ensures precision, even on partially obscured surfaces like slag-covered molten metal.

The Xi 1M operates autonomously and integrates easily into existing systems. With digital interfaces and real-time data output, it's a flexible tool for engineers managing high-temperature processes.

Process Parameters Ltd, is a UK distributor for Optris who are a leading Germany manufacturer of infrared thermometers, and offers the Xi 1M as part of a broader range of temperature measurement solutions.

## In conclusion

In the metal industry, where precision, efficiency, and safety are critical, Infrared temperature measurement systems offer the tools needed to monitor and control high-temperature processes. By adopting modern solutions like the Optris Xi 1M, you can improve product quality, reduce downtime, ensure safe operations and most importantly maintain a competitive edge in today's industry.

**process**parameters





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# SAVE THE DATE

## CBM MINI FASTENER EXPO 2025

**Wednesday 15th October**

NMC Venue, Birmingham Road, B70 6PY

**For more information about this event please email Rachael Bromley at [Rachael.bromley@thecbm.co.uk](mailto:Rachael.bromley@thecbm.co.uk)**





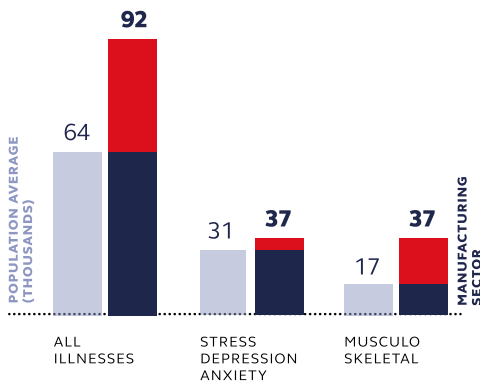
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Source: Simply Health



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days lost to sickness absence in the manufacturing sector per year

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<b>Dreher Automation</b> Germany D-72172	<b>t: 00 49 7454 881 640</b> <a href="http://www.dreher.de">www.dreher.de</a>
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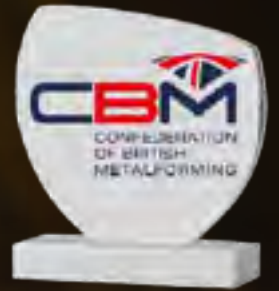
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