



CARDIFF
SWANSEA
TENBY

WG Davies
Servicing South Wales

Staff Newsletter

Q2 2023

Editor's message

Welcome to the Q2 newsletter, which is a bumper edition full of all the usual news and updates.

We always take the opportunity to get to know someone a little better through the newsletter and this quarter it is Kelvin Miles who steps into the spotlight. He talks about how he came to work at WG Davies - a family connection that goes back to Roger's father.

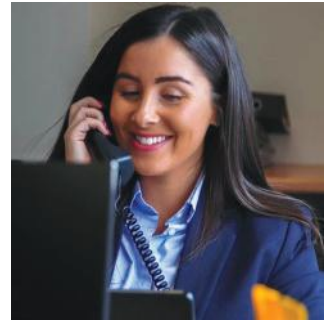
Kelvin's energy and his work ethic are quite humbling and so I hope you enjoy this.

Roger uses his column to share and celebrate a

huge milestone for the business and to say thank you to everyone for keeping the focus on looking after our customers despite the workload.

The sales update from Dave Hopkins suggests the supply of new MANs into South Wales is picking up, while parts and the depots all report being ahead of target. Finally, we feature some quotations from customers, some of whom believe the service we offer could not be better and a few highlighting the need to keep the communication flowing and we sign off with a sneak peek at our social media feed. I don't know how we got all of that on just four pages!

Thank you for reading, Rachel.



Roger Davies - The Inside Track: **Success**

You may not be aware that we hit a significant mile stone recently. At the time I was proud but in truth I'm proud of what the WG Davies team does every single day, so it was not until we hit that milestone for a second time that I reflected and realised this was an indication that everything was coming together, not just once but in an ongoing and sustainable way for the business.

The milestone was us achieving a turnover of £1m in a single month. We first reached that in March 2023 and then we did it again in May 2023. Of course, turnover alone can be misleading, the saying goes "turnover is vanity, profit is sanity and cash is reality" because chasing turnover, in the absence of profit and without cash flow, makes us little better than busy fools.

Let's face it, every one of us knows we've been busy but the numbers tell us no one could suggest we are fools. The £1m turnover has been delivered with a healthy profit margin and, significantly, it has happened at a timme when we have not been chasing the money. The turnover is a consequence of keeping a focus on looking after our customers as if they were part of the WG Davies family (which of course they

are) and on nurturing our colleagues, while also keeping aligned to MAN.

What does this mean for the business? First of all it gives us confidence that the new structure announced at the end of last year, with new systems and greater input from Alun, Andrew, Daniel and Gareth is clearly great for the business. It also allows us to continue to invest in our most valuable asset, the people who work at WG Davies. To that end we are actively working to identify and fill any gaps in training and we know we can never stop investing in the tools we need to do the work we do on customers' vehicles too.

For now, I want to say thank you to each of you for working towards the single goal of keeping our customers' wheels turning every day. The feedback from the CSI



interviews is full of anecdotes from customers who tell us you go above and beyond for them, which is the most obvious demonstration of your desire to do your very best for them every day.

Thank you.

Staff Spotlight: Kelvin Miles, Swansea Yardman

We had the pleasure of catching up with Kelvin, the Yardman at Swansea, who might be approaching retirement age but he has a work ethic that defies description and clearly no plans to slow down any time soon. Kelvin's zest for life in and out of work, his positivity and his family values shine through in this conversation.

We started by asking him how he ended up at WG Davies and it turns out there is a family connection that dates all the way back to Roger's father, "My older brother worked for WG Davies as a fitter when John Davies was MD, that was back in the late 1970's and he loved working for WG Davies. One day I was driving an HGV into Swansea and the Workshop Manager offered me a job as the Yardman and it was easy to say yes."



"Working here is everything he said it would be, it is a real family atmosphere, a feel good factor. There is not a day goes by when Roger, Debbie or Rachel will go past without stopping to ask how you are. They are such a lovely family and all the staff are looked after here. Now and again, on a hot day they will go up to Farm Foods and buy an ice cream for all the boys. Little things like that mean a lot."

Prior to taking up the position at WG Davies, Kelvin has worked in a hugely diverse range of jobs, sometimes more than one at a time. "After school I worked for the summer building the M4 from junction 46 through to 49" he told us, "Then I joined the Royal Navy on HMS Cambridge for

three years. It was during peace time and ship being refitted, so while the friends that I had done training with were travelling all over the world, I was shore based and just leaving home for manoeuvres, so I decided to come out."

Following that Kelvin put in 31 years at British Steel as the Health and Safety manager and while there he dramatically changed the safety record. "The Works Manager wanted me to lead a team we called "Target Zero" and we had a five year plan to reduce lost time due to accidents. In 2000 we had 23 loss time injuries and by 2005 we got that down to zero. I was awarded the Chief Executive's award for changing culture within the industry, they went on to adopt the model we had and rolled it out to rest of industry. That's my claim to fame."

At the same time as he worked at British Steel, Kelvin also worked as a retained fire fighter in Glamorgan, putting in 40 hours a week plus additional time on call, always wearing a pager when he was at home. "I just enjoy work" he explained simply.

If that sounds impressive - and it surely must - you should know also that Kelvin was voted "Teacher of the Year" for each of the six years that he worked as a Cover Supervisor at the Bryn Tawe comprehensive school, a position he was head hunted for after leaving British Steel.

With all of that going on he still found time to build his own home from scratch and that is where he lives now, in Amman just a few miles from Swansea. "My father was a brick layer and together we built it up to slab level, then I managed the build with help from a lot of friends who I have in the trade."

Today Kelvin has responsibility for "Anything relating to the yard, workshop maintenance and keeping the biomass boilers fired up to provide heat and water for the staff. I also look after new vehicles, I wash and valet them and then I deliver them to the customer."

It is a job which comes with its own company "vehicle", which featured in the Q4 newsletter. "I wanted a wheel barrow," Kelvin explained "so I plagued Daniel. He got one of the apprentices to paint the registration number KELV1 on it. Then they called me into the workshop urgently, all



the techs and apprentices were there and they presented me with it."

It is an enviable team spirit, "The banter is amazing," Kelvin told us, "I come in in the morning smiling and I go home at night with my jaw hurting because I laugh so much in work. The morale is just remarkable. It is just 18 months to my retirement in January 2025 but the way I feel now I will just keep going."

Away from work, family and travelling are Kelvin's focus. He has a son, Kristian, to whom he is very close. As a boy they would enjoy motor cycles together and his voice fills with pride when he talks about his work in Fiji as a marine / environmental biologist for Conservation International. "He lives in Fiji now and I go out there for a month every Christmas as well as getting together for a family holiday. We have been to all the Canary Islands, quite often to the States and to Australia, a month ago we were out in Vegas.

Kristian will fly out from Fiji with his partner, Cece, while I travel out from here with my ex-wife and her new husband, who I get on great with, and we have a holiday together."

Kelvin is an inspiration. A hard working, humble man with enough energy to put most of us to shame and an attitude to life that is truly uplifting. Thank you Kelvin for taking the time to share all of that with us.

Sales Scoop, Dave Hopkins - Q2 saw us prepare and hand over 14 new and used vehicles

WG Davies and MAN attended the British Truck Racing Championship at the Pembrey Circuit in May, for which we secured the MAN hospitality trailer and a variety of vehicles.

It was a very successful weekend, with lots of WG Davies staff on the stand to greet customers both old and new, and with an opportunity to

enjoy a coffee in the sun. Away from our stand there was a packed race schedule and it all added up to a great day out.

Notably Gavin Griffiths, a conquest customer, bought an 8x4 MAN tipper from the stand and he has taken delivery of that (pictured right) already.



We also took the opportunity to hand over two vehicles to TJB Haulage Ltd (pictured right) with the following all going out to customers during Q2:

- ✓ Creigiau Tyres Used tractor unit
- ✓ CTE International Used tractor unit
- ✓ Right Freight New tractor unit
- ✓ Gavin Griffiths New 8x4 tipper
- ✓ TJB Haulage 3x new tractor units
- ✓ Interhaul New tractor unit
- ✓ Gower Plant Hire New tractor unit
- ✓ Rees Hiab & Haulage Used tractor unit



Depot Round Up - Q2 2023



Swansea, Dan Jones

The team in Swansea have shown outstanding commitment and resilience, throughout the first half of the year and the results speak for themselves; every target set for us has been smashed and I can only heap praise on everyone for pulling together. Just one example of the consistent hard work is the productivity which has been over 90% from workshop staff, who

could not do that without the support of service reception and parts too.

There was no doubt that the team deserved to celebrate their success and so on 3rd of June 24 of us enjoyed a day and a night out in town. It really is testament to the outstanding morale in the team that even with a few shandies down there was nothing but good humour and laughs, plus plenty of sore heads in the morning.



Craig Vyner managed to find time to attend an advanced electrics course in Swindon and he is now transferring those new skills to customer vehicles in the workshop.

The newest member of the Swansea team is none other than Rachel Davies. Fresh from looking after Tenby while Sarah was away on maternity leave, she has now stepped into the role of Assistant Service Manager for Swansea. While it was never in doubt, it is great to see that she has taken the job by the horns and is excelling in her new position.



Cardiff, Tom Carrol

We continue to be ahead on contribution for the year, despite being just behind the budget, thanks to keeping tight control of our expenses.

Looking forward to Q3 we are optimistic that picture will improve further as the workshop team has been

boosted with the addition of Ivor Magee (qualified technician) and Daniel Meek (apprentice technician). The administration team also has an extra pair of hands as Patricia Mackenzie joined us at the beginning of June.

Training will be a real focus for us in the second half of the year with all of the tech's booked on courses. Alongside this, we have had training from Peter Harris to pressure test the external components of fuel tankers, this will result in less downtime for customers for a number of jobs like renewing foot valves.

Finally, we always enjoy seeing new MANs and so it has been a real pleasure preparing 10 vehicles for Gerry Jones Transport in April. We know Dave Hopkins has been busy, so there will undoubtedly be more to come.

Tenby, Sarah Spolton

The team at Tenby has been nothing short of amazing, dealing with a workload that has continued to increase and that has enabled us to hit target every single month. This is something we've never been able to sustain in the past and it is a credit to everyone here.

We've had some new vehicles to work on, including four tractor units for Suttons and an Asda tractor with trailer on a full R&M with Scania.

Despite the workload the boys have just done their SLP training and their working at heights training.



Swansea MOT and Light Servicing, Michelle Kidwell



We've been embracing summer from the very start of Q2, with lots of motorhomes coming in for their MOTs and annual service, often with our free safety check for added piece of mind. We are one of the few garages in the area which can accommodate motor homes and seeing them always reminds us that we can look forward to better weather. Of course, now that the glorious weather has finally arrived, air con regassing is much in demand.

Alongside that we have had full days of MOT's, which generate work for us when there are any failures. This is keeping our apprentice, William, busy. He is a real bonus for us and it is great to see him with so much opportunity for hands on learning. William works with the qualified MOT testers,

Chris, Josh and Paul who are being continually assessed and examined to ensure they are up to date with all the latest legislation surrounding MOT's. They continue to pass every assessment with flying colours which, while it is no less than we expect, is re-assuring.

CSI Customer Service Interviews - What Could We Do Better

If there is anything at all that could be better in respect of the service we offer, we want to know

We are half way through the year and more than 60 interviews have been conducted. Interviews are unscripted and driven by the customer because while we hope that we demonstrate our understanding of our customers' business needs every day, we would not assume we know everything.

The interview starts with an open question about how well they feel we are looking after them, if that is all good, Janet probes with questions around communication, service slot availability and quality of work done, plus parts availability and even parts value for money. If that does not indicate any issues, she asks the straight question: **"What could WG Davies do better for you?"**

It is great to report that the majority of customers tell us nothing could be better:

I can't fault it

I can't think of anything to be honest. Everyone is really on the ball

Nothing could be better, everything is perfect

Occasionally, however customers do ask for us to sharpen up a little bit. That might be around parts availability or pricing, which might be out of our hands, but requests for better communication are definitely something we can take on board. Here is what they have said:

I think there's room for a little bit more communication

Our trucks are serviced at the weekend... occasionally a driver turns up on Monday morning to find his truck is not ready

If a vehicle is going to be VOR, we need to know about it as soon as they know

Getting through on the phone... it just rings and rings and rings!

Parts Update, Alun Taylor

There are lots of changes to the team at WG Davies and MTBUK

It's all change in parts, both with staff at WG Davies and our interface with MAN Truck & Bus. Looking at WG Davies first, Thomas Green who joined us in February has proved to be a great addition to the team in Swansea, so much so that he has been promoted to Assistant Parts Manager, while sadly Daniel Gillard is leaving us for pastures new at the end of June. For now we are happy that Tiago Pinto (pictured below) has joined us as Parts Advisor on a temporary basis from mid-June, but we are still looking for a parts advisor for the Cardiff depot and sales rep for the South Wales area.



In terms of our interface with MAN, you may be aware that Kevan Williams has been our Regional Sales Manager for a number of years now but he is being transferred away from our region, so we will look forward to building a similarly positive relationship with our new RSM Adam West going forwards.

We hold over 4,500 parts with a value of £460,000 but, of course, we rely on MAN to supply us and parts availability from them has been up and down over the last quarter. It is good to be able to report that we are still managing sales that will allow us to hit the target set by MAN, although that is mainly thanks to the workshops. We are also aware that the cost of living increases are hitting everyone hard and our customers are looking for us to work to do them the very best deal we can.

Q2 Social Media Matters

New vehicles and new jobs - they are all on our social media feeds!

For Q2 we've used Facebook and Insta to start the conversation and to share information about our business hours over the long bank holidays. Of course, we always find time to post some images of vehicles too, including this gorgeous example of a TGE panel van which we had for sale:

We also posted about three jobs we have available, so if you know someone who is looking for a fresh challenge with a family business, please share or tag them in our feed.

wgdavies Swansea, United Kingdom

WG Davies 31 May · 🌐 Jobs available !!

We are currently looking for the following:

- Parts Advisor (Cardiff)
- Parts Rep (Cardiff - Swansea - Tenby)
- Service Administrator (Swansea)

If you're looking for a new challenge and think any of these vacancies could be an interest to you or somebody you know, please get in touch today.

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