

WITHAM HELPS RESTORE RAF WADDINGTON'S ICONIC VULCAN

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Pioneer Plant "Standing Shoulder to Shoulder and Making it Happen"



Witham's ISO 14001 Accreditation Renewed for Another 3 Years

A.M. Borrill & Son Rationalise Their Lubricants and Oil Storage



THE BOTTOM LINE NIGEL BOTTOM - GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR





Dear All,

The year pushes on at pace and with 2024 on the horizon it is time to look both backwards and forwards at our achievements and challenges.

We continue to work closely with our trusted technology providers, formulating the very highest quality and robust formulations to meet the growing needs of our customer base, both old and new. There are continual updates to oil specifications from the OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) and government agencies. As more specific engine, gear, hydraulic and transmission designs evolve, so too must the Qualube Lubricants used within them, and Witham Group are in constant dialogue with all parties. We see a continued lean towards lighter viscosity grades and brand and engine specific specifications rather than generic qualities. As the pool of different applications continues to grow, the service dealerships and end users will have to carry more and more grades in stock to cover off the increasing range of specifications they have to choose from to ensure the correct lubricants are used for the correct applications.

As qualities rise, so ultimately do the prices, and with pressure of costs increasing, the return on investment is harder to chase. In the lubricant market, we are unfortunately seeing less scrupulous lubricant resellers and blenders suspected of using and sourcing illegal sanctioned products, sourced ultimately from Russia, at heavily discounted prices. In some cases, they are being offered at lower prices than our UK cost of raw materials and the illegal practice of 'product dumping' is taking place. We are advising our customers to not get caught out by this practice and to support the global sanctions in place for good reasons.

The great work of the United Kingdom Lubricants Association (UKLA) and the VLS (Verification of Lubricant Specifications) continues, with more than 20 different oil companies and grades being reported as being none compliant in one way or another. The pleasing result being, after a 6-month review, the offending companies have changed their operation and stopped claiming their products reach certain standards and specifications. Sadly of course, as one cleans up their act, another steps in their place! Witham Group is committed to offering only the approved correct lubricants at all times, and through our team ensure our customers receive only what they require.

Not 'all oils are the same' and there are many tiers, ranging from budget or 'judged to meet' to approved or 'premium.' Approved formulations are a minimum to ensure the correct level of lubrication is given to our customers machinery and vehicles from both a protection point of view and of course support with fuel economy. The role engine oils, brake fluids, gear oils etc play within a machine or vehicle is critical. If you think you would not put poor quality food in your body everyday because you know you would fall ill eventually, it's the same with machinery and vehicles. Put the right oils in and the machine will run for longer and significantly more efficiently. Witham Group would say that using the correct oil should not be an option.

We are proud to supply in excess of 4,000 different customer orders every month, many which are independent and small in volume, through to the largest multi-international partnerships with the OEMs themselves. It gives us a great reach to many different industries and to be able to offer both oil and paint requirements.

BUSINESSES STRUGGLE WITH UNPRECEDENTED WET AUTUMN 🌰 🌰



We have seen many of our agricultural customers struggle with the weather this year and as Autumn was the wettest on history in some counties of the UK, we see much crop still in the ground and drilling of seed way behind where it requires to be for some.

However, as one farmer said to me at the recent Midland Machinery Show, "We have been here before. Farmers are a resilient bunch and we will find ways to ensure we deliver on the promises made to put food on our table."

One of our customers, George Hay & Son at Wragg Marsh Farm in Spalding, sent us this photo showing their fields covered in flood water. Sadly, it looks more like a beach than a field. These are both really honest appraisals of current climate and we wish all our farming customers well with some dryer spells in the coming weeks.

THE WHOLE WITHAM TEAM IS KEY

The Teamwork within Witham Group continues to impress and humble me in equal measure and in some individual cases the levels of commitment, enthusiasm and a can-do attitude is simply staggering. Every single personal performance within the Team makes a real difference to our group success.

We have busy weeks ahead, across all silos of the business, however, with Christmas Holidays on the horizon as well, I look forward for us all to having a well-earned break away from the day-to-day commitments. I look forward to the tinsel being put up in the offices and the Christmas jumpers being pulled out to be worn. December is traditionally the month for giving and receiving and I look forward to, along with the Sales Team seeing and thanking as many customers as we can.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and business and wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and Happy & Healthy New Year from all at The Witham Group. Thank you! Nigel

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OIL PRODUCTION COSTS RISE FURTHER

Raw material cost increases continue to impact the market with Brent crude prices jumping above \$90 per barrel, after Saudi Arabia and Russia extended their supply curbs until December 2023. Saudi Arabia has also maintained production cuts of 1 million barrels per day.

The continued war in Ukraine looks no closer to a peaceful resolution and coupled with the recent conflict between Israel and HAMAS, the downstream impact is likely to put further pressure on oil prices. This could be further exaggerated should Europe experience a harsh winter where demand for heating oil spikes.

This is the time when Witham's close and long-term relationships with key suppliers is crucial to allow us access to key raw materials so that we can continue to ensure our quality products remain available.

VLS REVIEW PANEL VISIT WITHAM AND SEE BLENDTEK

Witham Group HQ were pleased to host the VLS Technical Review Panel (TRP) at Lincoln for its recent quarterly meeting. VLS (Verification of Lubricant Standards) is responsible for ensuring products claiming incorrect specifications, or those that don't meet the physical requirements are identified and the parties responsible contacted.



The TRP try and meet face to face once a year and after the meeting, a short tour of the Lincoln factory was given as there was great interest in our blending energy savings due to Blendtek.

Witham Attend National Fluid Power Centre Industry Exhibition

We recently attended the National Fluid Power Centre Ltd UK Industry Exhibition in Worksop. As the UK's leading provider for integrated systems engineering, the NFPC provides services to over 300 major companies both across the UK and internationally. They offer a unique range of short courses, based across more than 25 sectors of Industry, for those involved in the maintenance and management of fluid power systems.

Over the years, NFPC's Industry Exhibition has grown in popularity, attracting major industry players from around the world. This year has been fully subscribed, with 60 companies representing hydraulics, pneumatics, and applied electronics attending.





We continue to work hard to achieve our ongoing environmental objectives for the year ahead. It has been 3 years since we first achieved our ISO14001 Environmental Standard accreditation and so recently we had an inspection to review all that we have achieved and assess the business for renewal of this certification. We were delighted to receive the following glowing report following the recent ISO inspection.

The auditor would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who participated in the audit process and for the hospitality received. The aim of this assessment was to undertake a strategic review of the audit performance over the current assessment cycle for the ISO 14001:2015 certification in order to establish if a recommendation can be made for re-certification and also to undertake a surveillance visit of the ISO 9001:2015 management system.

Through the strategic review in terms of audit performance, the three year certification cycle confirmed that a low number of findings had been raised and the environmental management system has demonstrated a good level of performance.

Objectives set are noted to be mainly met whilst supporting the strategic plan of the company of providing less environmentally impacting products such as the Calcium based grease which is a substitute for Lithium based products, and reducing its carbon footprint. All planned processes and areas of the business have been sampled.

During this audit, no weaknesses were noted and as such, no findings were raised against the management system. The assessment durations for the ISO 14001:2015 scheme were reviewed and will remain unchanged at one day and one half day visits alternating every six months.

Based on the findings of this audit, the outcome of the strategic review, a strong recommendation is made for recertification to ISO 14001:2015 and continued certification to ISO 9001:2015 is made.

We are delighted with this achievement and continue to develop new sustainable options for our widening product range and ingenious ways to offer our customers reliable and long lasting products but without all the nasties. In the New Year we will be launching two new biodegradable Extreme Pressure and Heavy Duty Greases for plant and off road, marine, agriculture and forestry machinery. In addition, we will be launching through our Prolan range, a new special Under-body Rust Protector range, which will offer outstanding long tern rust prevention on vehicles. Our blending programme, using Ultrasound, continues to attract interest from the wider lubricant industry and we are also working with our packaging suppliers for further recycled and lower plastic alternatives for the future.





WITHAM SOHAM GETS A MAKEOVER!

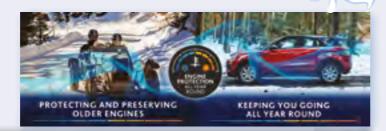
We've been busy giving our Soham Depot a makeover in Cambridgeshire. We have painted our two warehouses, the office block, and a selection of storage containers across the site. All the buildings were painted in Woco Supercote navy blue paint (RAL5011).

We have also refreshed all the Witham external signage, from a redesigned main sign, new doorway header, signs to the car park and many signs in and out of the building.



WINTER ANTI-FREEZE OFFER NOW AVAILABLE

We have launched a new offer to help customers ensure their vehicles are prepared for winter conditions. We are offering competitive prices on Anti-freeze & Coolants and giving away free screenwash and de-icer spray with orders of 50 litres or more of any Antifreeze/Coolants.





NEW HANDHELD WRAPPING REDUCES OUR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We have recently introduced a new handheld wrapping device that allows us to wrap some of the products that we sent out via carriers to protect the labels and containers. Previously, we were using a cumbersome large pallet roll of plastic, so to become more efficient and to reduce our plastic use we are now using a small handheld roll to wrap these products.

For other packaging, we use biodegradable packaging called Hivewrap which produces a robust paper honeycomb to protect our orders. It's 100% recyclable and biodegradable and it has reduced the amount of overall packaging we use.

Witham Developing New Biodegradable EP2 & Heavy Duty Greases

In our continued drive to offer as many environmentally sensitive products as possible we are in the early stages of developing two new Biodegradable greases. These products will be Calcium based and will be a direct alternative to the Lithium products that we know are causing high environmental impact. The new products will be ideal for marine, agriculture, forestry and plant and off road industries and will be launched in the New Year.

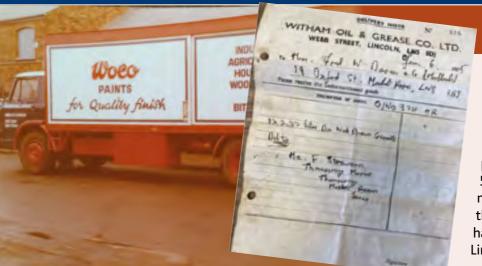
IMPROVEMENT OF COLOUR MATCH SERVICE

We are now able to offer a 'while you wait' colour matching service for our Woco Paints with our new in store 'photospectrometer' machine. This device allows us to scan and match colours to our extensive database. Previously, the older lab-based piece of equipment was used, and although accurate, it was linked to a limited database. This newer and smaller model, links to the tint machine directly and accesses all the colours in the database, meaning a wider choice of colours to choose from. Customers can supply us a colour sample, we can then match this colour to our extensive database of Standard and In house matches to produce paint in a range of our Woco Paints.







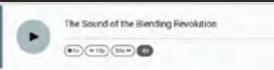


BLAST FROM THE PAST!

A customer recently sent us an old Witham delivery note from 1975 that they had found in their office. It was for 200 litres of Creosote delivered to Strawson's Farm in Lincolnshire. We still supply this product to many customers today - nearly 50 years later! This delivery would have been made using our Witham Delivery truck from the 1970's (a Ford Model D) which would have been loaded from our old Webb Street, Lincoln base.

THE SOUND OF THE BLENDING REVOLUTION





0.00 - 24.8

Our Managing Director, Nigel R Bottom, has been featured on the Lubes'n'Greases podcast's latest episode "The Sound of the Blending Revolution". Nigel joined technology journalist, Trevor Gauntlett to talk about our game changing 93% energy savings on lubricant blending, using our ultrasound technology, Blendtek.

In this interesting interview, Nigel also went on to explain how Witham Group drew on its experience of its paint business to use ultrasound technology to slash energy costs, speed up blending time, and get lubricants packaged quicker than ever.





In September we attended the Flintham Agricultural Society show, near Newark. Unfortunately, due to heavy rain in the lead up to the event, access to the site was rather chewed up prior to our arrival, resulting in us getting stuck in the mud and needing assistance from a tractor on the site!

Thankfully, the day of the show was fine and bright, and so was well attended. It was great to catch up with so many customers and see some impressive (although somewhat sticky!) ploughing action to boot!

MIDLANDS MACHINERY SHOW



Wonderful Tribute to Geoff Bottom by Sandringham Royal Warrant Holder's Association as he retires from their Council

We were delighted to see that Geoff Bottom, our Chairman and former Sandringham Royal Warrant Holder's Association President, was recognised in a special tribute in their latest member newsletter. The article was written in honour of Geoff's outstanding contribution to SARWH over the years and explained:

"The sound foundations laid down by Geoff both at Witham Group and his full involvement of the Sandringham Association of Royal Warrant Holders, allows him to step back from the front line now, knowing he has done his part and he will enjoy more than most seeing it move on and continue to go from strength to strength."

The article also included some wonderful tributes from Geoff's associates at SARWH:

"I got to know Geoff as a very dedicated, honest and genuine gentleman. I will miss you at Council!" President Johan

"Your pragmatic approach and input has always been of such value and the energy you gave to SARWH surpasses even your dance floor moves. I would like to say a big thanks for the example you have set for all of us to aspire to. SARWH is as good as it is due in no small part to yourself - thanks!"

Nick Farrow - Past President of the National Royal Warrant Holders Association





SARWH Member New

GEOFF BOTTOM

Welcoming Geoff as President Emeritas

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WITHAM PAINT HELPS RESTORE ICONIC VULCAN XM607

We are very proud to have supplied our Woco Paint for the recent surface finish restoration of Vulcan XM607 located at RAF Waddington.



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Steve Hand (centre) and the skilled team who have transformed the plane



The special Vulcan XM607 went on display at the gate of RAF Waddington, a significant airbase in Lincolnshire, in January 1983, a month after being retired from service. With the need for a new building where it was sitting, the Vulcan was to spend time stored at several locations on the base until, in 2003, it was moved to a site close to the A15 road. As serious deterioration set in, during the summer of 2021 XM607 was moved to the hangars for restoration work to begin.

The Paint Lead, Steve Hand, and his team commenced the laborious preparation involved in the surface painting of the aircraft in March and the Witham Paint Team were on hand to provide technical support and advice. We supplied our Woco Two Pack Epoxy Polyurethane paint (TDS 451) in medium sea grey, dark green and dark sea grey, in keeping with the original colours of the aircraft. Once mixed and thinned, three coats were applied.

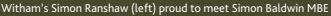


"From start to finish the team at Witham, namely Ralph Godbold and Richard Scarbrough, provided me with everything I needed to know about their products, which I was immensely impressed with. We applied the paint via roller and spray application and the coverage was excellent. At a temperature of 21 degrees, we were able to mask on to what we'd applied 14 hours later without any issues.

Having used Witham materials on such a large project and one with a proud history I wouldn't hesitate to use their products again. *The supply chain from mixing to delivery* at Waddington was excellent and I highly recommend them to anyone else undertaking projects of a similar scale."

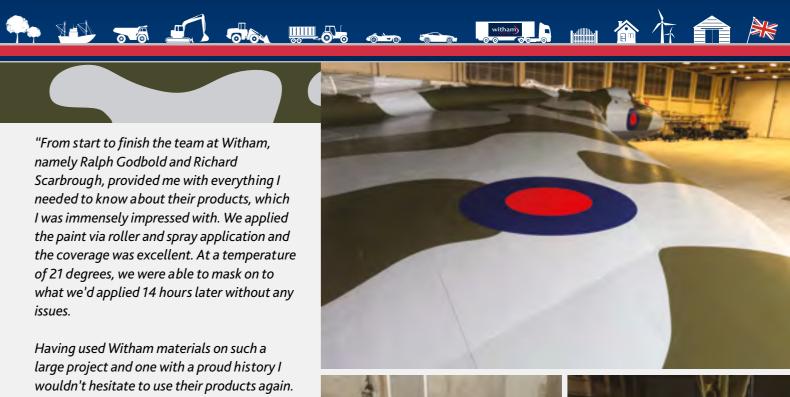
The historic bomber will now return to its position at Waddington alongside the A15 and an option to make it a moveable display is being explored.







Martin Withers (centre) and the original crew of the Vulcan







WE MEET ONE OF THE VULCAN SQUAD FROM THE FALKLANDS WAR

Earlier in the year we attended a reunion of No' 44 (Rhodesia) Squadron. This squadron flew Lancaster bombers during WW2 from Lincolnshire bases, and later the Vulcan bomber from RAF Waddington. The gentleman pictured in the right is Simon Baldwin MBE, who always called the Vulcan XM607 his aircraft, but it was flown on the Falklands raid by Martin Withers, as Simon had been given the job of planning the 'Black Buck' operation as it was known.

Not only were the aircraft flown from Waddington to Ascension Islands in the South Atlantic, but they also then flew 3,900 miles to the Falklands and back again, a round trip of 16 hours. Each aircraft was supported by a fleet of Victor tanker aircraft carrying the extra fuel.

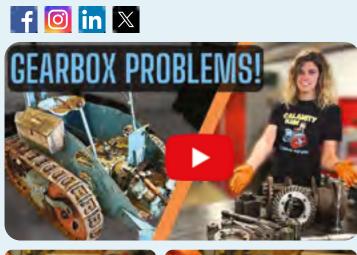
Simon explained they only had two weeks to ready the aircraft for the mission. The air to air refuelling system needed re fitting, as these had been closed off, as well as fitting up the aircraft for dropping conventional bombs, as they were designed to carry nuclear warheads. They also needed to train the crews for air-to-air fuel transfer, as they were out of practice in doing this.

SUPPORTING THE MINI COOPER REGISTER

We have proudly supported the Mini Cooper Register club over the past months. We supported the 'Minis to Ireland' event which was a tour of Kerry, Galway and Mayo in October. We also attended the Classic Motor Show at the NEC in Birmingham and joined the MCR on their stand. It was a very busy day with many members stopping by to discuss all things Mini. We had a number of interesting talks regarding lubricants for both Classic and Modern cars.

GROWING SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE FOR WITHAM

It is fantastic to see some of our customers and business partners continuing to share their stories and comments about us. We recently received a great YouTube video as well as many posts and tags on Facebook and Instagram.









Mini Cooper Registe



H227 JPR

TRAFFIC FILM REMOVER Essential help to keep your vehicles clean this Winter...

General Purpose TFR

witham

Qualube

GENERAL PURPOSE TER

RAFFIC FILM

Our General Purpose Traffic Film Remover (TFR) is used in power wash sprayers and high pressure cleaning equipment. This special detergent is diluted to remove stubborn dirt, traffic film and road coatings from all vehicles. A great all round product for home and business use.

Gold TFR

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GOLD TFR

Our Gold top quality Traffic Film Remover (TFR) not only cleans off dirt, grease and road grime easily but also leaves vehicles with a high gloss shiny finish. Suitable for use on all vehicles, and types of paint, this is our best-selling vehicle cleaner.

CUSTOMER STORIES

European Vintage Ploughing Match Success

Congratulations to our customer, Stephen Watkins from T E Watkins, who won at the European Vintage Ploughing Championships in the Netherlands last month. He was representing the England Ploughing Team and we are very proud that he was using our lubricants for his tractor and plough.







Congratulations also to our customer John Crowder, of Sturton by Stow, near Lincoln. After much success competing in the vintage trailed class, at various events this year, John qualified to represent England at the European championships in Holland in September. John transported his trusted 1938 Fordson N tractor and Ransomes plough to Holland for the event. John runs his Fordson on Qualube SAE 140 for the gearbox, and Qualube SAE 30 in the engine.

HYDRAULICS FACTORY FLOOR UPGRADE

A M Hydraulics in the West Midlands, specialise in turning, milling, horizontal boring and cylindrical grinding of small to large and heavy components. We have supplied floor paint to them on two other occasions and they have recently had a new building erected and requested our advice and recommendations for a product to use on their new floor.

We tested the floor for moisture and then recommended the following floor paint products:

- TDS 622 Two pack Epoxy Acrylic Floor paint (light grey)
- TDS 462 Koverflor Type F Single pack floor paint (Red)

These floor paint products help resist marking and stains and provide attractive long-lasting finishes to hard worked areas. The customer was very happy with the finished floor.









RUCKSTOP

We recently obtained extra business from a long-standing customer, who sells their own label oils at their truckstop business. A1Truckstop is based on the Colsterworth roundabout near Bourne in Lincolnshire and is a popular stopping off point for the masses of lorries, coaches and vans, travelling on the main A1 road from London to the north. We are delighted to be able to supply their own range of oils and products to them.



PAWSON transport









We were are delighted to be working with Collings Brothers of Abbotsley, who are an Agricultural dealer, now selling our oil through their own label brand, which we have helped them design. Collings Brothers have been in the agricultural engineering industry since its formation in 1930. They are main dealers in Cambridgeshire for a wide range of agricultural machinery, horticultural and garden machinery and workshop consumables.

New Haulier in South Yorkshire

We have recently started supplying a large new Haulier near Rotherham. The company provides a range of services to the logistics sector, including transportation, driver training, and fleet services and has both national and local clients.

We are providing our Qualube engine oils, hydraulic oils and gear oils for their fleet of trucks.

CUSTOMER STORIES

1968 Ford 4000 Tractor Restoration Using Witham Paint

This 1968 Ford 4000 was sent to father and son team, Andrew, Ronan and Kieran Marwood, Agricultural Engineers of Full Sutton, near York, to be restored recently.

This classic tractor had a full restoration from front to rear, and was filled with all new lubricants from Witham Group. It was then painted in Supercote Ford Tractor Blue, and a colour chosen from the RAL colour chart for the off white finished off the project superbly.



WITHAM TO SUPPLY NEW SEVERN TRENT GREEN POWER SITE



geo

Severn Trent Green Power are a huge player in the green waste and anaerobic digestion sector with many sites up and down the country.

We are proud to supply our lubricants to them, and are delighted to now support another of their sites based at Ardley in Oxfordshire, with bulk storage tanks to service their fleet of Volvo industrial equipment.

The Ardley IVC facility is part of a long term contract with Oxfordshire County Council. The plant can process up to 35,000 tonnes of organic waste per year. The plant's IVC tunnels are constructed from a unique gore membrane that reduces the plant power requirements to approximately one third of those needed by conventional plants.

GEO QUARRIES NOW USING BOTH WITHAM OILS AND PAINT

We are delighted to now be supplying lubricants and paints to Geo Quarries Ltd in Lincolnshire. Geo Quarries were established in 2015 and supply a range of construction materials including aggregate, stones and paving from their quarry in Little Ponton.

We were invited to the quarry to inspect and recommend the preparation and product to paint the metal containers used for the offices and storage.

They were very happy with our recommendations, and we are pleased to now be supplying the Quarry with all their lubricants and paints.



CATTLE TROUGH GIVEN SUPERCOTE TREATMENT

One of our farming customers in Lincolnshire made this cattle feeder trough in their workshop. To protect it from the elements, we supplied our Woco Supercote grey undercoat primer, which was followed by our Woco Supercote topcoat in mid Brunswick green, which is extremely durable and long lasting. The result NOCO was a very smart feeder trough for the farm (and cows!)









CUSTOMER STORIES

LR OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT SHOWCASE WITHAM **PRODUCTS AT LAND ROVER OWNERS SHOW**

One of our customers, LR Optional Equipment, recently attended the Land Rover Owners show and included a display of Witham products on their stand.

LR Optional Equipment specialises in the restoration, remanufacture and documentation of period Land Rover accessories and conversions, including Winches, Power Take Offs & Free Wheeling Hub. We supply a range of our Qualube lubricants, paints and rust prevention products which LR uses on vehicle renovations and keep in stock for their customers to buy.



BAGGLEYS MACHINERY LAUNCH OWN BRAND OIL

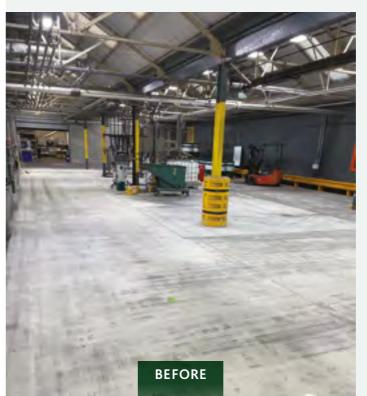


a worldwide reputation as a reliable and innovative formulator, manufacturer and supplier of high performance, specialty lubricants for the Marine, Textile and Food Grade industries.

In 2002, Vickers Oils launched the world's first biodegradable stern tube oil and now supply thousands of vessels with our award-winning range of Environmentally Acceptable Lubricants (EALs) delivered globally.

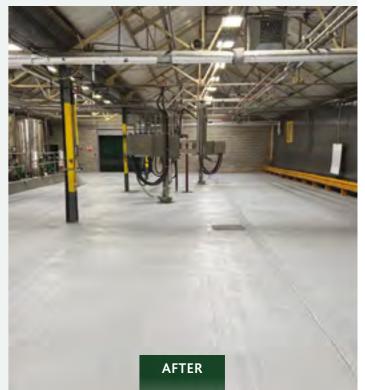
As the company approaches 200 years in business, Vickers Oils are long term friends of Witham Group Vickers are excited to deliver this dedication to quality, in the lubricant industry and said, "We were delighted ethics, and service across a new range of products, that our experience with Witham's Paint surpassed our setting a new standard for the food and beverage expectations. From the initial point of contact to the industry. technical assistance provided by their team, the product has provided a durable and attractive finish which will Vickers Oils maintain the highest cleanliness standards last for many years. Thank you Witham!"

to ensure that their customers receive a premium





product manufactured in a facility meeting various industry standards. The paint used for their new floor was applied in their blending hall at Airedale mills in Leeds, which is specifically used for filling various pack sizes with their lubricants.



"STANDING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER AND MAKING IT HAPPEN" PIC

Pioneer Plant Ltd was created in the middle of the pandemic and yet in only 3 years has grown to be a significant player in the plant & off road market. We recently caught up with Steve Corner and Brian Conn, founders and directors of the business, to find out the secret of their success...

Steve has been in the industry for over 33 years. He started out as an apprentice mechanic in a garage that did everything - cars, trucks and plant etc. Later, he ended up full time in the plant sector, starting at a dealership where he worked his way up to become workshop manager, and then group aftersales manager. He started working with Brian in 2010. Brian has been in the industry for 22 years, originally starting out in marketing at a plant machinery dealership. He went on to start selling used machinery and took care of export machines. Brian went on to work for a global heavy equipment brand before joining Steve in 2010.

A management buyout opportunity led the duo to get a taste of running a business but they both wanted to be in full control, make their own decisions and be responsible for it all and that is how Pioneer Plant was formed. Helped by a silent partner investor, they became a brand new dealership for the then Doosan (now Develon) the global machinery manufacturer from Korea. The new name Develon, was chosen to replace Doosan as a contraction of the words 'develop' and 'onwards', and so Pioneer Plant became part of the new Develon Construction Equipment UK dealership network.

Sales Director Brian Conn, says the business is driven by honesty. "The name of the company Pioneer originally was chosen back in 2020 for its definition of wanting to be the first to explore, pave the way and be a leader in our industry. The bear logo was one of

PIONEER PLANT LTD



our favourite animals - some people think it's a polar bear surviving in tough conditions. We just call the bear Diga–and he's become quite a personality for the business".



Diga the polar bear has become a friendly face of the pioneer brand

The business dealership offers sales and after service for mini diggers, large tracked excavators, wheel loaders and dumptrucks. Pioneer Plant offer the full range and provide after sales support and back up as well as parts. The company likes to focus on being masters of their products with highly trained staff. Steve explains "our sales area operates in Leics, Northants, Cambs, and the PE postcodes of Lincolnshire and more recently we were awarded Norfolk and Suffolk. We are one of only two service providers for the UK and we cover from the Humber estuary down to Gloucestershire."

We have 7 engineers, and three specific workshop engineers, a sales team and admin support. Overall, we currently employ about 23 people with apprentices being taken on and we will soon be looking for another person to join our sales team in East Anglia."

Their customers range from civil engineering, groundworks, recycling and waste companies to forestry and landscaping, demolition, quarries and housing developers. There is no business too big or too small for Pioneer and more recently, the company is finding success with the agricultural sector. Brian confirms *"It's a relatively new market for us, but its growing well, we have a great range of machinery suitable for the agricultural industry and it's an area we are moving more into."*





HOW HAS THE BUSINESS CHANGED SINCE IT STARTED

Steve explains, "The business started in the summer of 2020, when we had the opportunity of the new Doosan Dealership but unfortunately that was right in the middle of the Covid pandemic". However, despite the company experiencing the after effects of the global pandemic and the UK teetering on the edge of a recession, Pioneer went on to win the award for the number one Develon dealership for sales in Europe, in it's very first year.

Steve puts this success down to the combination of determination to offer only the best service and choosing Develon, a great brand because of its fuel efficiency and reliable engines, which are made using their own technology. "A lot has happened, a lot has changed and the company has achieved much in these 3 short years" continues Steve, "2023 has seen the business already expand its sales territory into Norfolk and Suffolk and grow the team and its reputation as being key account service providers for Develon's major customers. One of our biggest challenges at the moment, is not letting the business expand too quickly, and we are already having to update the computer system we have outgrown and ensure all our team are in place for our new sales and support in East Anglia."

The company's expansion of its sales territory to cover Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, South Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and now Norfolk and Suffolk is a huge milestone for the business and is something they are very proud of. Brian explains, "in such a short period of time, we have completed our 500th machine but it hasn't been an easy ride. I'm sure like a lot of businesses, it's been really tough because the industry has done a full 180 degrees turn from not being able to get machines but have the orders for them, to loads of machines but fewer orders in a short time. We have had to manage expectations, stock levels, and adapt our processes. These pressures have helped make the team realise that customer service is the most important thing that's where other businesses can fail when in a hard climate, when they don't provide extra level or support. Supply now is still challenging on occasion, and Brexit had its challenges for us, but now things are easing. Develon are now carrying more parts in the UK and this is proving very

useful for us and we stock most fast moving items or can get the next day delivery. It's still a challenge for us like most businesses though to balance holding the right amount of stock. We have to compete with other premium brands dropping prices drastically, economic pressures have proved challenging also, with interest rates increasing drastically, the HS2 project being cancelled and a lot of businesses going under. In the world of plant and off road servicing, the confidence to purchase new equipment has fallen based on this economic downturn however, the upside, is that looking after existing machinery and equipment is becoming even more key so our servicing side of the business has never been busier."

WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY ETHOS?

Brian passionately describes the answer to this question. "We just Make it Happen" he says, "Hard work pays off -the harder you work the better you do. Train hard and fight easy is in Steve's make up with his history of martial arts and good old fashioned customer service is key. If we say we are going to do something, we do it". Steve adds, "We are proactive and really push for looking after customers and we are recommended by others to look after people. There is no divide between sales and service within this business, we stand shoulder to shoulder. It doesn't matter who you are or what level you are in within Pioneer, we all are proud of what we do, we work hard and we care about what we achieve."





WHO IS YOUR INSPIRATION IN BUSINESS?

Brian: "Richard Branson and my old boss at Mawsley, Ian Wright, who influenced me the most and taught me everything I know today about commitment, drive and sense of wanting always to achieve".

Steve: "My first boss, 'Mac' influenced me greatly when I was an apprentice at just 16. He taught me an awful lot and gave me the foundations of business. I also look up to Nigel Mansell, the racing driver whose story is another great example of drive and how he went about his job and life with a great attitude".

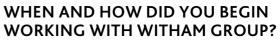
WHAT GETS YOU OUT OF BED IN THE MORNING?

Brian – "I love a new day, everything to play for. I love the job, and wouldn't change a thing. I have a great team I believe in and look forward to working together over the next few years."

Steve – "I just love trying to be the best at what we do and I always look forward and not backwards. I am also just super proud of having the best service and parts department out there!"

For more information about Pioneer Plant visit: pioneerplant.co.uk

PIONEER PLANT LTD



TY1D=

Pioneer started working with Witham Group before in other businesses, but started using Witham again in July 2021. Steve explains, "We were dealing with a different supplier and weren't the most pleased. Witham came to the yard one day and the rest is history. Witham now supply all our lubricants, coolants and paint colours matched to our machines. Our relationship with Witham is excellent. We tested all the Witham products as we wanted a better quality oil that would look after the machines and know what we need. Without doubt, the products you offer are of great quality and meet all the latest specifications and approvals of our machinery. Witham also provide great support with other opportunities. Witham has now designed the labels and now supplies our own range of oils which helps us promote our brand and expertise developing an after sales pack. You help make our life and business easier. Other oil suppliers are interested in selling not in serving and caring about the business. Witham are clearly a people business, who offer great service and let us know if there are any problems and we look forward to working together more into the future."

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR FUTURE?

With immediate plans to strengthen their stronghold in Norfolk and Suffolk, there are also plans for Pioneer to open up another depot there and expand further into East Anglia territories. Brian says, "We want to continue to grow organically and develop our business, pushing new models over next 12 months. We will expand the sales team whilst keeping the ethos of the business, not too fast and never without the service!"



We have been receiving some great customer feedback about our Prolan range recently and delighted that more and more customers are finding this environmental alternative is delivering impressive results.

Prolan lubricants work on almost any surface including metal, rubber, steel, vehicles, vinyl and painted areas. Each of the 5 viscosity grades offer specialist benefits which include staying on in harsh conditions, lifting rust scale, resisting acids and alkalis, removing dirt and grime and so much more. Its unique lanolin-based formula contains linseed and offers outstanding natural moisture repellent qualities. It is non carcinogenic, environmentally safe and has excellent rust protection properties completely freeing up rusted and seized parts.

It's not just great for metal either, it's an ideal wood preserver too, preventing outdoor rot and greening on fencing and wooden structures. Safe for marine waterways, forestry, agriculture and food production areas, it is internationally certified by NSF. Prolan is also non-conductive, so it can be used for electrical wiring and connections such as engine batteries.

This new ultimate lubricant range comes in a handy spray, liquid or thick anti-seize grease, depending on which of the five different viscosities you need for the job in hand. As more people address the use of chemicals in their supply chain, Prolan is proving a great replacement. Here are just some of our recent customer stories:

A TRIO OF CUSTOMER SUCCESSES WITH PROLAN

PROLAN PROTECTS METAL RACK FOR WINTER

Our customer, Hugh Pearl Land Drainage, have recently used Prolan Medium Grade to protect a metal frame used to store steel in an outdoor container. Established for more than half a century, Hugh Pearl is the premier name in the South East of England for Trenching, Sports field construction and Civil Engineering projects.

As we know, Prolan is an amazing rust and corrosion protector and its unique, lanolin based formula provided outstanding moisture repellency and long lasting results for this customer.

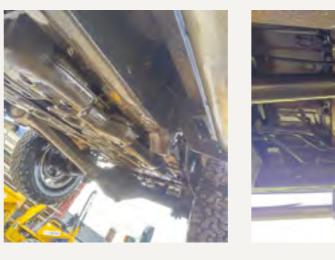


PROLAN HEAVY GRADE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR TRUCK UNDER-BODY

Jason Garrard from JLG Plant Servicing, operates and services plant equipment based in Diss, Norfolk. Jason has been using Prolan to protect the chassis and undercarriage of his own truck for the past year with great results. We were delighted to get this brilliant review:

"This is the second year of using the Prolan Heavy Grade Lubricant as an underseal protection on my Toyota Hilux. On this year's preparation steam clean of the truck, you could clearly see the protection layer still on the truck from last year's pre-winter application.

The product is easy to apply using a hand pump spray gun but does require heating to allow the product to flow easy through the pump. The product gives a good coverage when warm and thickens when it cools to leave a thick protection layer which easily lasts a year and stays on under normal pressure washing. I highly recommend this product to keep the rust at bay and will continue to use it in the future."



"PROLAN-MORE EFFECTIVE THAN YOUR NORMAL CHAIN SPRAY" 3

GC Hinsley is a road haulage and transport services customer based in Beccles, Suffolk and has recently given our Prolan products a glowing review:

"We had previously been using a chain spray to help the latches on the back of the lorries from getting stuck. We would apply this almost daily for it to be effective, but it left a sticky residue. We were then introduced to the Prolan Medium Grade aerosol which we applied to the latches and found not only did we not have to keep reapplying it and it was more effective and didn't leave a sticky residue.

We felt happier using it as it is a natural product, and have since found it works well on our airline cuplins as well. An all-round great product that every workshop should have!"







HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE WORKSHOP OIL STORAGE?

Unfortunately, oil is one of the most common reports of pollution, contributing to over 15% of pollution incidents each year in the UK. It can harm people, plants and marine life, damage rivers, soil, destroy natural habitats and drinking water supplies, as well as ruining workshop and garage environments.

Oil Storage regulations are governed by the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001. This requires anyone in England who stores more than 200 litres of oil to provide secure containment facilities for tanks, drums, Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs) and mobile bowsers. There are different regulations for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland and in this article, we take a closer look at oil storage for all workshops...

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF OIL STORAGE

The basis is always to create an area which is safe, clean and appropriate. Basic rules include:

- 1. Oil must be stored at least 10 metres away from inland or coastal waters, flood areas and 50 metres clear of a spring.
- 2. Tanks should be on flood level or below ground level and must never be stored above roof level and kept away from areas that risk damage via impact, machinery and weather. The full Legal requirements are outlined in detail in the Oil storage regulations for businesses - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) website which covers storage of quantities of 201ltrs and above. There are however different regulations that apply, depending on where you store your oil, how much you store and what you are using the oil for. If you choose not to comply with these regulations, you can be served an anti-pollution works notice and face prosecutions.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF OIL CONTAINERS REQUIRE CAREFUL STORAGE

Lubricants are supplied in many ways, bulk, barrel, & various drums & small packs to meet the needs of a wide customer base. Bulk & barrels are generally supplied to commercial workshops and the other sizes to both the commercial & retail market. With the exception of bulk, the remaining sizes can all come in either plastic or metal containers depending on the supplier and also the type of product. Lubricants stored in a factory fresh sealed container will not normally degrade. Obviously, metal containers can be subject to corrosion over extended periods. In essence, the largest single container must be contained within 110% of its volume.

Storage and movement of containers is guided by lifting at work regulations, so heavy containers are to be lifted correctly and with suitable/appropriate machinery.

THE TEMPERATURE OF THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT CAN **AFFECT THE LUBRICANT**

Heat is a huge risk to oil, not only from a fire point of view, but also from a volumetric point of view. Oil volume will increase as the temperature rises so contained vessels need to be vented.

Once a container is opened it will come into contact with the environment and whilst lubricants often contain Antioxidants they will start to oxidise when in contact with the atmosphere. If for example you were to leave a sample of hydraulic fluid in a glass jar open to the atmosphere for a period of time you would see it darken in colour as this happens. Elevated temperature will, as will almost all reactions, increase the speed.

IS THERE A WAY TO MANAGE LUBRICANT **STORAGE SUSTAINABLY?**

Yes! Oil not only needs to be stored safely and properly flaps to stop wastage of unused clean oil which can be because it's the law, it should be stored to help with the returned to the bulk tank. environment and health and safety. Bulk Storage tanks are an ideal solution of metal tanks in your garage that ARE THERE WAYS TO OPTIMISE SPACE removes the need for all plastic packaging. The simple WITHIN THE WORKSHOP FOR EFFICIENT colour coded tanks have sight gauges, taps or pumps and LUBRICANT STORAGE? come labelled with each lubricant name and its application There are many innovative storage solutions on the and are filled in bulk deliveries, saving the need for plastic market, bulk tanks are excellent for larger volume products drums and waste. This system is easy to use for all the and bulk tanks can simply be raised off the workshop floor workshop team, helps keep working spaces ship shape, and downpipes fitted to both fill and empty. A simple avoids spills from containers and helps avoid important oil process which will not impact the workshop floor space at contamination, whilst helping the environment by using all. Bunded racks and trays are also available for smaller no packaging. With annual maintenance the longevity of sizes. Try and avoid storing products for extended periods bulk tanks will last over 50 years. This is a very sustainable and just buy as much as your immediate needs require. process indeed as the defunct metal tank can then be simply recycled and the metal used again.

This method of storage and use, also helps tick all the regulation requirements for oil storage and keeps users and the workshop environment as safe as possible.



WHAT'S THE NUMBER ONE THING THAT **GARAGES NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN STORING LUBRICANTS**

The best piece of advice we can give is to treat lubricants as if you were storing drinking water. Always avoid storing any products outside where water could penetrate the lid or seal. Many people assume the seals on barrels are watertight, they are generally not and are simply used as an anti-tamper method. If no other option but external storage is available always store barrels on their side. Moisture and Dirt ingress are the two main factors. Moisture can be overcome by keeping the bulk storage at as close to the same temperature as possible at all times.

In addition to this, using air operated or electric transfer pumps and guns stops the contamination of oil in dirty transfer jugs. If jugs are used, they need to be kept in a clean environment also, upside down and empty when not in use. Bulk storage tanks should be fitted with return

For more information about Oil storage, bulk storage tanks, recycled packaging, barrel recycling schemes and other ways to ensure your workshop is clean, safe and sustainable - visit: www.withamgroup.co.uk.



"KEEPING IT SIMPLE – ALL PROBLEMS ARE OPPORTUNITIES"

Truckmasters Handling Ltd was established in the late 1970s as a Toyota Industrial Forklift Dealer. Operating from their premises on the A52, close to Wainfleet near Skegness in Lincolnshire, they supply forklifts and associated material handling equipment to the local farming and produce packers.

We recently spoke to Graham Elsam, Truckmasters Managing Director to find out more about its company's history and the challenges it faces in today's climate...

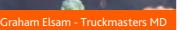
HOW DID THE BUSINESS GET STARTED?

In the early years, the business was closely associated with Sanderson Forklifts, a well-known and innovative manufacturer of rough terrain forklifts. With their factory a few miles up the road they recognised the quality and creative manufacturing process that Toyota pioneered and used the trucks in their production lines.

The 1970s saw Toyota complete the construction of the Takahama Plant in Japan becoming the largest facility in the world to manufacture only industrial vehicles. The plant was a showcase for futuristic manufacturing equipment and methods. Truckmasters embraced this culture and integrated this into the marketing, supply and aftercare of these new and revolutionary new forklifts. The business expanded through and on into the 1980s with the opening of depots to enable local sales and service support in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED?

It was in the mid-1980s that I became involved and joined Truckmasters to develop and promote a range of construction plant and equipment that the company had diversified into. Coming from a motor trade background this was a new and exciting challenge for myself and the business. Throughout the late 80s Truckmasters enjoyed being involved with supplying machinery and equipment for the flourishing house building and civil engineering sectors. Providing specialised handling equipment for the development of Centre Parcs Norfolk and the new Stansted Airport. It was in 1990 that the



opportunity came about acquire the Truckmasters business assets and operation. This involved at the time a significant commitment and belief in the business and its highly experienced, skilled and motivated staff. That was almost 34 years ago, and that belief has been confirmed, proved and totally justified.

WHAT DO YOU SUPPLY?

We supply a range of New Toyota Forklifts and material handling equipment. With diesel, LPG gas and battery powered drive units, with lifting capacities from 1000kg up to 8000Kg. We offer a full range of warehouse equipment, hand pallet trucks, power pallet, stacker, reach trucks and Very Narrow Aisle Trucks (VNA) including Aisle Master and Combilift of specialised narrow aisle equipment.

We also offer Moffet Mountie Lorry mounted forklifts and specialised poultry industry specification. Not only that we supply Karcher industrial cleaners, brushes, vacuums and scrubber driers and a comprehensive stock of used equipment. In addition, we offer casual and short-term fleets for hire ideal for seasonal demand and customer support.

To back up the sales we offer a full service and repair contract hire and maintenance on all new and used equipment. This service is supported by a team of mobile technicians with extensive stock of spare parts replacement wheels and tyres.

HOW BIG IS THE TRUCKMASTERS TEAM?

In total we employ around 60 staff across the 3 locations consisting of field and workshop engineers, parts specialists, technical, sales and support staff. The company operated a continuous training program and apprentice induction scheme. We are proud to continually benefit from a high retention rate of staff, along with their associated skills and experience.

WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?

Our customers are our business. They are made up from a broad spectrum of industry, manufacturing, agriculture, transport, storage, public service and local authorities. Among one of interest, we have the country's leading cricket bat manufacturer! Then we have a few leading pet food manufacturers and lots of our customers handling thousands of tons of potatoes, carrots, onions, cabbages, cauliflowers and just about all you would find on a supermarket shelf. Builders' merchants, transport and haulage, warehousing and distribution, frozen food processors and distributors, recycling businesses and many more, the list is so varied and almost endless. We are also proud to count the Air Ambulance and the RNLI amongst other organisations we support.

HOW HAS THE BUSINESS CHANGED **OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS?**

The business has evolved and continues to do so as have our customers and their businesses. The ever-increasing dominance of online shopping and the decline of the high street has accelerated far quicker than most expected. These changes are like all change not always for the good although bring with them benefits and opportunities. Regardless of the advances in technology and AI, product and goods will have to be handled processed and distributed by equipment and machinery which will need from time-to-time human assistance to repair and maintain. So, until a Star Trek style "Beam Me Up" machine is invented it looks like stuff will still have to be stacked on pallets and moved around with forklifts.

WHAT ARE YOUR CURRENT BIGGEST **CHALLENGES?**

We always welcome challenges and like to view them as opportunities. So, the bigger the challenge the bigger the opportunity. A current, topical challenge is the government's recently announced policy on restricting immigration. The headlines are all focused on the affects this will have on the staffing levels of the Care and Health sector. This will clearly also have repercussions for the agricultural, food processing, packing and distribution industries. To specifically look at the Mechanical Handling Industry there is already a shortage of equipment operators and with the aspirations of a domestic population to secure higher skilled and higher paid jobs this will only become more of a challenge. Also with drive away from carbon producing gas- and diesel-powered equipment to electric and battery power, our customers are seeking new and innovative solutions. Although automation and the use of robotics is at a relatively early stage of development, we envisage its cost and the integration of artificial intelligence technology to be the future. At the present it appears a massive



challenge but like eating the proverbial elephant, it is an exciting opportunity to take on a bite at a time.

However, the last 12 months have been very positive. Among the challenges have been maintaining and expanding the numbers of skilled staff and managing extended lead times on new equipment. However, we are looking forward to 2024 and beyond.

WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY ETHOS?

Keep it simple, question why it can't be done then develop a way it can, problems are opportunities.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE OR HAVE **DONE DIFFERENTLY?**

In business as in life, it is good practice to combine hindsight about the past, insight about the present and foresight about the future. Maximum value can be obtained when you combine all three, enabling you to make truly insightful decisions about what needs to change. You cannot change the past but you can use the experience, both good and bad to change and shape the future. Going forward we will be as innovative as we can and ensure we listen to our customers feedback to meet their growing needs.

WORKING WITH WITHAM GROUP

We started our working relationship with Witham Group in December 2016, using Witham's range of lubricants, paints and greases, including 3 different grades of engine oils, transmission fluids, hydraulic oils and gear oils.

The main importance and what has been significant for us in these recent times has been the stability of prices, certainly through the pandemic era and keeping an exceptional service. We have a great relationship with Darren Smart our local salesman from Witham and within both business's hierarchy. We also have reciprocal business together along with some great networking opportunities. The relationship Truckmasters has with Witham is very healthy, and the products we use are a great fit to service our business.



Kieren Nee, Group Editor for Professional Motor Mechanic Magazine, contacted Witham Group recently to discuss the biggest changes workshops can expect to see in engine oils over the next few years and the current challenges and misconceptions that garages, workshops and the motor oil industry is facing. We were delighted to help contribute to this interesting article...

Thinner and more complicated than ever: **MOTOR OIL IN 2024**

PMM clears up a thing or five about motor oil.

ipping into the silver tome that is the AA Book of the Car, published in 1976, I find the advice for "choosing the right oil" includes castor oil as a viable option, although it does concede that its use, even in racing cars, "has been superseded by mineral oil". Although, to my surprise, castor oil is still in use in certain racing applications, I don't think many garages would get away with stocking barrels of the "runny" stuff these days. Multigrade oils had evidently made their way onto the scene by 1976, for providing "easy winter starting". What is most striking, however, to the modern reader (apart from the genuinely shocking warning found under Potential Dangers for the Motorist that "in women, judgement is often affected by menstruation") is the wholly advisory tone of the whole article. Nowhere is any oil described as being necessary to a particular vehicle, nor is it ever stated that the choice of oil is anyone's but the driver's - how odd!

Fast forward to 2024, and the situation is, shall we say, different and is only going to get different-er...

I asked Adrian Hill, Morris Lubricants, what we can expect to see in oils over the next five years. He told me that "the drive towards improved fuel efficiency will push for thinner oils and engine oil formulations in the direction of 0W-20s, 0W-16s and 0W-8s. These thinner engine oil formulations will also be required for hybrid powertrains where rapid circulation of oil from cold is required to reduce engine wear and continue to drive

fuel efficient operation." Over in Germany, Liqui Moly's Oliver Kuhn thought that oils would soon bottom out at around "0W-20 for diesel cars and 0W-16 for gasoline cars, and only some OEMs will go lower".

If only it was as simple as oils getting ever thinner. In fact, as Petronas' Fausto Lupone told me, there is still a perception in the industry that "thicker oil is better for protection". The reality is, he tells me, "today's vehicles vary from traditional combustion engines to hybrids, plug-ins, and

"You wouldn't put burgers and chips in your child every day because you know they would fall ill eventually, it's the same with cars."

Nigel Bottom, Witham

fully electric models. Each demands specialised fluids for optimal maintenance, efficiency, and emission reduction." But it's not just different powertrains which require different oil specifications. Each engine require its own unique blend of oils and additives, as the Witham Group's Nigel **Bottom** explains: "As engine designs evolve so too must the lubricants within and the lubricant manufacturers along with the additive companies are in constant dialogue about this. In the next five years we will see a continued lean towards lighter viscosity

grades and brand/engine specific specifications rather than generic qualities. The carpool of older engines will grow and garages will have to carry more and more grades to cover off the increasing range of specifications and the correct lubricants for the correct applications."

Choice still exists

All this is not to say you don't have a choice when it comes to engine oils - you do. This is something Nigel is keen to emphasise, explaining that a common misconception among workshop owners is that "they have to use only the lubricant recommended by the manufacturer which is strictly incorrect. The correct oil has to be used, of course, but as long as the oil supplier carries the approved formulation specification within their portfolio, the brand is irrelevant. The right oil for the right application is important which provides the correct specifications for the OEM not the OEM's oil itself. After all, that will be manufactured by an independent oil company."

Likewise, there is some confusion surrounding indicators of quality, as Jason Vigrass outlines: "People may get confused with the naming and branding of engine oils. Viscosity grades such as 5W-30, 0W-20, 0W-30, etc. and the use of descriptions such as fully synthetic, synthetic-based, mineral, etc. are not an indication of the engine oil performance. These words only form part of the overall profile of the engine oil and it is the OEM specification that should drive the decision to buy a particular oil grade."

What is less clear is what separates the good from the bad. Witham's Nigel Bottom suggests it comes down to the quality control and testing process, as well as how far beyond basic protection the oil goes: "There are many tiers, ranging from a) budget 'judged to meet' to b) approved 'premium'. Approved formulations are a minimum to ensure the correct level of lubrication is given to the engine from a protection point of view and of course support with fuel economy. The role engine oils, brake fluids, gear oils etc play within a machine or engine is critical. If you think you wouldn't put burgers and chips in your child every day because you know they would fall ill eventually, it's the same with cars put the right oils in which guard against corrosion in the engine, provide slick performance of the moving parts and help prevent breakdowns and wear and tear. Good oil should not be optional."

Time to change

Something which will be a sticking point for many is that all these extra specifications means more money - not for you but for your customer. Unfortunately, saving your customers a few quid today might result in costly repairs further down the line. Lucas Oil's Dan Morgan has identified another way garages are looking to save customers money - oil changes, or rather, skipping oil changes. He told me, not without a certain

sympathy, that "garages are expected to provide customers with expert advice, but often feel obliged "to try to save the customer's money." Too many mechanics assume, for example, that a visual check of the oil's level, colour and viscosity is enough evidence to advise that it's good for a few more thousand miles yet. These and many other shortcuts to maintenance are tips that offer false economies that both the garage and the customer may come to regret later on. It's a situation created by insufficient background knowledge about the latest engine oils and additive technologies now available." Not judging by colour alone is something Fausto from Petronas agrees with: "Oil colour doesn't reliably indicate condition, so regular analysis or following manufacturer-recommended change intervals is essential." He does concede that changing oil too often can be wasteful, which is why "lubricant suppliers have created products with extended drain intervals to combat the need for frequent replacement." Both suggest keeping up-to-date with training opportunities is the best way for technicians to avoid such pitfalls.

From Russia with... Love?

I was invited along to the UKLA annual dinner recently - that's the United Kingdom Lubricant Association, if you didn't know. Mike Bewsey, president of the

UKLA, referenced the recent rise in dumping as a cause for concern in the industry. I was, and remained, blissfully unaware what dumping in this particular instance referred to. Until, that is, fellow UKLA board member Nigel Bottom filled me in: "There is still short supply of high-quality raw materials for blenders partly since Covid and partly due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Very recently, we have seen suspected products being 'dumped' within the UK markets from sources alleged to be from sanctioned Russian suppliers. Not only at very reduced pricing levels but also of dubious qualities and origin. The industry also continues to see poor/incorrect quality products being offered, but through the hard work of the UKLA and the VLS (Verification of Lubricant Specifications), these products are being reported and published to the industry - I advise everyone keeps an eye on their website and sets themselves up to receive their newsletters." Something, I too, can't recommend highly enough.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? FOR MORE INFORMATION GOTO WWW.RDR.LINK/ABE028



LUBRICANT RATIONALISATION CASE STUDY: A. M. Borrill & Son Farmers, Hibaldstow, Lincolnshire

Robert Borrill, farmer, businessman, and past-Chairman of Woldmarsh Producers Limited, has employed Woldmarsh Buying Group and one of its preferred suppliers - Witham Group, to take a look at the farm's lubricant purchases to see how they could support. Find out more about how we teamed up to help...

With lubricant requirements for farm machinery becoming more and more precise and specifications very often confusing with which application they relate to, sometimes selecting the correct oil and grease to use is a difficult case of guesswork. Acting on your behalf, Woldmarsh continue to offer a professional approach to lubricant purchases, through the latest products and services of Witham Group offering further beneficial prices to members.

Witham Group have been preferred suppliers to Woldmarsh Producers for over 50 years and have been established manufacturers and blenders of lubricants for agriculture since 1921. Based in the City of Lincoln they supply the agricultural, industrial, horticultural, roadhaulage, marine and renewable power generation markets both throughout the UK and also strategic countries in Europe. No matter how small your enterprise is or how large, Witham Group has some trusted credentials and a century of reliability to help members. Nigel R Bottom, Managing Director of Witham Group, explains more

"Robert and I met recently, and we opened discussions about purchasing warranty-approved lubricants at preferable rates through the Woldmarsh Group. After a brief and constructive meeting with both Robert and the Farm Manager David, who oversees the maintenance of all vehicles and machinery on the farm for Robert, we were able to arrange the following services

We carried out a full and complete technical lubrication survey, free of charge, to ensure we offered the correct lubricant for the correct application. We also rationalised the number of lubricants purchased by the Borrills, reducing the workshop from three different engine oils to one, two different back-end / transmission oils to one type, and two different hydraulic oils to one, without jeopardising warranty or compromising protection in any way.

It was a good project to do, not only to rationalise products but also, we found some gaps in the cover for the products which were currently being purchased. This was not the fault of the farm, but the advice given by a local dealership that would of course only be able to offer the oils for their brand of tractor and not a product that would cover multiple brands together in one product.

All the products we proposed were warranty approved by the global tractor OEM machinery manufacturers and all showed significant savings in cost through the power of group purchasing.

We also offered and supplied, free of charge, colour-coded, bulk storage tanks, complete with sight gauges and taps for easy stocking levels and quick, safe, and clean dispensing of the product. A selection of colourcoded oil jugs was supplied free of charge to complete the set-up. The tanks' capacities ranged from 300 litres to 450 litres with a minimum top-up of 200 litres per product.

Delivery of the product was key to A M Borrill & Son also, and after guaranteeing every other day delivery, or sooner, if necessary, this helped the farm ensure they had the correct amount of oils at the busiest times of year. It also negated the need to run a van and operator to a local tractor dealership to fetch smaller more expensive packs of products".

Robert and Nigel also discussed the environmental offering from Witham Group and Woldmarsh and how important this was for the farm now and in the future. It was confirmed that all lubricants supplied by Witham Group are blended carbon-neutral thanks to a revolutionary process at Witham Group HQ which is leading the lubricants industry using ultrasound to blend as opposed to heating up raw materials for hours on end. Witham Group has been able to reduce its gas consumption by over 93% using this process.

Robert commented, "As the environmental credentials on-farm become more and more important, I am proud to be one of the leaders in the industry by having carbon neutral blended lubricants for my fleet of tractors and machinery. The agricultural industry is well and truly under the microscope and any small increments of improvement that can help both our business and the whole environment we work within is excellent and key to our continued success"

Robert added, "The manufacturer-branded lubricants are being advertised by the local dealerships, and with careful recommendations by these professionals this can be achieved using Qualube Lubricants at beneficial prices through the Group, which is fantastic. I am also pleased to support a UK manufacturing company, which is family owned and run, plus based in my home county of Lincolnshire".



Witham's Simon Ranshaw (left) with farm manager David (centre) and Robert Borrill (right)

Paul Massey, Machinery Sector Head at Woldmarsh added "The membership of Woldmarsh throughout Lincolnshire, Yorkshire, and further afield, have used Witham Group and the "Qualube Lubricants" product for many years with complete satisfaction on quality, price, and service. This service has been taken up by many existing Woldmarsh members, both farmers and contractors who have rationalised grades, made the application of lubricants simpler and appreciate this approach to lubrication our trusted supplier makes. I am so pleased that through our relationship and our team's recommendation, Robert has been able to find further improvements and savings to his already efficient operation".

Paul continued, "If any member would like to investigate further what Witham Group can do for them, please do not hesitate to contact either the Woldmarsh Office, or Witham Group direct. They will professionally organise a technical lubrication survey, hopefully rationalise products and most of all show significant savings without jeopardising warranty, even on brand new machines".



Woldmarsh Agricultural Buying Group and Witham work hard to ensure their customers get the best service, price and efficiencies for their business.

WITHAM KEEPS HYKEHAM SAILING CLUB AFLOAT!



We recently donated some vellow and blue 5 litre containers to Hykeham

Sailing Club for use on their club boats. These are attached to the sail at the top of the mast to stop the boat inverting completely if it capsizes. The Club were extremely grateful to receive these.





BARREL SUPPORT FOR MARKET RASEN BEER FESTIVAL



Market Rasen and District Round Table's Beer Festival in September had an extra Witham Barrel of Beer behind the bar this year, thanks to our support. This Lincolnshire community event that attracted hundreds of visitors over the weekend to watch the live music and sample the beers and raised over £5,000 for local causes and charities.

TEAM SUPPORT FOR MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

CANCER SUPPORT

In September, we took part in the national MacMillan Coffee Morning event at Lincoln office. A huge THANK YOU to all who donated the delicious cakes and pastries and to all those who kindly purchased and enjoyed these delights. This year we have managed to raise a magnificent £107.46 - our largest total in recent years. Well done everyone!



FARMER DOES SCHOOL RUN IN STYLE IN A **SEGWAY FUGLEMAN!**

One of our farming customers recently shared these great photos of him doing the school run in style in a Segway Fugleman UTV - Powered by Qualube Lubricants of course!

Our Qualube Quad Bike oil gives outstanding protection and performance in all conditions and is suitable for both waterand air-cooled motorcycles and All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs) and Quad Bikes. Also ideal for school runs!!



WITHAM SUPPORT OIL ENGINE DAY AT DOGDYKE **STEAM PUMPING STATION**

Dogdyke Steam Pumping Station recently held an 'Oil Engine Day' at their visitors centre near Tattershall in Lincolnshire, where engines of all shapes and sizes were on display from members of the Lincolnshire Oil Engine Club. These engines once powered workshops, pumped water, generated electricity, drove milking machines and other farm equipment - and several were made in Lincolnshire by such firms as Ruston & Hornsby and Blackstone and Robey. The Station's own Ruston & Hornsby 7XHR oil engine of 1940 was also on display - still in its original condition within the purpose-built pump house.

We were proud to supply our Qualube Lubricants for the event and support our longstanding customer Dogdyke Steam Pumping Station.





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WITHAM PROVIDES LORRY FOR "TRAINING PULL" **AT LINCS FITBOX**

The fit folk at Lincs FitBox asked if they could borrow one of our Witham Lorries for their members to practice pulling as part of a focussed strength, training challenge... and we were more than happy to oblige! Well done to all involved – an amazing effort, and thanks to Lincs Fitbox for the photos!





SPALDING AND EAST ELLOE CLASSIC CAR CLUB VISIT LINCOLN FACTORY

We recently hosted a Factory Tour and talk for a group of members from the Spalding and East Elloe Classic Car Club. The group were very appreciative, and we had some great feedback from the chairman:

"Thank you so much for entertaining our club last night, I have never had so many positive messages concerning our visit. You and your wonderful company deserve to go from strength to strength please keep doing whatever it is you are doing as it seems to be very successful."

If you know a club or society that would like to learn about the world of lubricants, please do get in touch.

BAILEY TRAILERS OFFER SPECIAL "WIN IT IN PINK" TRAILER IN AID OF BREAST CANCER

One of our customers, Bailey Trailers, have painted one of their renown TB15 agricultural trailers in an amazing, one of its kind, pink colour and offering it as a prize in a draw to raise funds for breast cancer charity - Breast Cancer Now. We were extremely proud to have supplied the special pink paint for this fundraising campaign.

Tickets for the prize draw are available until the 8th December 2023 and the draw will take place on 15th December at Bailey Trailers premises in Sleaford, Lincolnshire. They're suggesting a minimum donation of £25.



WITHAM HELP FINAL PUSH FOR **"ON FREEDOM WINGS"** TO GET OFF THE GROUND

The Bomber County Gateway Trust recently visited Lincoln HQ for a strategy day in November, hosted by Ali Bottom, to facilitate and help them plan how they are going to reach the final £90,000 fundraising hurdle in their quest to erect a full size Avro Lancaster Bomber sculpture at the side of the A46 dual carriageway into Lincolnshire.

The completed landmark, which will be called "On Freedom's Wings", will sit above the skyline at 30m high appearing to be gliding alongside the A46 near Norton Disney. It will be seen by 34,000 drivers travelling between Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire every day.

The project has already raised £200,000 through donations but needs at least another £90,000 to finish the job.

When tilted, the Lancaster's 31m wingspan will make it taller than the Angel of the North which is approximately 20m high. A team of 30 engineers are volunteering on the project, but more specialists are needed.

Ground excavations have already been completed at the site and in October 2019 a steel podium on which the Lancaster will sit was fixed in place with 1300 tonnes of



M&P Construction and Civils Ltd recently grouted the bases of the stanchions





concrete. Witham Group are proud to have provided the paint for the structures support and stanchions so far and are hoping the day helped reignite the trust and its partners with ideas and an action plan to finally get the project completed and off the ground. There will be a fundraising appeal launched in the new year, so anyone who is able to help with donations, fundraising promotion of the project, offer goods or services, or would like more information should please get in touch: www.bombergatewaytrust.co.uk

WITHAM CUSTOMER'S TRACTOR DELIGHTS NURSERY CHILDREN

Our farming customers, Wilkinson Brothers, based in Sudbrooke, Lincolnshire, made a group of nursery children very happy, by taking their Fendt 724 Tractor (which uses our Qualube lubricants range) into the playground to teach the children about farming and the harvest. The children at the Granary Nursery in Scothern were delighted to see such a large tractor up close and get to sit in the cab.



Irsn WITHAM CAKES HELP HARVEST FESTIVAL RAISES MONEY FOR CHARITY

We supported the Lincolnshire Rural Support Network at The County Harvest Festival, at Lincoln Cathedral, by donating some delicious Witham themed cupcakes. The service was a celebration of Lincolnshire's wonderful agricultural community and the variety and quality of produce grown and reared in the county. The vegetable produce was donated by various farming companies from within the county, and it all went to the Lincoln Food Larder after the event. The service was followed by refreshments (including our cupcakes, made by Good Little Party Food) served in the chapter house. LRSN were delighted with all the support and gave us this feedback:

"Thanks to all the growers that provided the vegetables for the amazing displays in the Cathedral, thank you also to all the people involved from those who read during the service to the who presented the produce at the alter and our thanks go to The Witham Group for the sponsorship of the refreshments after the service."





'We'll Meet Again' is an award-winning WW2 Homefront Museum, based at Freiston Shore, near Boston, Lincolnshire. This fantastic museum has won numerous awards including the Pride of Boston 2018 award, a Destination Lincolnshire Tourism Excellence Award in 2022, and the YMCA Age-friendly Business award in April 2023.

The museum was set up by husband-and-wife team, Paul and Linda Britchford in 2017. Paul and Linda had previously run a mobile museum visiting schools delivering a highly acclaimed teaching of life at home during WW2. This was so well received, they decided to set up a static museum for the public and have been adding to their comprehensive range of exhibits ever since.



A LIFELONG INTEREST IN WW2

Back in 1969, Paul's dad, Jeff, took Paul to see the Battle of Britain film. One of the first things that fired Paul's imagination was news of the Hawker Hurricane fighter aircraft that had been placed on the Lincoln Odeon cinema's roof to promote the film, which was set in the summer and autumn of 1940. From that point onwards, Paul's interest in WW2 and all things military grew, and grew.

Today, the museum boasts a vast collection of artefacts and clothing from both world wars, from genuine soldier's uniforms, to rations in their original packages - and even Sir Winston Churchill's hole punch.



Another attraction includes a virtual reality Lancaster Bomber flight experience, where guests can sit in the cockpit and take control of a World War Two bomber. The cockpit and virtual reality footage, allows guests to take-off from RAF Coningsby and choose from a variety of flight plans, including a trip all the way up to the Lake District and back.



HOMEFRONT EXHIBITS

In the Homefront Hall there is a typical 'shop' counter of the period displaying numerous products and packaging items, from breakfast cereal to Sunlight Soap to Spam! The cash till, weighing scales and glass jars of sweets all add to the effect.

Members of the public have been very generous, and on occasion have donated WW2 items that have been in their possession for years or been owned by a close family member who has passed away and they wished to share their memories with others. One such item is an Anderson Shelter which is on display at the edge of the Parade Ground along with some wartime bicycles.

THE BLITZ EXPERIENCE

The museum also offers a Blitz Experience which offers a very impressive view of what it was like to be exposed to a WW2 bombing raid. The recorded narrative is delivered by an American WW2 reporter of the time. There are recorded sound effects, spotlights and smoke effects. Seating is provided and all in all, it's a memorable example of what it must have been like for those who experienced it. The museum, staffed entirely by dedicated volunteers, has seen visitors from all over the world, including Japan and New Zealand, and has even been endorsed by the late Forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn herself.

The museum's estimated running costs are more than £40,000 a year, and the couple have poured their blood, sweat and tears, as well as their life savings, into the museum.

Sadly, Paul was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2022, and after working tirelessly to get the museum up and running and investing his life savings, he has kindly donated the business to Lincolnshire as a charity museum. This fantastic legacy will therefore be available to the Lincolnshire community for generations to come

The Witham Group recently got to know the museum after we donated some paint for their restoration of a replica Hawker Hurricane from the Battle of Britain film. Paul has been very pleased with quality of paint and service from Witham. He explains:





"My friend Paul Needham recommended Witham Group's paint for the restoration of a replica Hawker Hurricane, and we have been very impressed with the company and the quality of the paint. I painted all the camouflaged areas free hand to as they would have done in the war, and the paint was easy to apply with good coverage.

We would like to say a huge thank you to Witham Group for their very kind and generous donation. We look forward to working with the Witham team again on any future projects at the museum."



MOTORSPORT RICHARD SCARBROUGH





2023 SEASON VICTORIES

We have had a really busy few months supporting our customers and teams at some exciting motorsport events around the UK and this year, our teams and drivers have had some fantastic results! We even competed ourselves for the first time with Richard S, becoming a navigator in the MG Rally Championship. We are extremely proud to supply our products to many different customers and teams in these various UK motorsport championships and as the season draws to a close for some, thank everyone for their support and help in promoting Witham Group and Witham Motorsport. Here is a round up of our latest Motorsport News...

PROTYRE ASPHALT RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON FINALE

We have been proud to support the Protyre Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally Championship this year and witness some exciting rally rounds!

Well done to Roskell Motorsport, one of the teams we support, who have been leading the championship for much of the season. Unfortunately, a mechanical failure in the final round at Rali Ceredigion in Wales last weekend led to them finishing 2nd in the championship - but still a very worthy result!

Congratulations to the 2023 Champion, Callum Black and thanks to Paul Morris and the rest of his team for a superbly organised championship.



WITHAM MOTORSPORT NAVIGATOR WINS AT MGJ RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

We are delighted to be specialist lubricant partner to the new MGJ Circuit Rally Championship for the 2023/2024 season.

The first round was the Salford Van Hire Neil Howard Stages Rally at Oulton Park on November the 4th. Our very own Richard Scarbrough was asked to navigate for driver Mark Kelly in his Skoda Fabia R5 and the pair had great success again - winning the rally outright!

Our sponsored driver John Griffiths with this navigator Emma Morrison had a great round too and are currently 2nd overall in the Championship.

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING UK FINISH 5TH IN THE BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Well done to the Speedworks Motorsport run Toyota Gazoo Racing UK team for a fantastic BTCC season. Highlights included a win for Rory Butcher at Donington Park and Ricky Collard also ended the season on a career high.

Collard completed his second full campaign in the BTCC with a strong run to cement eighth spot in the title standings. Butcher ended the season tenth in the championship, with George Gamble 21st and the Toyota Gazoo Racing UK team fifth in the Teams' table.

Christian Dick, Team Principal, Toyota Gazoo Racing UK, said: "Overall, it's been a season of learning for the team, but we are in a much better position than where we started out back in April, and with a busy winter development programme in the pipeline, we're fully focussed on carrying our positive momentum into 2024."







MOTORSPORT

CHRIS DITTMANN RACING VICTORY IN BRITISH F4

Congratulations to the Chris Dittmann Racing for a fantastic end to the British F4 season at Brands Hatch. Well done to Gustav Jonsson who won the Rookie Cup Championship and Jack Sherwood who got P2 in the final round at brands hatch.

Gustav and Jack have displayed exceptional dedication and growth as drivers throughout the season and collected their fair share of trophies along the way! Well done team for a brilliant season - we are proud to support you!





GBS ZERO COFFEE MORNING EVENT

It was great to see everyone at the Great British Sports Cars Ltd Cars & Coffee Open Morning. We are proud to supply all the lubricants and greases for the GBS road cars, track cars and race cars.



NORFOLK CARS SUCCESS IN MINI CHALLENGE

Congratulations to our long standing customer and sponsored team Norfolk Cars Ltd - Mini Specialist who are the MINI CHALLENGE CLUBSPORT Cooper Class Champions for 2023!

OVENDEN MOTORSPORT FLYING HIGH!

Tristan Ovenden and the Ovenden Motorsport team were on track to get 3rd place in the 5 Nations British Rallycross Championship finale at Lydden Hill in early November.

Unfortunately, to decide the final seasons placings a position backtrack was applied which in a cruel twist of fate saw him demoted to fourth place in the championship. A disappointing end to the season but non the less still a great achievement considering the championship is enjoying its strongest season for many years.







Congratulations to Will Ovenden who won the 2023 BTRDA Junior Rallycross Championship and got 2nd place in the final round of the 5 Nations British Rallycross Junior Championship.



Congratulations also to Tom Ovenden for a fantastic title win of the MINI CHALLENGE UK championship in early November.

TEAM ENFORCER 922 FINISH 2ND IN WORLD POWERBOAT CHAMPIONSHIP

A massive well done to Nick and Michelle from powerboat team Enforcer 922 on their 2nd place in the Historic OCR Pleasure Navigation Class of the UIM World Championships which were held Blankenberge in Belgium.

The UIM Class 1 World Powerboat Championship is an international motorboat racing competition for powerboats organized by the Union Internationale Motonautique (UIM). It is the premier class of offshore powerboat racing in the world.

Class 1 is considered one of the most spectacular marine motorsports. A Class 1 race-boat has twin inboard 1100hp engines and can reach speeds more than 257 km/h (160 mph).

It was only the second time the Team Enforcer had been out in their new boat and they did amazingly well in very difficult sea conditions.



MOTORSPORT

WITHAM MOTORSPORT TO SUPPORT BRITISH SPEEDWAY RIDER LEWIS KERR IN 2024

We are delighted to be supporting British Speedway rider Lewis Kerr in next season's championship. Lewis is from Snettisham in Norfolk and has been riding in the British Speedway for nearly 15 years. He was a pivotal part of Sheffield's premiership title win last year and he was a Tier 2 pairs winner and Tier 1 league cup winner in 2022 so we're looking forward to seeing how he performs in 2024!

NATIONAL KART RACING CHAMPIONSHIP SUCCESS FOR OR MOTORSPORT

Congratulations to Ollie Rowley from OR Motorsport who won the fought after T plate in August in the National Kart Racing Championship. This promising young talent also won the Junior Championship for 2023, at Tattershall in Lincolnshire, by 1 point in a tense race at Tattershall earlier in November.

HAT-TRICK FOR MATTHEW HIRST IN PIRELLI WELSH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Matthew Hirst and Declan Dear finally clinched the Motorsport UK Pirelli Welsh Rally Championship title for





BTRDA CLUBMANS RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP SUCCESS FOR TODD CROOKS

Well done to rallycross driver Todd Crooks who won the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship (Supermodified class). He had a tough final at Knockhill where he came 4th, but it was enough to secure the overall championship! Well done, Todd!





BROMLEY MOTORSPORT WIN THE MG TROPHY **CHAMPIONSHIP**

Congratulations to Bromley Motorsport driver Tylor Ballard on winning the MG Trophy championship, Class B, along with also collecting the Drivers Driver and Ron Gibson Trophy. Also well done to driver Jack Woodcock on a strong debut season, taking P4 in the Class B championship.







WITHAM GROUP WISHES YOU ALL A VERY

Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

SLEIGH OIL

withamgroup.co.uk