



CARDIFF  
LLANELLI  
SWANSEA  
TENBY

**WG Davies**  
*Servicing South Wales*

# Staff Newsletter

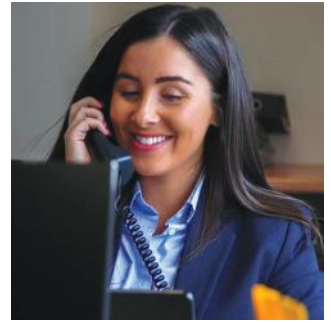
**Q2 2022**

## Editor's message

We're half way through the year already, so here is our first staff newsletter for 2022. It is the perfect opportunity to get to know Liam Jay, our parts supervisor in Cardiff, a little better. Liam has been working alongside Alun to deliver some stunning parts sales numbers but did you know he broke his back in a parachuting accident while serving with the military?

Roger uses his column to acknowledge just how important every member of staff is to the business and he makes three promises to all of us in the WG Davies family. You will also find the usual round up of depot news, an update from parts who are smashing their targets even in these difficult times, and there is top line feedback from our customers and our social media feeds.

Rachel



## Roger Davies - The Inside Track: **WG Davies is the sum of its people - staff and customers**

**I have never believed that WG Davies is the sum of our buildings, the equipment we own, or the offices we work from. Now, more than ever, I know that WG Davies is the sum of our staff, the skills and energy you bring to work every day, combined with our customer base.**

Transport is suffering an unprecedented shortage of skills right now and we are not immune here at WG Davies. The pandemic took its toll on logistics, it also demonstrated just how vital our sector is to the economy and I am proud of the part we played in keeping the wheels turning.

However, while the virus might be under control, the shortage of staff in our industry is at an all-time high. I know we need to work harder than ever to make WG Davies a great place to work and so I am very grateful to you for sharing your thoughts via the staff survey this quarter. In fact we had the best ever response to the survey this time around, the eighth time we have asked you to tell us what you think about working for WG Davies.

Thank you for your feedback. While I wait for a full review of the results and the action plan that will follow, I want to make you three promises:

**PROMISE #1:** We will always offer internal moves and promotions to existing staff member before we look outside of WG Davies. We want to keep the WG Davies family happy and you deserve the opportunity to progress

**PROMISE #2:** We will continue to invest in tooling and IT that allows you to do your best work - we know that working with outdated equipment is demoralising, so if there is something you need please talk to your manager

**PROMISE #3:** I will always listen. If there is something you want to share with me



personally, please do not hesitate to speak up and where I can, I will act.

I want to keep the WG Davies family strong and I want you to feel you are treated as individuals and that you are recognised and valued for your contribution to everything that we achieve.



# Staff Spotlight: Liam Jay, Parts Supervisor, Cardiff

For our first staff interview of 2022, Liam Jay, Parts Supervisor at Cardiff volunteered to step into the spotlight and be interviewed by Janet Birkmyre.

Liam Jay is the Parts Supervisor working out of our Cardiff depot and although he has only been with the company nine months, he has hit the ground running with the parts team achieving record parts sales in two months already. We are grateful to Liam for making time to step into the spotlight, I hope you will agree that it proved to be a fascinating interview.

Let's not beat about the bush, working in the motor industry is not Liam's first career choice but his military ambitions were cruelly ended when his parachute failed to open properly during a routine parachute jump, "The plan was to do the full 20 years as a soldier and retire with a pension. I wanted to progress from the Paras to the SAS and then Military Intelligence but I fractured a vertebrae in my spine and that put an end to that. I spent weeks in hospital and then several months in a wheel chair, during which time I weighed up my options. I guess I was a bit arrogant, I had passed P company (the selection course for the Parachute Regiment) five years before that, I had done the marksman course and had an attachment to special forces, joining the Royal Logistics was not what I wanted to do, so I decided to take a medical discharge."



to work "I got on with Roger instantly. And it is quite rare to find but I liked the fact that when we were walking around people were nice and polite, and there was a great team spirit across parts and service."

The ambition and drive that saw him pass P company to join the Parachute Regiment before his 18th birthday (in his class of 30 he was one of just four who passed) is now being poured into developing the parts business at Cardiff. He clearly works well with Alun, "He took over as manager at about the same time as I joined WG Davies and we just clicked. We both want to motivate the parts team to exceed targets but we also want them to enjoy being here - a culture of work hard, play hard."

So what is driving the parts sales success? "The biggest thing, and it is what I have always done, is to get parts out as quickly possible. I know that if we cannot do that there is a danger customers will go somewhere else. So if the parts van is already on the road, I will find a way and that might mean jumping in a van myself."

The relentless focus on availability is backed up with honest open communication, "We need to keep customers informed, they know things are difficult just now and they will forgive us a bit of a delay if we keep them up to date - communication is a big part of the process".

When he's not working he joins members of his local motorbike club who travel all over the country, enjoying music and more than a few beers. Clearly the work hard play hard ethos spills over into his personal time and no one would begrudge him that.

His life today is a far cry from his original ambitions but Liam is more than stoic, he is optimistic, ambitious and inspiring; "I've got no complaints, I would not be me now if none of that happened. I am happy with where I am now, so I cannot regret anything which has gone before."



*Liam with Monroe Jay and Llewellyn Jay*

Such a dramatic change of fortunes would challenge even the most resilient of us and Liam does not sugar coat it, "Coming out of the Army was the hardest things I had ever done. I was homeless for about six months but I had a trade as a technician, which I gained during downtime in the barracks, so I stayed with a friend and I got a job at KGM, servicing motor cycles." Alongside his work as a technician, Liam also worked in parts and soon he found himself back in his home town of Merthyr Tydfil working for VW as a Parts Advisor and then Parts Supervisor.

Liam joined WG Davies in October 2021, following roles with Mercedes and Mazda and he is relishing the culture and the opportunity. He instantly saw what makes WG Davies a great place

# Depot Round Up - Q2 2022

The theme seems to be all about being busy across all the depots.

## Cardiff, Tom Carrol

Everyone is glad that Covid restrictions are now fully lifted and we can start getting back to some form of normality. One of the things we have really missed is being able to get face to face for training - on line learning has its limitations - so the technicians are particularly enjoying getting on to some training courses again.

We are happy to welcome Piotr Cichon, who has joined us as an apprentice Technician, to the team. He seems to be enjoying his time here, is keen to learn and is already fitting in really well with the team.



We are always very busy at Cardiff and so everyone is pulling together and working hard to overcome the daily challenges for our customers.

## Llanelli, Daniel Jones

As you are no doubt aware, the team based in Llanelli will continue working from Owens' yard until October 1st, then we will all move to Swansea. Most of us are looking forward to the change and we are enthusiastic about merging with our Swansea depot in Q4.

For now, we are focussed on keeping the Owens' fleet on the road. MOT's in particular have been coming through thick and fast, with the team working hard to prepare the vehicles to a high standard. We will continue to work closely with Owens right up until we move, and I believe our relationship with them will remain as strong as ever, as we do our utmost to give them the best service we possibly can. We will still maintain their vehicles at Swansea for R&M and warranty work, plus any overflow from their own workshop.



MAN is the dominant brand within the Owens fleet

Our apprentice Liam Harris is currently sitting his final exams and he is looking forward to becoming a fully qualified technician. I am confident he will succeed. He is already a valued asset to the company, as his attitude and the standard of his work is excellent.

## Swansea, Ryan Twomey

The Swansea depot has benefitted from so much investment over the past few years that there is literally nothing left to improve and it feels good to settle down now and make the most of the facilities. Q1 was particularly busy for us with all eight HGV bays in constant use and it is actually a relief to report that things have settled down a bit more recently.

What we are seeing is more work coming in for the steam cleaning ramp, as more people get to hear that we offer that service. Alongside that our ability to offer tacho testing in house streamlines things for our customers and allow us to turn their vehicles around more quickly.

Even the technician team seems to have settled down now - we know we are lucky to have a full team in the current employment market.



Steam cleaning ramp at Swansea

## Tenby

For Tenby the huge news is that Sarah goes on maternity leave at the end of July. She told us: "I'm due on August 11th and have no idea if it's a girl or boy, we decided to keep it as a surprise."

Sarah is doing well but looking forward to the time off. In fact she is off until the New Year and while she is away her new "apprentice" Rachel will be at the helm. Rachel has been working alongside Sarah to learn the ropes and she is relishing the new challenge.

The offices have benefitted from the fitting of an air conditioning system - no one appreciated that more than Sarah during the recent heat wave! Further refurbishment of the offices and tea room are planned.

Meanwhile, all the technicians and the apprentice have completed BPW training and Adam Frearson has completed his ADR, allowing him to drive hazardous goods vehicles.



Rachel and Sarah in Tenby

# CSI Customer Service Interviews - Feedback is a Gift

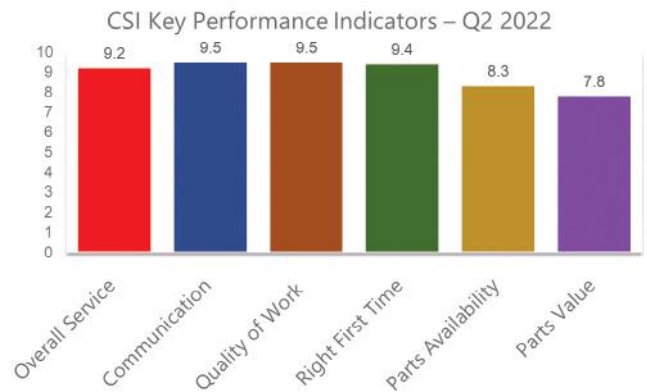
We believe feedback is a gift, that is why we make over 120 calls to customers every year, inviting them to tell us what we can do to serve them better.

As Bill Gates said, “We need people who will give us feedback, that is how we will improve”. We truly hope that if a customer has a problem they will tell us straight away and give us the opportunity to make it right but we know that not receiving complaints does not mean we cannot do better.

The purpose of the interviews is therefore to tease out the detail of where we could work to improve the support we offer our customers.

Alongside an unscripted conversation about what we could do better, there are six key performance indicators. Originally we set out to achieve a minimum of eight out of 10 for each of these but we quickly realised that we should set the bar higher and so today we are aiming for 9.5.

Perhaps this time next year we will be aiming for 9.6 because five of the KPIs are already rated in excess of 9.0 and two are already at 9.5. On the other hand parts availability and perceived value for money is not on the target we have set for ourselves at the moment. Supply and pricing are not elements that we can directly



control and our customers are quick to acknowledge that, what we can own is the honest communication of exactly what we can do for them.

For both parts and service customers, the quality of the communication is the single most important thing we can control; we need to be calling them with updates before they call us, we need to be honest at all times and of course, when we hit challenges we need to think about what we can do for them, not what we cannot do.

## Parts Update, Alun Taylor

There has been a lot going on in parts and that is certainly keeping the team out of mischief. As we approach the end of the first half of the year, I am happy to report that we have smashed the retail parts target. That reflects a lot of hard work from the team, which has delivered consistently strong sales and a couple of record breaking months.

As you will be aware, supply has been challenging. It is still a bit hit and miss for some parts because of COVID in Shanghai and the war in Ukraine, but happily the issues with supply from MAN in Germany appear to be a thing of the past. We can only hope that we will be able to say the same of COVID and the war in Ukraine soon.

The parts team in Cardiff welcomed Shyloh Bluto as a parts apprentice at the beginning of May and she is coming on in leaps and bounds - her approach to the job and positive attitude are truly a credit to her. She will start the MAN Apprentice Scheme in September and we are looking forward to seeing her progress through that.

In Swansea, we are sadly losing Luke as he moves on to pastures new, so we will be looking for a new parts apprentice there, as well as a parts advisor to work with the established team of Mike and Colyn. If you know of anyone who is looking for a fresh challenge, please let me know.



Liam Jay with Cardiff's Parts Apprentice, Shyloh Bluto

## Q2 Social Media Matters

**Social Media has been celebration a succession of shiny new vehicles**

We've had lots of likes, shares and reposts of the images we have posted of the shiny new trucks, lovingly prepared for our customers by our techs at Swansea and Cardiff. The most popular by far was the stunning image of eight new GX cabled TGX tractor units for Runtech's fleet and there are two more on the way.

Runtech is a family business that has been around for 25 years specialising in manned and unmanned vehicle hire / plant and transport solutions, delivering safety, service and savings nationwide.



Thank you Runtech for choosing MAN once again, we will look forward to looking after these for you.

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