

TPN future-proofs the network for its next stage of growth

THE Pallet Network MD Mark Kendall told Partners at its National Partner Meeting at Aston Villa in February 2022 that TPN has recently undergone a series of rigorous reviews in order to ensure that its Hub operations, its IT, and its operational protocols are all fit for purpose for the next stage of the network's growth.



Panasonic Toughbooks, which display real-time information about where and when pallets should be moved.

TPN has also continued its tradition of bringing the best of B2C technology into the B2B space. It will be rolling out the Locus ePOD solution used by parcel company DPD, which gives instantaneous proof of delivery, as well as route optimisation and a host of other efficiency gains.

"We have always had the highest standards of service at TPN, and sector-leading protocols, Partner standards and technology," says Mark. "However, you only maintain that excellent service by constantly re-assessing and reinvesting. The investments we make in our network will deliver a whole new level of intelligent, data-led and collaborative logistics."

The reviews have furthered and defined plans for a new central Hub in 2023, and seen several improvements in technology. All Hub forklifts have been fitted with new extremely rugged

News in brief

TWE Haulage donated £2,000 to Katharine House Hospice before Christmas, a long-standing charity which supports end-of-life cancer patients.

Bristol-based **Safe Transport** has designed custom-made trailer curtains for roofing solutions specialist The Garland Company UK. Garland says Safe's service is 'fantastic'.



Newland Express Transport is our most recent TPN Charity Draw winner, splitting its £1,000 between four charities including **Pulmonary Hypertension Association, Ouch UK, Macmillan Cancer Support** and the **Alzheimer's Society**.

Lombard Express celebrates its 30th year of trading in 2022.

Derby Express Couriers has recently moved into a new facility which is three times larger than its previous premises.

Welcome

At TPN, we have extremely long-standing Partners, and they invariably have very long-standing customers. This is for the simple reason that we offer a great service at sustainable, best value rates.

Customers in the pallet network sector often review their choice delivery Partner. One reason for this is price-sensitivity. Poor service is another. Often the two go hand in hand.

When you are choosing your pallet network Partner, think quality, not price. If you choose a distribution service based on price, you

will likely pay for short-term savings again and again in poor customer retention, reputational damage, pallet damage, loss, and time spent on customer enquiries.

Or you can choose a sustainably priced, well-executed service and reap many times its value in repeat customers, first-time delivery success and excellent delivery reviews. Choice is always good, but only some choices are the right ones.

Mark Kendall
MD, THE Pallet Network

Claude Hellowell celebrates 20-year loyalty of FLT driver

Halifax-based **Claude Hellowell** has highlighted the 20th year of FLT driver Colin Whippey's career with the company, praising him as a valued and exemplary employee.

Colin started work in the tanker shed at Claude Hellowell, and then moved into the yard, where he drives an FLT and keeps the yard operationally sound, including clearing or gritting as needed.

"Colin is reliable and efficient, and he's hugely valued by the whole team," says general manager Chris Lord.

Colin covers the (very) early mornings and is known for occasionally warming his breakfast crumpets on his forklift during the colder months. He has also adopted some key duties for himself, including walking the MD's dog Louis.

"Colin walks Louis daily after work. They are as thick as thieves," says Chris. "We just wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the many years we've been lucky enough to have Colin and say thank you."



NFS 360 Connects with drivers

Peterlee-based **NFS 360 Connect** has boosted its driver workforce significantly by paying for licence acquisition training and covering new recruits' Driver CPC costs, and so has increased its fleet to 34 vehicles.

Four new 44-tonne Renaults and an additional 80,000 sq ft of adjoining warehouse space are just two of the major investments the company has made this year to keep its resources matched with customer demand.

"We've seen considerable and consistent demand for storage from existing and new customers," says director Bill Giles. "We'll continue to train and to invest to ensure that our high customer service levels are retained regardless of volume."

Station Couriers more than pulls its weight for charity



Station Couriers is continuing its fundraising efforts for Wales Air Ambulance in April with an attempt to enter the Guinness Book of Records by hand pulling an HGV down the length of the Welshpool runway.

Members of Newtown Rugby Club will pitch their strength alongside the Station Couriers team in this record-breaking feat. It will take place at a family fun day. Wales Air Ambulance told the team: "You are all helping save lives across Wales."

The company has also liveried three trailers with fundraising details and donated £500 from the TPN Charity Draw fund to the charity. Its fundraising has been supported by its curtain maker WJ Leech and insurance broker Towergate.

SC director Sian Jenkins says: "Wales Air Ambulance does an amazing job. We have family and friends that have needed their service. Living in such a rural area we would definitely be lost without the services of the Wales Air Ambulance."

Mitchells invests in higher safety and lower carbon

Mitchells (of Mansfield) has taken delivery of four new Renault T Range 26-tonne delivery vehicles, all fitted with the latest **HALO pedestrian safety systems**.

MD Richard Montgomery says the company is also investigating its decarbonisation strategy. "By the end of the year we hope to have invested in our first electric HGV."

He says the company is in talks with its local Renault dealer. "An electric HGV is a perfect solution for us as our 40 delivery

vehicles travel an average of 75 miles a day and all return to base in an evening. The biggest battle for all hauliers will be cost, with an average electric truck costing three to four times that of a diesel."

Mitchells is also pushing efficiencies through technology. "We are further developing our IT and our ways of communicating with customers," he says. "We want to increase growth steadily this year so that we can ensure that the use of vehicles is commercially and operationally sustainable."



DVS-compliant



Starlings Transport has invested in two new 18 tonne Renaults for its Great Yarmouth site. The vehicles will primarily perform collections and deliveries for TPN. Commercial manager Daniel Starling says both vehicles are compliant with the Direct Vision Standard. "This means they can travel in London when necessary, but it also offers greater safety in every location."

Bacton upskills its drivers to protect its 'most important and best assets'

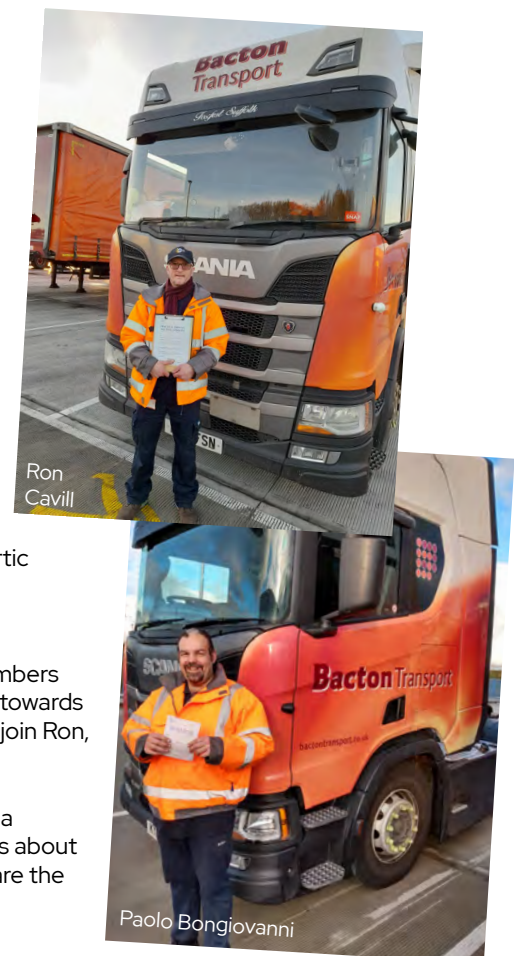
Stowmarket-based **Bacton Transport Services** has been tackling the driver shortage by doubling its numbers of drivers for 7.5 tonne vehicles and training them up to drive artics with its own driver training program.

In quick succession, Ron Cavill, Paolo Bongiovanni and Alastair Titchmarsh have progressed through the ranks and having successfully completed their C+E tests now drive artic vehicles as utility drivers covering all aspects of the Woolpit operation.

The initiative has been so successful that other members of the 7.5-tonne driving team are currently working towards obtaining their category C licences with the goal to join Ron, Paolo and Alastair on the artic fleet.

MD Charles Downie says: "Our strategy is based on a people-first approach to life. We all think transport is about big, expensive trucks but the reality is your people are the most important resource and your best assets."

In addition to their own in-house schemes, the company is working in partnership with a local training company and further education college to provide courses and career advice to young people interested in careers in the transport industry.



Big G supports top pet food producer

Manufacturer of complete dry pet food, Welwyn Garden City-based **Gilbertson & Page** is impressed with its first year of service from TPN Partner **Big G Logistics**.

Gilbertson & Page produces a vast range of health-conscious, quality dog food, including Arkwrights, Dr John's and Gilpa. They are delivered to wholesalers, retailers and end users across the UK.

The company, which has a Royal Warrant, has been trading for 140 years.

Sales office manager Heather Thayne says that delivery reliability is essential in the competitive pet food marketplace. Big G provides an extended service to the company, including a dedicated account manager.

The company sends out approximately 90 pallets a week, and Heather says they are very satisfied with Big G's performance. "They do a great job for us," she says.



Oxford Carriers expands infrastructure and investigates new avenues for added value

Witney-based **Oxford Carriers** has boosted its successful fulfilment centre with two additional warehousing units, along with the recent acquisition of four new vehicles.

Two more artics have already joined the fleet, while another artic and a rigid vehicle will join the operation in March.



"We are investing across the business to meet customer demand and ensure that our high service standards keep pace with the growing volume of fulfilment and distribution work," says MD Grant Morris.

The 2022 focus for Oxford Carriers will be finding new ways of adding more value for their customers. "Everything we do is a service, and we are exploring ways of making business ever easier and more profitable for our customers," says Grant.

The company has also continued staff training, upskilling team members with more counterbalance and narrow-aisle forklift truck training.

"Safety is clearly a priority but we also want equipment to be sustainable and pleasant for staff to use. Our three new FLTs are electric, which is greener and zero emission for the operator, plus the driver can alter the width of the forks with a joystick rather than having to do it manually," says Grant.

Ferryman invests in training centre

Gwent-based **Ferryman** has built a new training centre on its Pontllanfraith site, with a conference style suite, training resources and screens.

The purpose-built facility aligns with the recent qualification of office staff member and ex Class 1 driver Paul Chivers as a driver-assessor, giving Paul a space to conduct all classroom-based driver coaching. The driver training programme will be split between practical in-cab and discussion sessions,

with an ongoing programme of coaching on safety, hazard awareness and fuel efficiency.

The company will also conduct all its Driver CPC sessions on its own premises and hopes in time to extend the training offerings to all of the staff and external candidates.

The centre has been decorated with a mural of Ferryman flagship vehicles by local graffiti artist Walls by Paul.

