OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2026 THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF HIRE ASSOCIATION EUROPE AND EVENT HIRE ASSOCIATION

INTERFACE ON HIRE

HAEEHA

ARRESTS MARK MAJOR DEVELOPMENT, BUT 'GHOST COMPANIES' STILL HAUNT US

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From Icelandic beaches to Greek peaks, portable power fuels 'The Odyssey'

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How modern partnerships will shape the future

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INTRODUCING Hae HIRE ASSOCIATION EUROPE PAVILION

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INTRODUCTION BY HAE EHA CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PAUL GAZE

A view from on hire

HAE EHA was proud to be a key partner of the recent Rental Summit 2026, which took place at the Frankfurt Airport Visitor Centre and FRA Lounge in Germany, and there are some key messages and action points we can take away from this event.

Focusing on cost of ownership and strategies for the plant, tool, and equipment hire sector, the main takeaway for the British equipment hire sector was that profitability relies heavily on mastering Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), embracing practical electrification, while boosting operational collaboration.

HAE EHA Commercial Director Neil Bravery delivered a keynote in which he explicitly highlighted how high fleet maintenance costs destroy bottom-line profits. For UK hire firms operating in a disciplined, lower-growth economic climate, buying equipment solely based on a low upfront purchase price is a losing strategy, and success requires prioritisation of proactive maintenance, parts availability, and equipment durability to maximize utilisation and curb unexpected downtime.

Electrification is no longer just a compliance exercise. It is a core business strategy. The summit heavily debated the commercial integration of battery power, using real-world frameworks like Vanguard battery packs. With major UK contractors increasingly mandating strict site emissions and noise standards, the message to the British sector is clear: Invest in rental-ready, lithium-ion, and battery-powered plant alternatives that guarantee an immediate measurable return on investment (ROI), rather than waiting for future mandates.

With the broader European and British construction markets facing regulatory changes and economic consolidation, equipment rental firms need to move away from competing purely on rental rates. Leaders were urged to adopt "proactive value creation", such as offering data-driven telematics, carbon footprint tracking, and flexible machinery packages, to help end-users mitigate their own project delivery risks.

Navigating the modern shift where traditional hire meets complex new software and regulatory systems requires deep supply chain alignment. UK hire businesses cannot solve integration or technological hurdles in isolation. Firms must establish tighter partnerships with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and technology innovators to co-develop practical machinery, ensure streamlined component supply chains, and future-proof their fleets.

The CECE congress, hosted by the Construction Equipment Association, is another key event due to take place this month. It will bring together global construction industry leaders, to share insights and discuss the challenges facing our industry and we give you a preview of what's to come in this issue's focus feature.

We're really pleased to be one of the successful applicants for the CITB Specialist Upskilling Fund. Through the Fund, we'll be working with plant and tool hire businesses to identify training needs, support workforce development and help businesses access the right upskilling opportunities. We're looking forward to helping businesses build the skills they need for the future.

If you'd like to find out more, please contact our Learning and Development Officer Nikki Wyllie.

As many of you will know from national media coverage, 20 people have now been charged by Cheshire Police in connection with a large-scale plant hire fraud scheme involving the theft of approximately £1 million worth of machinery. I'm proud that HAE EHA has played such an active role in helping bring this about, alongside policing colleagues and NCATT. But unfortunately, it's still just the tip of the iceberg and we've already heard of similar scams being targeted at hire firms recently. Read our HireSecure feature to find out more. Theft and fraud of hire equipment and tools continue to damage our sector and customers so it's essential we heed the warning signs and listen to advice on how to help prevent this.

There have been some good collaborations and results from other HAE EHA members on theft and crime which you can read about in our news section, and there are also plenty of positive projects we shine a spotlight on this month, including how members have helped keep a cinematic blockbuster running smoothly, a new venture in the North East of England and how careers in hire are evolving. <<

"We're looking forward to helping businesses build the skills they need for the future."

INTERFACE ON HIRE

Head Office
2450 Regents Court, The Crescent,
Birmingham Business Park,
Solihull B37 7YE

CEO
Paul Gaze
paul.gaze@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4609

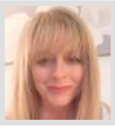
Director Certification Services
Carl Bartlett
carl.bartlett@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4604

Commercial Director
Neil Bravery
neil.bravery@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4605

Director of Public Affairs
Mark Bradshaw
mark.bradshaw@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4621

Learning & Development Officer
Nikki Wyllie
nikki.wyllie@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4617

Marketing Officer
Stuart Tyrrell
stuart.tyrrell@hae.org.uk
0121 380 4608



Editor
Stephanie Cornwall
editorial@hae.org.uk

Advertising
Theresa Geeson
advertising@hae.org.uk

Design
Dean Cole
deanc@warnersgroup.co.uk

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR ...

SOME of the news shared with us in this issue by HAE EHA members is a real eye-opener into just how far-reaching our sector's expertise is, and what is possible thanks to the services and adaptability offered by hire companies.

A key highlight for this month is a project undertaken for this year's blockbuster movie, The Odyssey, which I was lucky enough to see a month ago. Its film crew faced intense production challenges in diverse country settings, and our feature details how these were overcome with hire equipment and some of the inspiration for scenes. If you're familiar with the the film, you may view it with fresh eyes now - something the film's deadly Cyclops might be a little envious of!

There is a strong focus on equipment theft and fraud tactics in this issue. While many will be applauding recent high-profile arrests, others have unfortunately shared experiences involving recent advance impersonation tactics, urging timely warnings for others, while organised crime groups increasingly deploy 'ghost firms' to intercept a wide range of heavy machinery.

Our news articles and feature on page 28 discuss some of the red flags, alongside latest collaborative technology and recovery solutions. Be sure to also read our separate feature in which Dr Marco Lafrentz, MEF Global Board Member and Chair of the Anti-Fraud Program explains why practical action is needed to protect the hire sector from text scams.

It's heart-warming to see how HAE EHA's membership ranks are continuing to swell and we introduce a host of recent recruits in our 'New To The Crew' pages this month. Of particular note is the Construction Equipment Association (the CEA). Our special news focus details how this association is working in collaboration with our own, while our 'New To The Crew' focus reveals more about its activities, alongside those of other new members, including Spartan Solutions Ltd.

There are some new appointments to share, and Learning & Development Officer Nikki Wyllie discusses some of the take-aways from the recent European Rental Week.

Don't forget to keep me up to speed with your own news – you can contact me at editorial@hae.org.uk and if you have anything you'd like to promote, be sure to drop Theresa a line at advertising@hae.org.uk.

Stephanie Cornwall
Editor

Major contributor to the war on goods theft

FOLLOWING its recent recognition for innovation at the 2026 British Security Awards, one of HAE EHA's members has shared the actions and inputs which assisted in the recovery of hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of stolen goods.

SelectaDNA joined HAE EHA as a supplier member last year, extending its crime-prevention technology to networks within the hire and construction sectors.

In June, the company was named Innovative Project of the Year at the 2026 British Security Awards, in recognition of its partnership with the Metropolitan Police under Operation Zoridon, which brought together more than 300 officers alongside Trading Standards, Border Force, local authority licensing teams, and major national retailers.

SelectaDNA supported the Met in deploying forensic marking kits across participating retailers, including Sainsbury's, Holland & Barrett, Co-op, BP, and Tesco, with thousands of individual items marked and circulated into stores as part of a targeted deterrence and intelligence-gathering strategy.

SelectaDNA's forensic markers are invisible to the naked eye but fluoresce under UV light. Each marker carries a unique DNA sequence and embedded microdots that identify the item's owner. Officers entering suspect premises could scan goods on shelves and immediately verify which items were stolen and from which stores, accelerating enforcement and strengthening the evidential chain.

In October last year, the Met carried out more than 120 targeted raids, resulting in 32 arrests and the recovery of hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of stolen goods, including electronics, cosmetics, food, alcohol, luxury goods, and illicit vapes. Nine shops received closure notices, with further long-term closure orders sought through the courts.

The project established three 'firsts' for UK policing and the security industry: The first city-wide deployment of forensic marking as an operational intelligence tool, rather than solely a deterrent; the first integration of forensic technology with multi-agency criminal market disruption, including Trading Standards and local authority licensing; the first use of a specialist SelectaDNA search dog trained to detect forensic-marked stolen goods during retail crime enforcement.

A sub-operation in south-west London recovered £150,000 worth of stolen goods directly traced to retailers using SelectaDNA, confirming systematic handling of stolen property and providing prosecutable evidence linking offenders to specific thefts.

Senior leadership from the Metropolitan Police, including Commander Andy Featherstone and Superintendent Luke Baldock, participated in the operation alongside the Mayor of London and the Policing Minister, reflecting the national significance of the initiative.

One of the most rewarding outcomes supported by SelectaDNA's deployment, which many in the hire industry will directly relate to, was the recovery and return of stolen tools to their original owner, demonstrating how forensic traceability can deliver direct justice for individual victims as well as systemic disruption of organised networks.

Vehicle theft a continuing burden

VEHICLE-related theft remains a substantial burden despite recent improvement: ONS figures for the year ending December 2025 recorded around 596,000 vehicle-related theft incidents, a 14% fall on the previous year. Tool theft moved in the opposite direction, with police recording 30,848 offences in 2025, a 16% year-on-year rise, and losses valued at almost £19 million. Broader industry estimates put the true cost to tradespeople, once lost earnings and business disruption are included, as high as £98.9 million.

Against this backdrop, the annual conference gives policing, retailers and industry a rare chance to compare what is and isn't working – from force-led operations to national partnerships – and to recognise, through the accompanying awards, the individuals and teams translating that work into measurable results.

Silver anniversary celebrated

SELECTAMARK Security Systems is celebrating 25 years as a Secured by Design member, marking a significant milestone in the company's long-standing commitment to police-approved crime prevention, forensic marking and asset identification.

Founded in 1985, Selectamark has established itself as a supplier of theft-deterrent property marking solutions, helping everyone from homeowners to law enforcement agencies protect assets, deter theft and reduce opportunities for crime. It became a Secured by Design member in 2001. Since then, the company has continued to develop property marking and forensic identification technologies under the SelectaDNA brand.

The growing threat of tool and equipment theft

WHILE some acquisitive crime categories have seen slight improvements over the past year, tool and equipment theft have moved sharply in the opposite direction, according to information shared at the recent National Acquisitive Crime Conference.

UK police recorded 30,848 tool theft offences in 2025, representing a 16% year-on-year increase.

Direct losses from stolen tools were valued at nearly £19 million. However, broader construction and equipment hire industry estimates put the true cost—including business disruption, hire replacement costs, and lost earnings—at £98.9 million.

The conference highlighted successful national crime prevention partnerships and marking initiatives and HAE EHA member SelectaDNA was applauded for its efforts which successfully recovered £2 million in stolen equipment. Police forces, retailers, local authorities and industry partners attended and James Brown, Managing Director of Selectamark, welcomed attendants to the event on both days.

Acquisitive crime remains a significant, and in places worsening, problem across the UK. Retailers recorded more than 20 million incidents of customer theft in 2025, equivalent to 55,000 a day and up from 16 million the year before. The total cost of retail crime, including prevention measures, reached £4.2 billion, according to the British Retail Consortium's Crime and Shrink Benchmark 2025.

Violence and abuse against retail staff rose more than 50% year-on-year and 340% since 2020, with retailers now spending a record £1.8 billion annually on crime prevention.

Get ready for the 2027 Hire Awards of Excellence - and relive the highlights of the 2026 wins

The Hire Awards of Excellence, which take place at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London include individual and company achievement categories for all areas of hire.

Visit our special supplement at **https://bit.ly/4dz9oHn** to see how the last event unfolded and what to expect in 2027.

Visit **www.hae.org.uk/awards** to find out how to enter or become a sponsor for The Hire Awards of Excellence 2027
SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, April 10th

Powering an epic

From Icelandic beaches to Greek peaks: Instagrid's portable power fuels 'The Odyssey'.

ONE of HAE EHA's members has this year helped a blockbuster film reach cinema screens by providing solutions for some intense production challenges.

Instagrid supplied up to 70 portable Instagrid ONE power units and Instagrid LINK modules to provide silent, emission-free off-grid electricity during the production of Christopher Nolan's epic film The Odyssey, which was released into cinemas this year.

Based on Homer's epic Greek poem, the film follows Odysseus, King of Ithaca, on his 10-year journey home after the Trojan War. Along the way, he must battle mythical monsters, gods and extreme conditions to make it home to his loyal son and faithful wife.

During the 91-day production of the epic film, Instagrid portable power systems were used to support crews across seven countries, including remote coastlines, mountain ranges, historic sites, caves and open-water filming locations where traditional generators simply weren't practical.

With up to 70 Instagrid ONE units deployed throughout production, the crew relied on silent, portable power to run lighting, camera equipment, cranes and other essential gear. When longer runtimes were required, Instagrid LINK modules expanded capacity without adding unnecessary complexity, helping crews stay mobile while meeting the demands of an ambitious international production.

The company supplied equipment for use in rugged, hard-to-reach areas across seven countries, including Greek mountain slopes and Icelandic black sand beaches, where traditional fuel-burning generators were logistically impossible or banned.

It supplied continuous power for heavy-duty film equipment, including a 45-foot technocrane used during steep location shoots, lighting setups, and monitors and handled the recharging needs for camera batteries on location to prevent downtime.

Everything operated completely silently, which was crucial for capturing clean, direct on-set dialogue and sound recording without the loud hum of a diesel generator.

The Odyssey was filmed across Morocco, Greece, Italy, Scotland, Iceland, Western Sahara, and Malta, following Odysseus's journey through dramatic landscapes, remote coastlines, historic sites, and open water.

The scale and ambition of the production placed extraordinary demands on its power infrastructure. Every location required reliable power to support lighting, cameras, cranes, rigging, DIT, and crew facilities, all without compromising the production's mobility or creative vision.

Many filming locations ruled out conventional generator power entirely. Production took place on boats, around water, on isolated Mediterranean islands, inside prehistoric caves, and across protected heritage sites where strict restrictions applied to noise, emissions, and physical footprint.

Furthermore, as filming took place in freezing temperatures and rapidly-changing weather conditions, its production needed a power solution that could perform consistently in harsh environments.

Constant travelling companion

Instagrid ONE, a portable 230V power system, travelled alongside cast and crew throughout the production, with up to 70 units deployed at peak usage across multiple locations.

Weighing 20 kg and designed to be carried by a single person, each unit delivered 3.6 kW of continuous output and up to 18 kW of peak power from a 2.1 kWh battery capacity, providing reliable electricity for lights, camera-cranes, monitors, and other high-demand equipment. Camera batters could also be quickly recharged on set.

When longer run times were needed, units were connected using the Instagrid LINK system, combining up to three Instagrid ONE units into a 6.3 kWh power source, extending operating time without operational complexity.

Instagrid ONE also powered the Scorpio 45' Technocrane supplied by Cinecrane during several demanding location sequences, including the filming of Odysseus (Matt Damon) ascending the slopes of Mount Pelion in Greece. Despite the steep, remote terrain, power remained readily available wherever the production needed it.

A location favourite

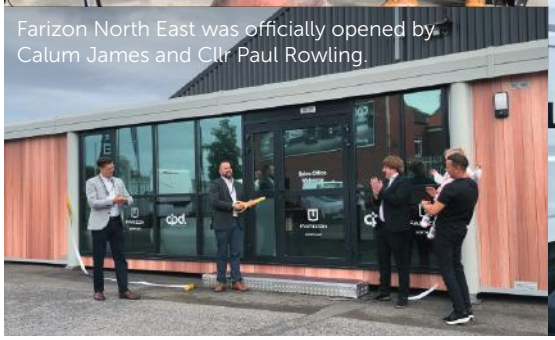
Bilal El-Harrak, a member of the lighting team working on the Scotland unit, said: "We had approximately 60 to 70 Instagrid ONE units on set, mainly powering the LED lighting. They became a favourite solution for location work where the terrain was difficult and rugged.

"In Scotland, the lighting team used Instagrid's portable power systems in the woods around Findhorn to power Skypanel 360s. Instagrid ONE units are essential for quick changes and situations where running conventional mains power would be too time-consuming. Carrying the units proved far more practical and allowed us to meet power requirements instantly." <<

Industry leaders discuss the electric van market and barriers to use.

Visitors discuss the Farizon Welfare conversion by CPD.

Cllr Paul Rowling.


Farizon North East was officially opened by Calum James and Cllr Paul Rowling.

The Newly Launched Farizon North East on Bowesfield Lane.

All-electric commercial vehicle hub in North East is major new venture for supplier member

CPD Bodies, a family-owned light commercial vehicle sales and conversion specialist, has become the retail dealer, strategic conversion partner, and aftersales service provider for the Chinese all-electric commercial vehicle brand, Farizon, in the North East of England.

The HAE EHA supplier member whose commercial director joined the HAE EHA Supply Chain Board last year, recently celebrated the official opening of Farizon North East in Stockton-on-Tees.

The official opening of the retail dealership and service hub was attended by members of local government, business leaders and some of the UK's leading commercial vehicle and electric fleet specialists. Councillor Paul Rowling, Deputy Leader of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Regeneration, joined Calum James, Country General Manager of Farizon Auto UK, to officially cut the ribbon at the dealership, which is operated by CPD from its Stockton headquarters.

The opening marks the latest stage in CPD's continued investment and diversification in the region. This year, it has created more than 20 new jobs while expanding its vehicle sales, conversion and fleet capabilities.

CEO of CPD and Farizon North East, Cathal Doocey, said: "CPD has been my baby for 17 years. It hasn't always been easy, but I'm incredibly proud of what we've built, and officially launching Farizon North East is a massive moment for us.

"Farizon gives us a huge opportunity to build on that experience and take the business in a new direction. Our partnership with Farizon goes much further than simply selling electric vans. We understand how commercial vehicles are actually used and how to develop them around the work our customers need them to do."

At the launch guests were able to drive the Farizon SV range and see the new SV Sport, developed by CPD in Stockton using the Farizon SV platform.

Deputy Leader of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Cabinet Member for Resources and Regeneration, Councillor Paul Rowling, said: "This is another fantastic achievement for CPD right here in Stockton-on-Tees and we have been delighted to support the growth of the business in our area, which has helped boost our local economy and provide some excellent employment opportunities."

Country General Manager for Farizon Auto UK, Calum James, said: "Farizon Auto's success relies on partnering with the best. With Farizon North East, operated by CPD, we found a business with bags of ambition, and an incredible 17-year build heritage, built in the heart of Stockton-on-Tees.

"Farizon North East has created a dedicated hub designed around real fleet needs, combining cutting edge workshop capabilities, commercial vehicle expertise and rapid turnaround support all under one roof."

The launch was also attended by Chris Renahan, Assistant Director for Inclusive Growth and Regeneration at Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, alongside customers, partners and representatives from across the commercial vehicle and fleet sectors. The event also included a Charged Conversations roundtable discussion, covering the issues businesses and fleets are facing as they consider the transition to electric vehicles. <<

New relationship strengthens cooperation across construction equipment and hire sectors

HAE (Hire Association Europe) and CEA (Construction Equipment Association) have agreed a reciprocal membership arrangement, strengthening cooperation between two of the UK's leading industry trade associations.

Under the agreement, each organisation will become a member of the other, creating a stronger platform for sharing insight, coordinating activity and working together on issues affecting their members and the wider industry.

CEA represents around 150 businesses across the construction equipment supply chain, including OEMs, component and attachment manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and specialist service providers. HAE represents approximately 700 members across the hire sector, including around 100 OEMs and suppliers.

Chief Executive Officer of HAE, Paul Gaze, said: "HAE already works closely with the CEA on a range of topics including theft, asset management and taxation, so reciprocal membership is a logical next step. We have many OEM and supplier members, so this relationship underlines our commitment to supporting the hire supply chain. Trade bodies working together can achieve so much more."

Chief Executive Officer of CEA, Viki Bell, said: "There is a natural fit between CEA and HAE, with both organisations representing businesses operating throughout the construction equipment supply chain. This agreement gives us a stronger basis for sharing knowledge and working together on the issues that matter to our members. Closer cooperation between our associations will help ensure that manufacturers, suppliers and hire companies have a more joined-up voice."

The two associations expect the reciprocal membership to develop into a wider programme of cooperation, supporting their respective members and strengthening links between the construction equipment and hire sectors.

Support for world's largest Irish music celebration

WORKING alongside Belfast City Council, Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland recently helped deliver the temporary infrastructure that supported one of the world's largest celebrations of Irish music.

The company provided temporary electrical installations, power distribution, lighting towers, barriers and fencing, access solutions, temporary roadway systems, plant equipment and fuel management across multiple locations in Belfast for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026 event.

The Fleadh took place alongside a wider programme of events across Belfast. During the same period, Sunbelt Rentals supported a number of arts festivals and events across the city, providing infrastructure for temporary visitor accommodation and temporary power for the Continental Market's.

Sunbelt's Managing Director Paul Tumilty said: "More than 1.6 million people came to Belfast for an incredible celebration of music and culture, and we're proud to have played our part."

First soil compactors delivered to Oswestry

THE first new JCB VM118D soil compactors to roll off the production line have been bought by an Oswestry-based company, Ridgway Rentals.

JCB's VM118D single drum soil compactor is powered by the 55kW JCB 430 diesel engine. This EU Stage V compliant engine requires no Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) to achieve the emissions standard, making it the world's first and only EU Stage V soil compactor over 10-tonnes that has no requirement for DEF.

1250kVA generators added to fleet

SUNBELT Rentals UK & Ireland has expanded its large-power offering with an investment in Cummins-powered 1250kVA generators from BGG, strengthening its ability to support complex, multi-megawatt temporary power requirements across the UK, Ireland and Europe.

The 1250kVA units form part of larger temporary power systems designed around the operational requirements of transmissions, major infrastructure, data centres and critical projects.

The fleet comprises trailer-mounted and standalone units configurated for rapid mobilisation which allow different configurations to be chosen around the technical environmental and logistical demands of each project and site.

Major work upturn sees firm purchase 40 new site dumpers

ROCKET Rentals has taken delivery of 40 new JCB site dumpers in a £1.5 million deal that takes the company's total investment in JCB equipment this year to more than £4.5 million.

Supplied by Holt JCB, the latest order follows a major fleet expansion earlier in 2026, which included 55 new excavators, telescopic handlers and compaction rollers.

The new dumper fleet comprises JCB 3T-2, 6T-2 and 9T-2 models - in both cabbed and non-cabbed configurations – and is set to work on a wide range of projects across the construction, industrial and civil engineering sectors.

Rocket Rentals Managing Director Simon Tomblin said: "With the upturn in work towards the end of last year and continuing into 2026, we decided to further strengthen the fleet with more machines."

Founded in 2003, Rocket Rentals has grown into one of the region's leading plant and tool hire specialists which supports construction, industrial and civil engineering projects with a wide range of equipment - from one to 25 tonne excavators alongside dumpers, rollers, telehandlers, bowsers, generators and access equipment. Its sister company, Rocket Tool Hire Limited, rents and leases tools, machinery, and equipment for construction, industrial, and DIY projects.

Bring back the Magic!

Objects can be copied, but thankfully people are unique. When they work together as a team, the results can be magical.

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JCB UPDATES LIVELINK PLATFORM

JCB has updated its LiveLink telematics platform with a series of developments designed to help customers improve profitability, safety and sustainability across their operations.

The latest updates see expanded safety and security functionality added across the platform. These include new remote machine management features - including JCB IntelliSense integration - available on Hi-Viz Loadall telescopic handlers.

JCB LiveLink is designed to help customers monitor and maintain their machines more effectively. Currently connecting more than 580,000 machines worldwide and supporting over 40,000 customers, JCB LiveLink is accessible through a web browser and mobile app and covers JCB and mixed fleets. The system provides information on machine location, utilisation, fuel consumption, maintenance requirements and security, helping customers maximise uptime, improve fuel efficiency and make more informed operational decisions. Most recently JCB LiveLink has been introduced as standard on JCB site dumper and mini excavator models meaning the system is now available across the company's entire construction and agricultural equipment ranges.

JCB Group Managing Director - Global Aftersales, Mario Moser, said: "Customers are increasingly looking for ways to reduce operating costs, improve machine utilisation and maintain safe, efficient worksites. JCB LiveLink continues to evolve to support those 1fleet, overseeing a project or operating a machine themselves, customers need access to information that is relevant to their role and helps them make informed decisions.

"By helping customers make better-informed decisions, LiveLink can bring increased profitability, safer working environments and more sustainable machine operation."

Greater control

JCB's Hi-Viz Loadall telescopic handlers – the 535-125, 540-140 and 540-180 models - now benefit through LiveLink.

Fleet managers can remotely adjust a range of machine settings including Auto Stop parameters, speed limit controls, IntelliSense activation, tyre pressure monitoring settings and remote PIN management.

The new functionality allows machine settings to be managed without visiting the machine, helping management teams improve operational practices, support site compliance and enhance machine security.

Tyre pressure monitoring information can also be viewed remotely, helping identify low tyre pressures that can affect fuel consumption, machine mobility and tyre life.

Safety and security

LiveLink continues to expand its safety and security capabilities through a combination of machine monitoring, operator checks and real-time alerts.

Customers can configure health alerts, maintenance notifications, geofencing and out-of-hours alerts to help identify potential issues early and flag unauthorised machine use.

Integration with JCB IntelliSense provides additional safety benefits. The AI-based system can alert operators to pedestrians in areas of risk, while near-miss events and video footage can be reviewed through LiveLink to support site safety management and incident analysis without needing to be present on site.

Smarter decisions

LiveLink provides information on machine operation. Automated reports and flexible monitoring tools help business owners, fleet managers and site teams track machine performance across multiple assets and locations. By identifying underused equipment, excessive idle time and unnecessary fuel consumption, customers can improve working practices, lower operating costs and support preventative maintenance programmes.

LiveLink also provides fuel consumption and CO_2 reporting, helping customers measure efficiency improvements.

The platform is also supported by the JCB Operator App, enabling operators to complete machine checks and helping ensure equipment remains safe, compliant and ready for work.

Customers can visit the LiveLink website for more information at **https://www.jcblivelink.com/** <<

Lunch with the CEO

HAE EHA CEO Paul Gaze meets with The Preparation Group's Managing Director, Tracey Glew, who describes how the company's strategy has naturally evolved to embrace new technology, diversify services, and adapt to modern demands over the past 30 years.

The Preparation Group's Managing Director, Tracey Glew.

I ask: The Preparation Group has been providing quality services for more than 30 years. How do you motivate the team to deliver for your customers?
Tracey says: We have embedded customer focus into every stage of our processes, from enquiry through to aftercare. We invest in our team's development, welfare and wellbeing, and training is a key focus from day one. It continues to evolve so that we stay on top of industry needs. Through that investment, we aim to deliver the best level of service for each customer's requirements. Another key element is the knowledge and technical expertise within the business. In some respects, that expertise has become less readily available across the wider industry. We still receive calls from people who have hired our equipment through other channels and need support with what to do or how to achieve a particular result. The investment we have made in research and development and in our people has paid dividends over the years.

I ask: So that investment in people, processes and systems is delivering for both the business and its customers?
Tracey says: Correct, yes.

I ask: How has your strategy changed through the different roles you have held and since becoming Managing Director?
Tracey says: I was Managing Director from day one. Over the years, I have done almost every job within the business, from the most basic skills upwards. That experience has helped me understand what needs to be built and improved. Investment in technology, systems and procedures is key to the company's continuous development. Our strategy has evolved naturally. The business has changed immensely as we have adapted to the way we work today, whether in response to legislation, health and safety, or the welfare and wellbeing of our teams. We have also had to consider a broader range of issues, including culture and sustainability. We have always maintained our hands-on, customer-focused ethos. We listen to our customers, embrace new technology and diversify our services to meet the needs of the industries we serve.

I ask: You have been involved in almost every aspect of the business. How has that breadth of experience influenced your leadership?
Tracey says: I have worked across administration, accounts and marketing, and looked closely at how our teams interact, as well as manufacturing and R&D. During the COVID lockdowns, I even became 'Director of Packaging'. Having an understanding of what people do, and what it takes to bring those teams together to serve our customers, is important. That understanding continues to evolve. >>

The Preparation Group has a purpose-built training school at its Lincoln headquarters. Tracey says training is a key focus from day one.

I ask: How does that understanding translate into the products and service customers receive?
Tracey says: Our focus has always been on good, honest advice and quality products that stand the test of time. We incorporate the latest technology to improve safety and operation, and that has remained at the forefront of our development. The principles of surface preparation have not hugely changed. A grinder or shotblaster still works on the same fundamental basis. What has improved is safety, cleaner operation, dust extraction, user-friendliness and ease of maintenance. We are also seeing developments in robotics and other technologies.

I ask: Your commitment to learning and development within the business is clear. Tell me about your work to develop skills across the wider sector.
Tracey says: Certainly. In relation to resin flooring sector, materials manufacturers and the hire side of the business, we are helping to train the next generation here at our headquarters, Preparation House. We established our in-house training facilities in 2006, and they continue to host a wide range of training opportunities. Within the resin flooring sector, where I am closely involved, there is a significant skills gap. A key focus over the last three years for us has been to bring new people into the sector and ensure they have the tools, equipment and education to begin their careers on the right path. There has been substantial investment in the facilities, and the same principle applies across the business. We give our customers the information they need, in the way that works for them, to make informed, best-value decisions about their investments and choices.

I ask: In my previous role at the Construction Industry Training Board, I worked with colleagues including Alan Wemyss, FeRFA and you to establish the programme that continues to run here. What are you most proud of?
Tracey says: We are proud to offer structured programmes. The SAP schemes help us bring new talent into the sector. Our aim is to create a confident, competent and motivated workforce capable of delivering excellence, and consistently high standards. It is encouraging to see new people who want to learn, because the skills gap is not limited to resin flooring or surface preparation; it exists across the wider construction industries and was accentuated by the COVID period. During the lockdowns, we continued to deliver training, with structures in place to ensure we remained compliant.

I ask: Your support for trade associations is a significant part of your work. You have served on the Hire Association Europe Board and have been closely involved with FeRFA and Build UK. Why is that collaboration important?
Tracey says: Collaboration across the industry is essential. Through my work with HAE, FeRFA and Build UK, I have been able to contribute to initiatives that help raise standards. By being involved, we can make a practical difference across areas including health and safety, sustainability, regulation and training. Trade associations are important to the development of businesses in every sector. They keep members informed, represent their interests and work in the background to help industries progress in ways that are profitable, successful and safe, as well as continuously pushing to raise quality and standards across the whole industry and sector.

I ask: Over the years, you have won a number of awards and been shortlisted for many others. You were recently shortlisted for the National Flooring Awards.
Tracey says: Yes. The most recent shortlist was for innovation in machine development, based on several pieces of equipment. It's always received positively and is an extra boost for our whole team to be given recognition for excellence, and we always remain very proud of the product. We have an ongoing programme of investment in R&D, with two or three new projects currently in development- so watch this space for the future!

I ask: That leads perfectly to your commitment to health, safety and sustainability. You provide guidance, training and support for people using the machines. How is that embedded in the business?
Tracey says: Health and safety is non-negotiable, and our Sales and Marketing team, Lesley, Lara and Ellie-May have developed clear user guides, training modules and online resources, and we have recently launched a new website to support safe working practices. Our products are always designed with the user in mind, including ergonomics and ease of operation. And it doesn't stop there - we were among the first to introduce QR Codes as standard on our machines (another Award-Winning innovation!) to assist operatives on-site with easy access to Operation Manuals and start-up videos. We strive to look beyond basic compliance, and always ask how we can improve designs and use our knowledge more effectively. We want everyone who uses our equipment to receive the best value

and to know that their choice is right for their business, not just for one isolated task. We invest in our fleet and spend time speaking with customers so that we understand what they need, we advise accordingly and help them achieve the best return on investment by providing guidance in a holistic way.

I ask: You are also proud to display the Made in Britain mark. Why is UK manufacturing so important to The Preparation Group?
Tracey says: We believe strongly in Made in Britain. Manufacturing here gives us greater control over quality, allows us to support local suppliers and the UK economy, and reflects our commitment to investment, integrity, workmanship and accountability. It also enables us to provide customers with full product traceability and information about our manufacturing processes. There will always be some components sourced from abroad, but we can ensure that robust systems and procedures are in place. For us, Made in Britain is a recognised standard, just as membership of HAE, FeRFA and other associations represents a commitment to the values and requirements they stand for, including investment in the local economy.

"Having an understanding of what people do, and what it takes to bring those teams together to serve our customers, is important. That understanding continues to evolve."

I ask: How has being part of HAE and undertaking SafeHire made a difference to the business?
Tracey says: Lara looks after SafeHire for the business. It has been instrumental in driving continuous improvement, and we gained the accreditation when HAE first launched it. It reinforces our commitment to safety, quality and customer care, and gives clients confidence in the people they are working with. It is an independent indication that we have met stringent quality requirements. HAE's support and resources have also been invaluable, connecting us with customers and industry peers. We will continue to engage, adapt and support positive change across the sector.

I ask: Looking ahead, where do you see the industry going in the short to medium term?
Tracey says: I believe we will continue to see a strong focus on sustainability, digitalisation and workforce development. Government initiatives that support investment in young people and employment opportunities will also be important. We currently have two people in our workshops completing engineering apprenticeships. We are not only thinking about the people who use the machines, but also those who will build the machines of the future. We have a great deal of knowledge within the workshop, and we are able to share it to support their development.

I ask: Tracey, thank you for your support of HAE and for your work to raise standards across the industry. It has been a pleasure working with you over the past 20 years.
Tracey says: Thank you very much, Paul. It has been a pleasure. Collaboration is part of the progress we are making and the journey we are taking into the future. <<

While shotblasters still work on the same fundamental basis, safety, cleaner operation, dust extraction, user-friendliness and ease of maintenance have vastly improved over the years and are evidenced by the company's current range.

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Robbie joins hire certification team

ROBBIE Davies-Jackson has taken on the new role of a Hire Certification Services Auditor at HAE EHA.

Robbie is no newcomer to the hire industry, having spent almost 14 years working for HSS: The Hire Service Company until January this year, as the Manchester company's Branch Development Trainer.

After that the role of Safety, Health, and Environment advisor at BAE Systems, a global defence, aerospace, and security contractor that designs, manufactures, and supports advanced military equipment and technology.

Robbie said he has missed working in the hire industry and is very pleased to be back working in the sector.

"Thank you to everyone who has supported me in this - back to the industry I call home!" he said.

Director of Certification Services at HAE EHA, Carl Bartlett, said: "We are absolutely thrilled to have Robbie join us at Hire Association Europe as our new Hire Certification Services Auditor. His extensive industry experience and passion makes him the perfect fit for this role, and we can't wait to see the positive impact he'll make."

Following in father's footsteps

GEORGE Bamford has become Joint Chairman of family-owned business JCB alongside his father, Lord Bamford.

Lord Bamford has led JCB for more than 50 years.

George Bamford, aged 45, has served as Deputy Chairman for the company since early 2026, and described the appointment as "part of JCB's next chapter". He is youngest son of Lord Bamford. His older brother Joseph "Jo" Bamford is an industrialist and businessman who previously worked at JCB, before founding green hydrogen investment and production firms including Ryze Hydrogen and Hygen Energy. He also owns the Northern Irish bus manufacturer Wrightbus, which builds double-decker buses.

Lord Bamford's eldest child Alice Bamford works as a film producer based in California.

George's appointment comes as the business, which has grown from its Staffordshire roots into one of Britain's largest privately-owned manufacturers, with 23 factories and more than 20,000 employees worldwide, sets out a programme of investment across British manufacturing and new production capacity in the US.

Three senior industry appointments

ALLIANCE Tool Hire, which turns 15 this year, has strengthened its senior leadership team with three key industry appointments.

The company started with one depot in East London and now has 10 spanning from Kent to South Wales.

The business has appointed Ed Fell as Operations Director, John Hopkins as Regional Director for Wales and Stuart Williams as Business Development Manager at its Newport depot.

Ed joins Alliance after 20 years with HSS Hire, where he rose from Branch Manager to Managing Director for the South, leading a £90m turnover division including 10 distribution centres and additional merchant locations. He will lead operations across the Alliance depot network as the business continues to expand.

John brings more than 35 years of hire industry experience to the newly created role of Regional Director for Wales. Having started out as a delivery driver, he went on to hold senior positions including Sales Manager, Sales Director, Operations Director and Supply Chain Director, and will now lead the development of the Alliance business across Wales.

Stuart joins the Newport depot as Business Development Manager after almost a decade in the hire industry across South Wales, with Vp Brandon Hire Station, Sunbelt Rentals and, most recently, Altrad Generation. He will work alongside Depot Manager Martin Fanthorpe and the Newport team to build relationships with construction businesses across the region.

The appointments follow the opening of the Newport depot in April, backed by a £1.6m investment over five years, and a further £100k spent on new delivery vehicles for the depot in June, as Alliance continues to invest in the Welsh construction market.

Beth Peters, CEO of Alliance Tool Hire, said: "Ed, John and Stuart each bring decades of hands-on experience from some of the largest names in our industry, and between them they know how to run depots, look after customers and grow a hire business the right way."

"When we opened in Newport we said our investment in Wales was just the start, and these appointments show we meant it. Ed strengthens how we operate across all ten depots, while John and Stuart give us the local leadership and relationships to grow our presence across Wales."

BEYOND DRY HIRE:
HOW MODERN PARTNERSHIPS WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE

The strongest customer relationships are built before the equipment reaches site. Photo: Cytonn Photography

Mark Hoad, Sales and Marketing Director at Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland, discusses how expertise, data and sustainable growth will be crucial to the future of hire.

THE hire industry sits right at the heart of how the UK delivers infrastructure, construction and industrial work through to film and TV productions.

From major transport upgrades to complex FM portfolios, hire companies help customers maintain progress while managing increasing expectations around safety, compliance, productivity and sustainability.

What is changing is what customers expect from us. Product availability and speed of service still matter, but customers are also looking for a genuine long-term partner. They want to work with a company that understand the realities of site delivery, can bring practical expertise to the table, and will work with them early to improve efficiency and sustainability outcomes.

The future of hire will be shaped by how well we combine specialist expertise, operational resilience and digital capability to deliver real, measurable value.

Partnership that goes beyond dry hire

The strongest customer relationships are built before the equipment reaches site. Early engagement allows the hire provider to understand what the project is trying to achieve and co-create the right approach together. That includes the right mix of equipment, transport planning, temporary power, welfare provision, environmental monitoring, servicing, compliance checks and reporting requirements.

Mark Hoad, Sales and Marketing Director at Sunbelt Rentals UK & Ireland.

That partnership-first approach is particularly important where trials and pilots of new technology are being conducted. With fuel costs fluctuating and lower-emission equipment required for many customers, they are rightly asking what alternatives look like in practice. The role of a hire partner is to help test options, monitor performance, identify limitations and support a route to wider adoption where the evidence supports it.

Trials and pilots are valuable because they give customers confidence. They allow teams to understand whether a solution works on the ground, what operational changes are needed and how benefits can be measured. In a sector where safety, uptime and productivity are critical, innovation has to be practical, evidence-led and capable of being scaled responsibly.

Expertise in practice

We know that customers are not looking for generic advice. They want clear guidance that they can act on, whether that is around compliance, safety, improving efficiency or taking tangible steps towards sustainability. That is why in-house expertise matters so much. When you have people who understand applications, regulations and the reality of working on site, you can have better conversations with project teams and give them the confidence that the solutions are designed around risk, productivity and performance.

Many customers are working towards net zero targets, but what they really need is help turning that ambition into practical action on site. For example, introducing lower-emission equipment may require different charging, fuelling, maintenance or logistics considerations. The right support can help customers plan those requirements early, rather than treating sustainability as an add-on once work has already started.

Scale and asset ownership

For national contractors working

across multiple regions, consistency matters. They need reliable response, coordinated delivery and common standards across sites. Scale can support that, but only when it is underpinned by strong operational discipline.

One of the key strengths of the hire model is asset ownership. The hire provider invests in the fleet, maintains it, inspects it and manages compliance. Customers can access equipment without committing capital to ownership, while retaining the flexibility to increase or reduce usage as project requirements change.

Asset ownership also gives the hire provider direct control over asset condition and readiness. Maintenance, testing, inspection and compliance processes all influence reliability. Investment in new, compliant fleet reduces breakdown risk and supports environmental performance. Proactive inspection reduces downtime and strengthens assurance. Strong customer service improves utilisation and retention. Pricing has to reflect those outcomes if the sector is going to keep reinvesting and keep standards high.

Digital that makes delivery easier

Over the last few years, customer expectations around visibility and data of equipment have advanced quickly. Accurate delivery windows, tracking data, electronic documentation and proactive updates are becoming the norm.

When digital tools are integrated properly, they strengthen operational control. Real-time tracking improves coordination. Automated alerts about the health of their products help manage inspection and testing requirements before issues arise. Centralised data supports better reporting and clearer decision-making.

You can see the benefit of that approach on a major Welsh road infrastructure upgrade we supported, where a coordinated supply model brought together equipment, temporary power, environmental monitoring and welfare under a single managed framework. Telemetry data provided visibility of utilisation and performance across a challenging, geographically complex scheme, helping to reduce unnecessary movements, strengthen oversight and support environmental reporting. It is a good example of how data, when combined with specialist capability and national coverage, can reduce complexity.

The next phase of growth in hire will belong to businesses that treat partnership, expertise, asset ownership and commercial discipline as connected priorities. Customers are asking for more guidance and more accountability, and they are looking for partners who can help them solve their problems early, run practical trials and deliver consistently of service.

That means the role of hire needs to keep evolving. It is no longer just about supplying equipment quickly, although that will always matter. It is about helping customers plan earlier, make informed decisions and use the right mix of people, assets, data and technology to reduce complexity.

Digital tools and AI will play an increasing role in that. Used well, they can help improve forecasting, asset utilisation, maintenance planning and customer visibility. But the real value will come when those tools sit alongside strong operational teams and well-invested fleets. <<

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"STANDING STILL IS NOT AN OPTION"

Europe's construction equipment leaders gather to address an over-riding theme: Create, innovate and inspire.

THE CECE Congress 2026 is expected to bring together more than 150 senior figures from Europe's construction equipment industry when it takes place at the IET Savoy Place in London later this month.

With the UK hosting the biennial Congress during Phil Layton's presidency of CECE, CEA (Construction Equipment Association) is leading delivery of the event on behalf of the Committee for European Construction Equipment.

Ahead of the Congress, which will take place from 27 to 29 October, Phil said it was an event anyone serious about the sector could not afford to miss.

"The CECE Congress is one of the few occasions when the European construction equipment industry can step back from immediate business pressures and look properly at the forces shaping its future," he said.

"Manufacturers are dealing with economic uncertainty, changing regulation, skills shortages, technology investment, global competition and a rapidly shifting political landscape. Those issues affect every business, but they cannot be solved company-by-company or country-by-country.

"The congress brings together industry leaders, policy voices, technical experts and people from outside our sector who can challenge how we think. It is a place for the industry to test ideas, understand the wider picture and make better decisions about what comes next."

Phil said the UK remains an important manufacturing, engineering and construction equipment market, and hosting the congress in London presents an opportunity to bring European colleagues together at a time when the UK-EU relationship, trade, regulation and industrial competitiveness remain very much on the agenda.

CECE President Phil Layton said the congress is a rare opportunity to look properly at the forces shaping the future of construction.

CEO of the CEA, Viki Bell, said the congress is as much about the conversations around the sessions as it is the content itself.

"It also sends the right message. Europe's construction equipment industry is strongest when it is outward-looking, connected and prepared to work together. London is a major global meeting point, and it gives us a strong platform for a congress focused on the future of European industry."

This year's theme is 'Create, Innovate, Inspire' and Phil said this sums up what businesses must do to remain competitive.

"Create is about finding better ways to solve problems, develop people and build value. Innovation rarely begins with technology alone. It starts with ideas, curiosity and the confidence to challenge established ways of working.

"Innovate is about turning those ideas into industrial advantage. That means more productive factories, more capable machinery, stronger supply chains, better use of data and technology that delivers a genuine return.

"Inspire is about people. Our sector needs engineers, technicians, digital specialists, operators and leaders. We need to make a much stronger case for the careers and opportunities this industry can offer."

The theme runs through the programme. Jason Bevan, former Head of Creative Development and Vice President of European Marketing at Warner Bros. Pictures, will explore creativity, innovation and how organisations respond to change, including the growing role of artificial intelligence. The inspire strand continues with a dedicated panel on skills, education and attracting new talent into the sector.

The congress will tackle the issues businesses are already dealing with, including geopolitical volatility, the outlook for European manufacturing, industrial competitiveness, technology, leadership, skills and market conditions.

"These are not distant policy discussions. They shape investment decisions, product development, supply chains, recruitment and the confidence businesses have to plan ahead," said Phil.

"The programme is designed to bring together different perspectives, including economists, manufacturing leaders, industry figures and voices

> **"Innovation rarely begins with technology alone. It starts with ideas, curiosity and the confidence to challenge established ways of working."**
>
> *Phil Layton, President, CECE*

from outside construction equipment. That matters because our industry cannot keep looking at the same challenges through the same lens."

Joe Nellis, Emeritus Professor of Global Economy, will examine the global and European economic outlook, while Lieutenant Colonel Stewart Hill, a former British Army officer whose career was cut short by a life-changing injury sustained on operations in Afghanistan, will close the first day with a keynote on resilience and leadership.

Sessions will be moderated by Riccardo Viaggi, Secretary General of CECE.

Sharper understanding

Phil said delegates should come away with a sharper understanding of the environment their business is operating in, new ideas they can apply, and contacts that will remain valuable long after the congress ends.

"No business should be setting its strategy based on headlines, assumptions or a narrow view of its own market. The congress gives people direct access to informed perspectives on the issues influencing our sector across Europe.

> **"Bringing senior people from across Europe together creates a valuable environment for discussion, connection and shared thinking."**
> *Viki Bell, CEO, CEA*

"It also creates the space for conversations that do not happen in the normal working week - honest discussions between manufacturers, associations, suppliers, policy experts and industry partners. Those discussions can influence how businesses think, collaborate and move forward."

A welcome reception will take place at IET Savoy Place while the Gala Dinner will take delegates onto the Thames for an evening cruise through central London.

CEO of the CEA, Viki Bell, said: "The congress is as much about the conversations around the sessions as it is the content itself. Bringing senior people from across Europe together creates a valuable environment for discussion, connection and shared thinking. The Gala Dinner on the Thames will be a highlight — a chance to see London from the river while spending proper time with industry colleagues."

CECE Congress 2026 will put manufacturers, association leaders, economists, technical experts and policy voices from across Europe in the same room, enabling conversations and responses to be formed around changing markets, regulation, global competition, technology, skills and investment pressures, often at the same time.

"Standing still is not an option, and neither is looking at those issues in isolation," Viki said, adding: "For anyone serious about construction equipment, London is the place to be in October."

The event is open to CEA members and non-members, with tickets available for the full programme. <<

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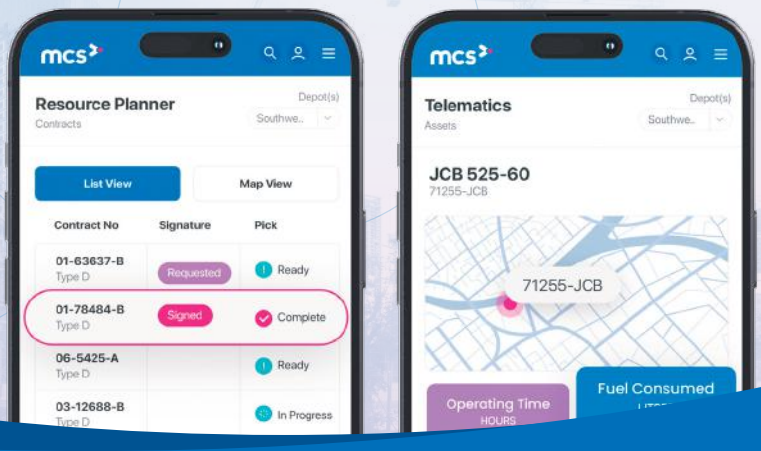

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Shining a light on the people, value, and careers driving rental

As HAE EHA celebrates the people behind rental during European Rental Week, Learning & Development Officer Nikki Wyllie discusses some of the takeaways.

EUROPEAN Rental Week brought the hire and rental industry together to raise awareness of the value of rental and showcase the businesses and people behind it.

Organised by the European Rental Association (ERA), the 2026 campaign focused on sustainability, people and skills, and the business value of rental. In the UK and Republic of Ireland, the campaign was marked as Plant Hire Week, now in its fourth year.

As a member of ERA, HAE EHA supported the campaign by highlighting the people and skills that make the hire industry what it is, with a particular focus on careers and opportunities for new talent.

With the sector facing an ever-widening skills gap and an ongoing need for fresh recruits, Plant Hire Week provided an opportunity to show potential recruits that there is much more to hire and rental than equipment.

Rental made it possible

Throughout Plant Hire Week, HAE EHA used LinkedIn to showcase the role rental played behind the scenes.

The campaign began with 'Rental made it possible', highlighting the contribution rental made to construction projects, events, repairs, businesses and countless other jobs. While the finished result might be what people noticed, rental equipment, expertise and the people supporting it were often an important part of making it happen.

Members were also invited to share their own stories and show what rental had made possible for their customers and businesses.

Celebrating the people behind the equipment

The campaign then put the spotlight firmly on people.

From hire desk teams and depot staff to engineers, drivers, sales teams and managers, the sector relied on skilled people who understood their equipment, their customers and the challenges they faced.

HAE EHA encouraged businesses to recognise the people making a difference every day and to share their stories as part of the campaign.

This helped demonstrate that rental was not simply about providing equipment. It was about people using their knowledge, skills and experience to find solutions and keep businesses moving.

Showing where a career in rental could lead

Careers were another key focus throughout the week.

HAE EHA highlighted its careers map, showcasing the wide range of roles available across the industry, including engineering and maintenance, hire desk, transport, sales, operations and management.

The campaign was an opportunity to challenge perceptions of the sector and demonstrate that people did not need to come from a hire background to build a career within it.

As HAE EHA Learning and Development Officer Nikki Wyllie, who coordinated the LinkedIn campaign, said: "The hire sector is a brilliant place to build a career. It's practical, varied and full of opportunities to learn new skills, meet people and progress."

The campaign also highlighted HAE EHA's training and development opportunities, including its free Introduction to Hire course, helping potential recruits and those new to the sector understand more about the industry.

European Rental Week provided HAE EHA with an opportunity to bring the people and skills theme to life, while encouraging the wider industry to celebrate its own people and share what rental makes possible.

From the equipment that helps a project happen to the people who make sure it gets there, rental made it possible. <<

The campaign was an opportunity to challenge perceptions of the sector and demonstrate that people did not need to come from a hire background to build a career within it.

Nikki Wyllie, Learning & Development Officer

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Stifling the scammers

Dr Marco Lafrentz, MEF Global Board Member and Chair of the Anti-Fraud Program, explains why practical action is needed to protect the hire sector from text message scams.

Dr Marco Lafrentz, Chair of the MEF Anti-Fraud Program.

TEXT messaging has become a critical part of everyday digital life for tool and equipment rental companies as automated text messages are one of the fastest ways to coordinate high-value logistics and time-sensitive returns.

In addition, contractors use texting as their main form of communication because they are frequently on the move, on the tools, or working in noisy environments. Texts continue to offer a convenient way to document changes, send progress photos, and coordinate schedules without interrupting the workflow.

Text messaging also supports customer communications, account access, authentication, and financial transactions for billions of businesses and consumers worldwide. It is this level of trust and ubiquity that has made messaging one of the most attractive targets for criminals.

The tool and equipment rental sector is one of the more heavily-targeted industries. Fraudsters use fake text interviews, delivery fees and check fraud schemes to con both the businesses and their customers out of money.

What was once viewed as a developing threat has now become a persistent and systemic challenge that demands industry-wide attention.

Recent figures illustrate the extent of the problem. In the United Kingdom, data from financial institutions and law enforcement agencies points to a significant rise in impersonation fraud and SIM-related criminal activity linked to messaging services. Industry analysis reports growth of more than 1,000% in certain categories of SIM-swap incidents, reflecting the growing importance of mobile numbers within digital identity and authentication systems. (Source: UK Finance and industry fraud reporting summaries, 2024–2025.)

While the monetary losses are considerable, the wider implications extend beyond financial damage. Every successful scam weakens confidence in digital services and communications channels that individuals rely on daily.

Why messaging?

Criminals naturally focus on channels that generate results, and messaging continues to be highly effective because people trust and engage with it. The same attributes that make messaging valuable for legitimate enterprises also make it highly appealing to fraudsters.

At the same time, mobile numbers have evolved far beyond their original purpose. For many of us, a phone number now functions as a trusted digital identifier. As more services rely on phone numbers as trusted identifiers, the value associated with them continues to increase.

This concentration of trust creates opportunities for criminals. When attackers exploit a phone number or impersonate a trusted sender, consumers often suffer the immediate consequences through financial losses, account compromise, or identity theft. Brands also experience reputational damage when fraudsters misuse their identities, regardless of whether the organisation itself has been breached.

Although mobile operators and CPaaS providers are not always the direct victims of these attacks, they still bear many of the resulting costs. Abuse generates additional network burdens, creates operational challenges, and attracts increasing regulatory oversight. This is precisely why no single organisation can address messaging fraud in isolation.

Collective protection

Today there is a growing recognition that messaging fraud cannot be viewed purely as a technical network problem or solely as a content moderation issue. It is a challenge that affects the entire ecosystem.

Every stakeholder sees only part of the picture. Consumers encounter the scams. Brands experience impersonation. Financial institutions identify suspicious activity. Network operators observe traffic patterns. Messaging providers monitor delivery channels. No single organization has complete visibility, but each contributes information that helps build a clearer understanding of emerging threats.

As a result, collaboration has become essential. Common frameworks and industry success provide the foundation for coordinated action. However, cooperation alone is not enough. The real test is whether intelligence can be exchanged, analysed, and acted upon quickly enough to stop fraud before consumers are affected.

Standards and action

The messaging industry has invested heavily in recent years to establish best-practice guidance, anti-fraud frameworks, codes of conduct, and industry charters. These efforts have

been instrumental in creating shared expectations and helping organisations understand their responsibilities.

Such initiatives are indispensable because they establish a common understanding of the problem and encourage a consistent approach across markets.

However, fraudsters constantly adapt. For that reason, preventing fraud ultimately depends on effective execution. Success requires effective tools, real-time intelligence, rapid decision-making, and operational collaboration capable of keeping pace with modern threats.

As Chair of the Mobile Ecosystem Forum's Anti-Fraud Programme, I have focused on helping organisations translate broad agreement into tangible outcomes. This includes supporting initiatives such as sender identification registries, intelligence-sharing programmes, and implementation guidance that organisations can apply across markets, rather than remaining theoretical concepts.

Real-world collaboration

A recent project in the United Kingdom demonstrates the value of turning collaboration into action.

The initiative brought together a mobile network operator, a major banking organisation, and MEF. Rather than simply studying fraud trends after incidents had already occurred, the participants shared intelligence on active campaigns and applied that information directly within network operations to prevent harmful messages from reaching customers.

The impact was significant. In just one month, nearly 250,000 fraudulent messages linked to more than 400 separate scam campaigns were intercepted and blocked.

The significance of this example extends beyond the number of messages blocked. It highlights the importance of scale. To achieve meaningful industry-wide impact, intelligence must move efficiently between organisations, markets, and platforms. Information needs to be collected, standardised, and distributed in a manner that allows multiple participants to benefit from shared visibility.

It also indicates why collaboration is key. The tool and equipment rental sector needs to work together, share intelligence and help mobile network operators block fraudulent messages before they arrive. This cannot be done on an individual level. It has to involve all stakeholders.

Industry organisations can play an important role in enabling that coordination while complementing, rather than replacing, the responsibilities of regulators and commercial service providers.

Self-regulation

Around the world, policymakers and regulators are devoting increasing attention to messaging fraud. This heightened focus is understandable given the growing impact of scams on businesses and financial systems.

Yet regulation cannot evolve as quickly as the threat landscape. Attackers can change tactics in days or weeks, while regulatory processes often require significantly longer timelines.

This is where industry-led initiatives become particularly valuable. Self-regulatory measures can complement formal regulation by enabling faster responses to new threats while maintaining alignment with broader public-policy objectives.

Programmes such as sender ID registries, anti-fraud charters, and industry best-practice frameworks provide effective mechanisms for rapid response. They also demonstrate accountability and maturity within the sector, helping regulators assess how effectively the industry is addressing risk.

The scale of the challenge remains considerable. Research from the Communications Fraud Control Association and telecom security specialists estimate that global telecommunications fraud losses exceeded $40 billion in 2024, with messaging-based scams accounting for an increasing proportion of overall losses.

Consistency vs novelty

There is no single technology, platform, or initiative capable of eliminating fraud permanently. Long-term success depends on sustained commitment rather than one-off interventions.

Progress comes from expanding proven approaches, encouraging broader adoption across regions, and preserving effective partnerships over time. It also requires investment in shared infrastructure that allows trusted intelligence to be exchanged securely and efficiently among stakeholders.

Industry working groups, collaborative programmes, and face-to-face forums remain valuable because they help maintain alignment and momentum. Nevertheless, genuine impact only occurs when commitments are translated into ongoing action.

When organisations consistently implement agreed measures, confidence in messaging ecosystems can gradually be restored and strengthened.

Determining the future

The messaging industry has reached a critical moment. Fraud will continue to evolve, and new attack methods will undoubtedly emerge. The key question is whether the ecosystem can adapt quickly enough to stay ahead.

Throughout my work across messaging, digital identity, and fraud prevention, one lesson has remained constant: Coordinated action delivers results. When stakeholders work together and execute decisively, meaningful protection is possible. When organisations are slow to respond, criminals exploit the opportunity.

Frameworks establish a roadmap. Collaboration creates shared purpose. Execution is what ultimately safeguards consumers, preserves brand trust, and protects the integrity of messaging channels. <<

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Marco Lafrentz is a MEF Global Board Member and Chair of the Anti-Fraud Program. The Mobile Ecosystem Forum (MEF) is a global trade association founded in 2000 and headquartered in the UK, with members spanning the international mobile ecosystem. As an independent industry body, MEF provides platforms for networking, cooperation, and the development of solutions that address shared industry challenges.
www.mobileecosystemforum.com

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We introduce the latest recruits to HAE EHA membership and invite you to join us in giving them a warm welcome.

FOURTEEN new members have joined HAE EHA in recent weeks from a range of different sectors and geographical areas, expanding its growing membership.

- **SPARTAN SOLUTIONS LTD** is a UK software company specialising in operations technology for equipment rental. Its PHALANX platform digitises and automates the rental operations lifecycle, from transport planning and picking through delivery and collection to inspections, servicing, and equipment turnaround. Built specifically for the hire industry, PHALANX gives teams real-time operational visibility while capturing photographs, signatures, inspections, and other evidence as work happens. PHALANX integrates with leading rental management systems, helping rental businesses reduce paperwork and manual checking, accelerate invoicing, improve equipment turnaround, and free their people to focus on customers and operations.
  Tel: 0141 559 7100
  Email: **jim.green@spartansolutions.com**
  Mobile: 07802 547336
  Web: **www.spartansolutions.com**

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- **THE CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATION** (the CEA) is the official trade association representing the UK's construction equipment industry. It acts as the recognised voice of the UK construction equipment sector, lobbying UK and European parliaments on regulations, tax, trade, and industrial strategy. The organisation provides members with market and technical information and insights including data on equipment sales, import/export metrics, and overseas market trends. It owns the CESAR Scheme, the industry security initiative to combat equipment theft. Working with partners like Make UK, it provides opportunities to contribute to the future and development of the sector including skills and training initiatives, and trade shows and exhibitions.
  Tel: 0208 253 4502
  Email: **info@thecea.org.uk**
  Web: **www.thecea.org.uk**

CEA CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ASSOCIATION

- **BJB HIRE CENTRE LTD** is a tool, equipment, and plant hire company providing machinery for construction, gardening, DIY, and decorating. Based at Thurmaston, near Leicester, the company was formed in 2003. Directors include Russell Conway and Helen Conway. The company primarily covers Leicestershire and much of north Leicester, while also offering plant, tool, and powered access hire across the whole of the UK from its central depot. It provides equipment such as diggers, dumpers, and rollers for DIY, gardening, and construction projects.

- **CAMBRIDGE-BASED 3B PLANT HIRE LTD** rents and leases construction and civil engineering machinery and equipment. Formed in September 2024, the company is run and controlled by Director Benjamin Boak and operates throughout Cambridgeshire.

- **JB LOCATIONS LTD** hires out equipment and support services for the film, television, and events industries across the UK. It supplies generator units ranging from 3.5kVA to 100kVA with single and 3-phase outputs, along with long-run fuel management. It also hires out LED tower lights, including zero-emission, silent, hydrogen-powered lighting options and provides water bowsers, fuel bowsers, makeup mirrors, and hand-wash stations. The company operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week with rapid delivery options to active sets and studios. Formed in 2015, its head office is based in Bideford and it operates across London, the South East, and the UK from locations like Uxbridge.

- **MTP HIRE** (operating as Midlands Tool and Plant Hire) is run and directed by owner Connor Guyatt. The company serves Nottingham and the surrounding East Midlands region, catering to the local construction, landscaping, and DIY trades. Midlands Tool and Plant Hire was founded in 2020. The company provides a wide range of rental equipment and tools, operating primarily out of depots in Nottingham (Lenton and Colwick). Its inventory includes plant machinery, access equipment, power and DIY tools, as well as landscaping and cleaning equipment.

- **PREMIER PLANT & TOOL HIRE LTD** was formed and incorporated in February 2020. It provides a wide fleet of plant equipment and construction tools, including micro diggers, telehandlers, excavators, dumpers, rollers, and access equipment, and serves trade and consumer accounts. The company sells equipment and supplies such as mixers, drills, gardening tools, workwear, and hand tools and offers nationwide delivery and next-day.

- **SOUTH WEST EQUIPMENT HIRE** provides trailer, tool and machinery hire across South West Scotland, with a range of equipment available for homeowners, tradespeople, contractors and businesses. Located in Dumfries & Galloway, the company was officially incorporated in August this year. Mohsin Riyaz (Mo) Sabur is a company director.

- **SITEWIDE PLANT HIRE LTD** operates in the renting and leasing of construction and civil engineering machinery and equipment. Based in Buckingham, since it was formed in 2013, it serves the South East region and delivers plant machinery and tools tailored for both professional and domestic users. Founder and Director Simon Hennigan runs the company with fellow directors William Hennigan and Robert Houghton who were appointed in 2017.

- **LIBERTY GUARD (UK) LTD** supplies portable accommodation and self-contained site welfare cabins for hire across the UK construction, infrastructure, and remote engineering sectors. It offers mobile towable and static units equipped with canteens, toilets, kitchenettes, drying rooms, and office spaces, while its eco-friendly range options include solar-powered welfare units, solar loos, dry rooms, and solar tower lights. The company also offers modular buildings, site accommodation. Having started as a family-owned business in 1981, it was officially incorporated in 2002 and was acquired in December 2005 by Acquisan, a site equipment hire platform backed by Westbrooke Equity Partners.

- **NINETEEN GROUP LIMITED** is a leading international events, exhibitions, and media company based in Wimbledon, London. The company organises large-scale trade exhibitions, conferences, and digital media platforms that connect businesses, industries, and communities. Its portfolio covers industries such as cyber security, manufacturing, emergency services, aerospace, engineering, retail technology, and health and safety. Nineteen Group Limited owns and operates the PlantWorx construction exhibition after acquiring it from Construction Equipment Events Ltd and the Construction Equipment Association (CEA) in December 2025

- **BRIGGS & STRATTON AG** in Freienbach, Switzerland, is a subsidiary which serves as the European regional headquarters and main administrative hub for Briggs & Stratton, managing the company's sales, distribution, and service operations across Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA). Briggs & Stratton, which was formed in 1908 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is the world's largest producer of small gasoline engines. It designs and manufactures essential components for lawn mowers, snow blowers, and generators. Beyond internal combustion engines, the manufacturer has expanded into modern power solutions, including lithium-ion batteries, commercial turf care, and energy storage systems under trusted brands like Vanguard, Ferris, and Snapper.

- **NEWBRIDGE SALES & HIRE LTD** is a garden equipment, tool, and small plant machinery supplier and hire company based in Newbridge, County Kildare, Ireland, that was officially registered in 2007. The company rents out a garden tools, lawn aerators, brushcutters, hedge trimmers, diggers, mini dumpers, generators, and moss brushes, and sells an assortment of hardware, tools, and outdoor machinery, such as lawnmowers and robotic mowers. It also provides maintenance, repairs, and servicing for garden equipment and machinery. Based in County Kildare, Newbridge Sales & Hire Ltd is managed by General Manager Wayne Moore and Retail Sales Manager Ross Hogan.

- **LEADER PRO SCAFFOLD TOWERS** supplies a wide range of professional access equipment, including industrial scaffold towers, AGR towers, GRP towers, podium steps, one-man towers, stairwell towers, replacement components and spares. The company supplies customers nationwide and works with a growing number of trade and hire customers across the UK.
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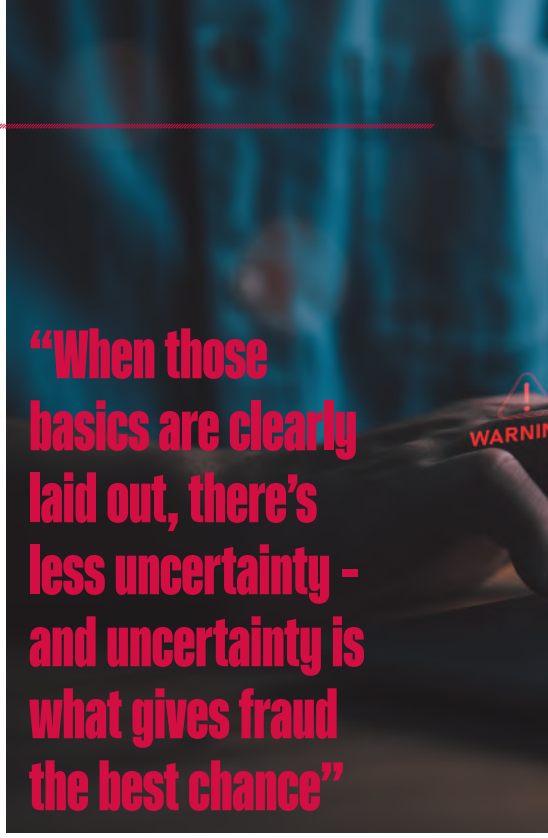
‘Ghost Company’ scams re-surface

As fraudsters pose as major contractors to steal heavy machinery and units, some of the warning signs are highlighted by victims and advisors.



THOSE in the hire industry are being warned to exercise extra vigilance to avoid a recurring scam after a welfare unit hire company almost fell victim to such an attack recently.

The green welfare unit hire company received a call from someone claiming to work for a large construction company, stating that they wanted to hire seven units on long term hire.

The caller provided a legitimately-formatted email address, completed an account form falsely in the company’s name, providing real references for contacts in the industry.

“The email bounced back so we contacted him and he claimed to be having issues with his emails, which as we all know, isn’t unusual recently,” said a representative of the company. “Luckily, we contacted the company head office who confirmed this was not legitimate, but we have heard this has happened to other businesses recently and the equipment has been stolen.”

She said the enquiry was ‘very convincing’ and asked for the experience to be shared via social media so that other hire companies were vigilant.

Combined Industries Theft Solutions (CITS), a voluntary, non-profit UK industry forum dedicated to reducing crime, theft, and fraud across sectors like construction, agriculture, transport, and utilities, highlighted several similar instances last year, while highlighting ‘ghost companies’ used in sophisticated hire fraud during 2026 who have attempted to obtain excavators, telehandlers, dumpers, rollers, and fuel bowsers across England and Scotland.

In one incident last year, a fraudulent hire was attempted at the Peterborough depot of a national hire company where an individual gave his name as Jason Jeffery of Apec Groundworks, attempting to hire a 0.8 ton digger and track barrow dumper for delivery to a farm address near Eye in Suffolk. Again, the email address featured the company’s name, but was registered to a Hotmail account.

When the hire company contacted Apec, the company confirmed it had not requested the hire. Weeks earlier, a similar attempt had been made with a fraudster contacting a hire company pertaining to be from Oakfield Construction.

Stay alert to red flags

This month, 20 people were also charged and appeared at Chester Magistrates Court in connection with a large-scale plant hire machinery theft, following an investigation into a suspected conspiracy last year, with thefts reportedly taking place in Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumbria, Humberside, Hampshire, West Midlands, Hertfordshire, Somerset, Staffordshire, Merseyside, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Suffolk, Cornwall and Lincolnshire.

But plant hire scams and fraudulent equipment rentals continue across the UK in 2026 despite major police crackdowns, with hire firms and buyers being urged to tighten due diligence through real-time asset tracking, geofencing, and consulting databases to flag fraudulent profiles.

HAE EHA advises against ignoring red flags, failing to verify customer identities, and relying solely on fleet numbers instead of serial numbers

Key Warnings and what to avoid include:

- **Ignoring instincts:** Never proceed with a hire if things “simply do not look right”.
- **Skipping verification:** Do not accept phone or email requests at face value without checking credentials.
- **Inadequate record-keeping:** Avoid relying only on internal fleet numbers instead of manufacturer serial numbers.
- **Complacency during peak times:** Do not drop guard during high-risk periods like bank holidays or seasonal clock changes.

Capturing photos of assets upon handover is also advised as well as training hire desk personnel and delivery drivers to spot fraudulent behaviour by organised crime groups.

Planning for staff absences

During periods when staff are on annual leave, criminals can also be spurred into action, with opportunists realising that people may be harder to reach than usual, and processes and checks will be slower.

When more people are on annual leave, authority and approvals are often delegated so it’s not unusual for payments, access requests or queries from suppliers to be handled by people who wouldn’t usually handle them.

To keep things moving when it comes to payment and approval processes, it’s normal for teams to create temporary workarounds like delegated sign-offs, email-based approvals and even some manual overrides.

At times like these, hirers are also therefore encouraged to think carefully about phishing emails, payment diversion requests and impersonation attempts.

All of these things rely on a sense of urgency, familiarity and authority, all of which are much more effective when you can't quickly double-check something with a colleague. Research reveals that authority bias is one of the strongest weapons attackers use.

Out-of-office messages can also contain detail that fraudsters exploit.

HAE EHA teams advise being very clear on your company's processes during staff holiday periods so that there are clear rules to follow, like guidance on what never changes (even during cover periods) and a clear route for them to escalate anything that doesn't feel right.

"When those basics are clearly laid out, there's less uncertainty – and uncertainty is what gives fraud the best chance," they stress. <<

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Charity partnership to boost understanding of autism

TOOL, equipment, and plant hire provider Speedy Hire has launched a new charity partnership with Ascent Autism Specialist College, based at St Helens, Merseyside, to support autistic young people to reach their full potential. Through its £10,000 donation, the Newton-le-Willows company will help enhance learning opportunities, improve facilities and create employability and work experience opportunities for students.

Hygiene and catering education

MACGREGOR Industrial Supplies recently welcomed visitors to a series of hygiene and catering open days where company staff shared information about the work they do and discussed opportunities within hygiene and catering. The events featured specialised product showcases, live demonstrations, and industry supplier exhibitions across its branches in Inverness, Aberdeen and Elgin. The company, which operates multiple branches across Scotland, opened its newest branch in Stirling in August.

Health and safety breaches

In this regular feature, we detail the latest court cases and sentences resulting from HSE investigations, highlighting the significant outcomes that result from lack of compliance and adequate care while carrying out work on construction sites, within factory or workplace environments, using plant machinery, working at height and other areas commonly associated with hire services.

Companies and individual sentenced after worker crushed by soil

TWO companies and a self-employed contracts manager have been sentenced after a worker was crushed to death when an unsupported trench collapsed at a site in Surrey.

The worker was at a site in Surrey in June 2020, trying to replace a damaged pipe at the bottom of the deep trench, which had been dug with a three-tonne digger. He had been clearing soil with a shovel and a pickaxe when, without warning, the trench walls collapsed. Although rescue attempts were made, he was buried in approximately 2 tonnes of soil and died at the scene.

A joint investigation by Surrey Police and HSE over five years found there were no supports in the trench and excavated soil had been deposited immediately next to it. The investigation also found that, earlier that day, a self-employed contracts manager had observed another worker in the same unsupported excavation.

Despite being aware of the measures required to prevent a trench collapse, he failed to ensure they were in place.

The principal contractor and subcontractor have been convicted of breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. One was fined £650,000 and ordered to pay costs of £40,000, while the other was fined £500,000.

The self-employed contracts manager pleaded guilty to breaching the Act by failing to take reasonable care for the health and safety of others and was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment, suspended for 18 months, and ordered to complete 150 hours of unpaid work.

An HSE spokesman said: "This case is a stark reminder that when basic safety standards are ignored, the consequences can be fatal. Companies and individuals alike have legal duties to protect workers and where they fail to do so, we will not hesitate to take enforcement action."

Construction company fined £60,000 after worker seriously injured

A CONSTRUCTION company in London has been fined £60,000 after a worker suffered life-changing injuries when he fell through an unprotected roof light while carrying out refurbishment work at a domestic property in Fulham.

In November 2023, the man was passing materials through an open, unprotected roof light during a property renovation. He fell through the opening onto the concrete floor below.

An HSE investigation found that measures to prevent falls, such as scaffolding, guard rails, an internal crash deck or harness systems, had not been used.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Work at Height Regulations and was fined £60,000. It was also ordered to pay £6,070 in costs.

Pillar drill incident leaves man with 12 fractured ribs

A SPRING and stampings manufacturing company has been fined £40,000 after an employee fractured 12 ribs during a lifting operation in Worcestershire.

The 36-year-old employee suffered multiple rib fractures in June 2024. He had been assisting with the lifting of a newly-purchased pillar drill using a forklift truck at the site in Redditch.

The pillar drill, which weighed approximately 500kg, became unstable during the operation and fell, striking the employee and causing serious injuries.

An HSE investigation found there had not been a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks associated with the lifting operation, as well as a failure to ensure the lifting operation was properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner.

The company was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay £5,032 in costs.

HSE inspector Charlie Rowe said: "Employers should always ensure lifting operations are properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised, and carried out in a safe manner. This firm's failure to do so has had dramatic consequences."

Recycling company fined for unsuitable storage and risk assessment

A WEST Midlands waste and recycling company has been fined after a man was killed while discharging a fire extinguisher.

The 37-year-old from Dudley, had been processing powder fire extinguishers which were at the end of their serviceable life in March 2023. While working on a cartridge type fire extinguisher, it had a sudden release of pressure and exploded, striking him in the head. After the incident, the fire extinguisher was found embedded in the ceiling of the workroom.

Despite hospital treatment, the man died the next day. An HSE investigation found the company failed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees while at work and while they were recycling these types of fire extinguishers.

It failed to conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, and its systems of work for processing these types of fire extinguishers were not suitable. Proper storage arrangements for old extinguishers waiting for processing were not in place, and there wasn't a suitable restraint system for containing fire extinguishers when they were being discharged, to prevent them ejecting dangerous parts.

HSE inspector Heather Campbell said: "I hope the sentence handed down leaves companies in no doubt that we will not hesitate to take action against those that fail to protect their employees."

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay £17,034.25.

Crate falls from forklift truck and seriously injures worker

A HULL business has been sentenced after safety breaches resulted in a 64-year-old employee sustaining life-changing injuries.

The employee was seriously injured when a crate weighing approximately 1.2 tonnes fell from a forklift truck. He had been delivering a large crate containing an electron microscope and it was originally intended for a forklift truck and driver to be provided for the delivery. However, owing to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were fewer people on site for unloading.

The task was not properly assessed, planned or supervised. As a result, the worker was positioned unsafely and the load was lifted in an unsafe manner, causing the crate to fall from the forklift truck and land on him, resulting in life-changing injuries.

An HSE investigation found the company had failed to adequately plan the unloading operation. There was no assessment of the suitability of the company's two-tonne forklift truck in relation to the characteristics of the load. The company also failed to consider how the lift should be carried out, who should be involved and what precautions were necessary. The unloading operation was not meaningfully controlled or supervised.

HSE guidance on planning and organising lifting operations states that lifting operations can often put people at great risk of injury, as well as incurring great costs when they go wrong. It is therefore important to properly resource, plan and organise lifting operations so they are carried out in a safe manner.

The company was found guilty of breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act, fined £230,000 and ordered to pay £111,000 in costs.

HSE Inspector David Stewart said: "This case should serve as a reminder to the wider industry of the need to properly plan and supervise unloading operations, particularly where non-standard loads are involved. Such operations require a risk assessment proportionate to the hazards, taking account of the nature of the load, the suitability of lifting equipment and the arrangements for execution and supervision."

Failure to prevent falls from height

A HOMES builder has been fined after a labourer sustained serious spinal injuries when he fell one storey onto concrete through a stairwell opening.

It was only his second week on the job when the father of one, stepped backwards and fell through an opening intended for a staircase that had not yet been installed. He was working as a temporary labourer for a scaffolding company in January 2024 at a site of four new domestic dwellings.

The stairwell opening had not been securely covered as previous loose scaffold boards had been removed, and the open edges were not protected. There were no alternative means of accessing the sub-floor and West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue and the HART team had to rescue the worker who had fallen unconscious. He sustained serious spinal injuries which prevented him from working for months after the incident and he has not returned to a physical job since.

An HSE investigation found that the company responsible had failed to put adequate measures in place to prevent falls from height, resulting in the worker falling through an unprotected stairwell opening and suffering life-changing injuries.

The Leeds-based company was found guilty of failing to properly plan and appropriately supervise work at height and not taking suitable and sufficient measures to prevent a fall. It was fined £300,000 and ordered to pay £9,284.05 in costs at Leeds Magistrates' Court.

Insufficient training led to ATV overturning and crushing employee

A FARM owner has been fined £5,500 after an employee died when an All-Terrain vehicle (ATV) in which he was a passenger overturned.

The ATV was being driven down a hillside in Monmouthshire, when the incident occurred in August 2022. The driver lost control and the employee was ejected from the vehicle which did not have any doors. He suffered fatal crush injuries and died at the scene.

An HSE investigation found that neither had been provided with adequate training and neither was wearing seat belts. The investigation also found that no routine pre-use checks were made on any of the vehicles used on the farm to ensure they were safe to use.

The investigation identified that the tyres of the ATV were improperly inflated, with differing pressures in each tyre, which should have been rectified before the vehicle was used. The vehicle was being driven in a high gear and two-wheel drive when it should have been in a low gear and four-wheel drive. The keys to the ATV were not adequately controlled and were available to anyone who was on the farm, including those not adequately trained.

Employers must provide employees who use All-Terrain vehicles (ATVs) with adequate training and instruction on their safe use and should be instructed to wear seatbelts where there is a foreseeable risk of overturn. There should have been a system for pre-use inspections to be carried out to ensure defects were identified and remedial actions taken before the vehicle was used.

The farm owner pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was also ordered to pay £5,813 in costs.

HSE Principal Inspector Damian Corbett said: "This accident was a tragic consequence of a lack of training, and a lack of basic safety precautions which cost a family a husband and a father. Employers must ensure that those entrusted to operate vehicles are properly trained and instructed to wear seat belts or safety equipment where there is a risk."

Contractor fined after employee fell through roof

A North-East building contractor has been sentenced after a bricklayer broke his back after falling through a barn roof in Northumberland.

The 24-year-old had been part of a team carrying out repairs to the roof last year when the man stepped on a polycarbonate roof sheet and fell approximately 8ft to the concrete floor below. He suffered two broken vertebrae in his back, as well as having a fractured sternum, that required surgery.

An HSE investigation found that the company had failed to ensure that there were adequate measures in place to protect employees or contractors when working at height. There was no risk assessment or safe system of work for the work activity being undertaken.

The contractor pleaded guilty to breaching Health and Safety legislation and was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £5,744 in costs.

Unsuitable arrangements lead to metal pile collapsing

A SCRAP metal recycling company has been fined after two members of the public were injured when a large pile of scrap metal collapsed onto them at a Scunthorpe site.

In February last year, a father and son were unloading scrap metal when a 360-degree excavator fitted with a grab attachment was operating nearby. As the machine removed material from a large stockpile of scrap metal a part of the pile collapsed, causing heavy pieces of scrap to fall onto the two. Both were taken to hospital following the incident and one sustained a broken leg.

An HSE investigation found that the excavator had been operating in close proximity to members of the public for around 20 minutes before the incident. The company had failed to put suitable controls in place to prevent the public being exposed to risks from moving machinery and unstable stockpiles.

There had been an earlier 'near miss' the previous month, when the rotating cab of the same excavator struck the side of a member of the public's vehicle as they unloaded scrap. Although no one was harmed during the earlier incident, the underlying failures were the same.

HSE guidance 'HSG136: A guide to workplace transport safety' states that pedestrians and vehicles should be segregated so far as is reasonably practicable. Waste and recycling sites should ensure suitable traffic management arrangements are in place to protect workers and members of the public from moving vehicles and machinery.

Following the incident, HSE served a Prohibition Notice preventing the excavator from operating close to pedestrians. The company subsequently introduced a separate area for public unloading, installed signage, implemented a supervised unloading system and developed a traffic management plan incorporating barriered walkways.

HSE Inspector Joe Fitzgerald, who led the investigation, said:

"Employers must ensure effective arrangements are in place to segregate pedestrians from workplace transport and mobile plant. Had suitable controls been implemented, this incident and the earlier near miss would not have occurred."

The company was sentenced after previously pleading guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. It has been fined £40,000 and must pay costs of £6,181.

Fines and ban after enforcement notices ignored

A CORNWALL-based timber company and its director have been handed a £20,000 fine after failing to comply with a series of enforcement notices issued by health and safety inspectors.

The company was served with Improvement Notices after HSE inspectors found that employees were not being protected from the ill health risks arising from wood dust, nor the safety risks associated with the use of rider-operated lift trucks in the workplace. If not properly controlled, wood dust can cause asthma, respiratory conditions and cancer.

The HSE investigation found that employees had not been appropriately trained to use rider-operated lift trucks. Staff had also not been face fit tested for respiratory protective equipment (RPE) to protect them from wood dust and were not under suitable health surveillance.

After pleading guilty, the company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £5,000 in costs while the director was fined £5,000 and ordered to pay £2,500 in costs and has been disqualified from acting as a company director for five years.

HSE principal inspector Melissa Lai-Hung said: "We also found workers hadn't been properly trained to use lift trucks, creating very real dangers for those onsite. Firms should be left in no doubt that companies and individuals who do not comply with health and safety legislation will be held accountable."

Telehandler driver sentenced following death of colleague

A SELF-EMPLOYED telehandler driver has been sentenced after he reversed over his colleague on a construction site in Cheshire, causing fatal injuries.

In June 2023, a lift supervisor was working on a large construction site alongside the telehandler operator.

Whilst walking back to his work area from the welfare compound, he was struck and reversed over by the telehandler, resulting in fatal injuries.

An HSE investigation found that the principal contractor had taken steps to minimise the need for reversing on site, including the creation of a turning circle, which was unobstructed at the time of the incident. Despite this, the qualified and experienced telehandler operator chose to reverse the vehicle without the aid of a banksman. He had also been using his mobile phone whilst in control of the telehandler, contrary to the site rules he had signed up to.

HSE publication The safe use of vehicles on construction sites HSG144 (PDF) sets out the risks involved and ways of avoiding reversing on construction sites, as well as setting out a checklist of safe working practices for drivers to follow.

Having admitted breaching legislation, the driver was sentenced to 12 weeks' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months, and fined £800. He was also ordered to pay £2,000 in costs.

HSE Principal Inspector Laura Royales said: "It is vital that drivers follow the site rules and do not cut corners and put lives at risk."

Groundworks company fined after worker seriously injured when dumper truck overturned

A DUMPER truck which overturned and seriously injured a worker has resulted in a hefty fine for a Warrington-based groundworks company.

In October 2022 the driver had been reversing the one-tonne truck on a construction site when it entered an unprotected excavation and overturned. The man was thrown from the vehicle as he was not wearing a seatbelt and sustained crushing injuries to his leg, resulting in a broken foot and ankle.

Investigators discovered the groundworks company had instructed workers not to wear seatbelts while operating one-tonne dumper trucks. Instead, operators routinely fastened the seat belt behind them before sitting on top of it. This disabled the vehicle's seat belt warning system and gave the false impression that the restraint was being worn correctly.

The investigation also found that open excavations on the site were not adequately protected to prevent vehicles from entering them

HSE guidance highlights that one-tonne dumper trucks are particularly vulnerable to overturning. Employers should ensure excavations are suitably protected to prevent vehicle access and operators should always wear seat belts so they remain within the protection provided by the vehicle's rollover protection structure if an overturn occurs.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £20,000 while being ordered to pay £4,824 in costs.

HSE Inspector Seve Gomez-Aspron MBE said: "This incident was entirely foreseeable and could have been prevented. Suitable protection should have been in place to stop vehicles entering the excavation, and operators should never be instructed not to wear a seat belt.

"Seat belts are a vital safety feature. They keep operators inside the protective zone created by the vehicle's rollover protection structure if a dumper overturns, significantly reducing the risk of serious injury or death.

"Had suitable edge protection also been installed around the excavation and the operator been wearing the seat belt, these serious injuries could have been avoided."

Construction company and director fined for risking lives with unsafe roof work

A CONSTRUCTION company and a director have been fined after workers' lives were put at risk with unsafe roof work in central London.

HSE took action after members of the public raised concerns about unsafe working practices. In January 2024, concerned members of the public sent photographs to HSE showing people working on a roof at the site with no control measures to protect them from falling, such as edge protection.

There was no safe means of access to the roof, with operatives photographed standing on a makeshift platform balanced on a stepladder. The HSE investigation found that there were no controls in place to prevent the workers, who were employed by a subcontractor, from falling from height on at least two separate dates.

Measures which had been identified in the roofing subcontractor's risk assessment as necessary controls, including scaffolding around the roof, were not in place.

HSE inspectors responded to several concerns raised by the public and occupants of surrounding buildings between November 2021 and September 2023 and took enforcement action the companies involved.

HSE guidance states that in order for roof work to be carried out safely there must be, at a minimum, safe access to the roof and a safe place to work on the roof.

For sloping roofs, in practice this usually means providing full edge protection on all roof elevations to which access is needed. Where roofs are steep, the edge protection system needs to be capable of safely containing a person sliding down the sloping surface. Edge protection is also needed at gable ends.

Guilty pleas were entered with a fine of £4,020 and a surcharge of £1,608 imposed on the company and a £2,300 fine, a surcharge of £1,108 and costs of £8,000 imposed on the director.

Bricklayer hospitalised for a month after fall through collapsing roof

AN Oldham-based construction company has been fined after a bricklayer was hospitalised for a month when the floor he was working on collapsed.

The worker fell, along with multiple concrete blocks that had been stored on the upper floor. He sustained fractures to his right leg, hip and left hand, requiring surgery and a month-long stay in hospital.

An HSE investigation found that the principal contractor had failed to properly plan, manage and monitor the construction work on site. The floor that collapsed had been overloaded with concrete blocks and had not been constructed in accordance with the manufacturer's design.

The investigation also identified a number of other health and safety failings at the site, including unsafe scaffolding, inadequate arrangements for work at height, a lack of fire alarms and inadequate competent site management.

As a result of these failings, HSE inspectors issued multiple enforcement notices.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and was fined £30,000, as well as being ordered to pay £4,883 in costs.

HSE Inspector Karen Farley said: "Employers must ensure that work is properly planned, supervised and carried out safely. This incident was entirely foreseeable and could have been prevented had the floor been constructed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and safe systems of work been in place to ensure it was not overloaded with construction materials."

Waste and recycling company fined £400,000 after woman crushed

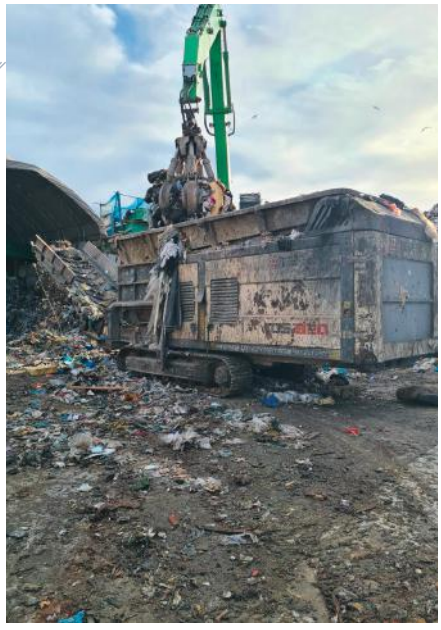
AN Essex-based waste and recycling company has been fined £400,000 after an employee was seriously injured after being struck by a mobile shredder at its site in Basildon.

A 22-year-old site operative was crushed by the moving vehicle while accessing the tipping yard in October 2024. She suffered life-threatening injuries when she was trapped between a gate post and the shredder itself.

An HSE investigation found the company had not managed the movement of pedestrians and vehicles at the site. This allowed it to become custom and practice for pedestrians to walk in areas close to moving vehicles, including the shredder, as well as close to lorries and forklift trucks.

The waste and recycling industry saw six workers killed during 2025/26 – which when compared over a five-year period, means fatalities are 10 times as likely compared to the all-industry average.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and was fined £400,000, as well as being ordered to pay costs of £10,259.



HSE inspector Joanne Williams said the waste and recycling sector continues to be one of the leading industries for workplace injuries and fatalities.

"Where pedestrians require access to working areas, safeguards must be in place to protect them, including providing adequate segregation or separation distances between pedestrians and vehicles in the area."

Council fined following stepladder collapse and injuries

A COUNCIL has been fined £6,000 after an employee suffered serious injuries when a stepladder collapsed beneath him while he was attempting to access a loft space.

As he neared the top of the stepladder, it gave way causing him to fall to the ground. He suffered a fractured collarbone and broken ribs.

An HSE investigation found that the council had failed to ensure, so far as was reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees by not adequately controlling the risks associated with working at height and the use of ladders.

The investigation identified failures in the council's management of work at height activities. Ladder use was not effectively controlled and despite identifying ladders that were not in a good state of repair and unsafe to use, they remained in place, accessible to any employee who wanted to use them. Furthermore, employees had not received training in in relation to how to assess a ladder as being safe to use.

The council pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act. It was fined £6,000 and ordered to pay £4,000 in costs.

After the hearing HSE Inspector Mike Lisle said: "The council failed to put in place basic measures to manage the risks associated with working at height. Employees had not received suitable training and ladders were not being systematically inspected to ensure they were safe.

"Employers should ensure suitable equipment is properly maintained, workers are trained and robust arrangements are in place for all work at height activities."

Badly-planned steel frame dismantling for event structure

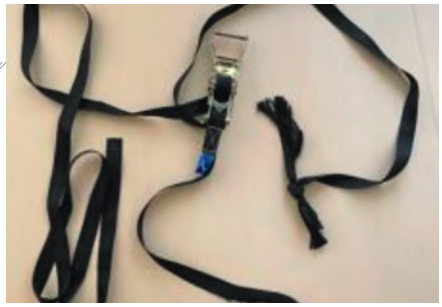
AN event structure company and its director have been fined after an employee suffered severe, life-changing injuries while dismantling an internal steel frame.

During the dismantling of a steel beam temporary structure, a ratchet strap was being used to lower a steel beam weighing over 100kg. The ratchet strap was not designed for lifting or lowering loads and failed, causing the beam to fall onto the female employee. She sustained multiple fractures to her back, a punctured lung and a broken leg.

The director was on site at the time and made the decision to use the ratchet strap, instructing workers where to stand. He continued with the method even though the victim had raised concerns about its safety.

An HSE investigation found that the company failed to ensure that the dismantling of the internal steel frame was properly planned and carried out safely.

HSE guidance states that demolition or dismantling arrangements should be written down before work begins. This



safe system of work may be in the form of a safety method statement identifying the sequence required to prevent accidental collapse of the structure.

The company pleaded guilty to breaching the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and was fined £12,000. It was also ordered to pay £6,949 in costs.

The director pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and received a community order with 75 hours of unpaid work to be completed.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Russell Beckett said: "Demolition and dismantling is a high-hazard work activity, but if the work is properly planned it can be carried out safely."

Company fined after man left 'physically ruined' after fall from height

A PRINCIPAL contractor has been fined after a man was left 'physically ruined' after falling from a tipping bucket on a fork lift truck in Kent.

Having been contracted to carry out work dismantling pipework, the man was in a raised tipping bucket on a fork lift truck when he fell out of it to the concrete floor below.

An HSE investigation found that a scissor lift had been ordered to undertake the work but was too tall to enter the area where it was taking place, so the fork lift truck was used instead.

No suitable arrangements were in place to manage the company's contractors and ensure safety on site and no actions had taken by the company to ensure a different safe system of working was undertaken.

Although the company provided equipment to its labour-only subcontractor, there was no training in place relating to the fork lift truck or scissor lift, no instruction or procedure in place to ensure only trained operatives could get access to these and no adequate supervision on site.

HSE found significant failings by the company relating to unsafe work at height over a prolonged period of time, relevant advice and enforcement was given to them from 2013 regarding control of contractors and unsafe working at height.

After admitting breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act, the company was fined £90,000 and ordered to pay costs of £27,241.

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