

ignite

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CHANGE IS IN THE AIR...

January seems to have been a month dominated by macro level news: BREXIT and Ecodesign for woodburning stoves, both of which potentially have a significant impact upon us. Regarding BREXIT, we have initiated plans to bring forward our stock deliveries for April and May to avoid any potential impact caused by 'border' disruption. I would also like to reiterate our offer to EU Nationals and their families who work for us to assist with any paperwork they may require in due course when more information is available.



When it comes to Ecodesign, the recent 'clean air' press is almost more of a concern to us than BREXIT. It is key for our customers to receive accurate information – published articles in national press have mixed new

Ecodesign appliances in the same message with older technology wood burners, and indeed with really inefficient and polluting open fires.

To counter, we have acted quickly publishing hard copy, social media and web messaging repeating the fact that Stovax currently have the largest number of Ecodesign appliances in the UK and Ireland, thus driving air quality improvement.

Whilst this negative press may slow sales, I firmly believe that we are well placed to secure our share of the solid fuel market.



In both cases, we have little or no control of the overall direction and timings of any impacts. We do have a clear set of priorities and plans in place, and as long as we continue to focus on these and to drive continuous improvement, we will be well positioned to achieve our 2019 budgets.

This year we will:

- Continue our reaction to feedback received at the round tables, with a focus on ensuring we are seen as an employer of choice, investing in our people with a competitive benefits and training package.
- Lead market innovation in our key three areas of Gas, Electric and Solid Fuel.
- Eliminate waste in all of our processes.

An early view on January shows the trend from last year continuing: Gazco is growing ahead of the market, with Stovax facing some difficult trading conditions.

Finally, as usual, I would like to thank you all for your hard work through the beginning of 2019, your efforts are all very much appreciated.

Alistair



HEALTH & SAFETY SCREENING - POSITIVE RESULTS

Looking after the welfare of our employees is paramount. We carry out health screening on a regular basis in various required areas, so that we can look after the health and safety of our staff.

This month the company has carried out a series of Health Surveillance tests, by trained Occupational Health Advisors, for those of our employees that are required to weld, grind or paint. The testing covers areas including lung function, audiometry, hand arm vibration and Isocyanates testing for those working on the paint line. No work-related health problems were identified and we continue to work to ensure the Health and Safety of all our employees.



FOCUS ON QUALITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

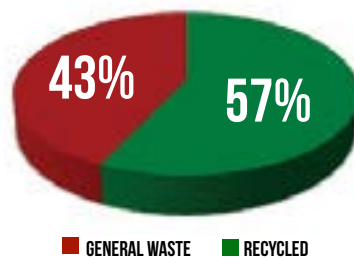
Lloyd's Register have just completed a successful audit of our Quality and Environmental Management Systems. One of the focuses of the external audits is that we follow a process driven approach and can demonstrate continual improvement across the company. We are pleased to say that we were able to demonstrate these to the auditor throughout the company. In particular:

- Staff are aware of the defined processes for their work area and utilise the relevant documents and systems that we have in place
- We are improving our communication of Key Performance Indicators and they are regularly reviewed to help everyone remain focused
- Since the auditor's last visit, there have been some significant changes in the business which are having a positive impact on our ability to satisfy the requirements of the quality and environmental standards

One of our targets for 2018 was to recycle 45% of our waste (excluding wood and metal). We managed to exceed that, so our target for 2019 is to maintain this level. In order to do this, we must continue to segregate our waste. It was suggested that our skips could be better labelled, so this will be reviewed shortly.

To help with the segregation of waste, we have acquired a twin-bin baler, which has been installed in Centurion, which can bale both plastic and cardboard. We also have roll cages so that card can more easily be transported between sites.

GROUP WASTE JAN 18 - DEC 18



We did not quite achieve our energy reduction targets in 2018, so this will be a focus for this year. Everyone can help with this one by turning off appliances when not in use, for example, air con units, heaters, lights, radios, computer monitors, etc.

Many thanks to everyone who was involved in preparing for this and who spared the time to speak with the auditor while he was on site.



FIVE MINS WITH... MARK BROOKMAN

SENIOR BUYER



HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY FROM ALL AT STOVAX & GAZCO!

How long have you been working at Stovax & Gazco?

Since June 2006 – almost 13 years!

Describe a typical working day.

Working with production planning to ensure components required for production in 12 days' time are available, working with suppliers, helping customer services.

What is your biggest challenge for the year ahead?

Brexit. I'll need to ensure we have goods available in case the ports become clogged up.

Has there been a particular highlight whilst working here?

It has been great seeing Gazco grow year on year. Coming from my previous company, where I had been for 20 years, I saw it decline which was extremely demoralising. I also work with a great team of people. I think the highlight was last week on my birthday with the surprises.

What was it like celebrating your 50th birthday at work?

It was a bit of a surprise coming in and finding my desk decorated. It was really nice that the office had got together and they even bought me an engraved whiskey glass and a bottle of Bushmills!

Help us settle the cream tea debate – jam or cream first?

As a Cornishman living in a house of Devonians, I am constantly having to educate them: it's jam first!

What are you most looking forward to in 2019?

My daughter's 21st, her graduation, and my thirty-year wedding anniversary – it is going to be an expensive year!

WELL DONE, AND CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Ian Wright, who moved from QC Manager to the position of Business Improvement Manager on 14th January 2019. This role will be leading our product management function.

Reporting directly to Alistair Compton, this is a key position in ensuring full business alignment on our new product development and older product portfolio management process. Ian brings a wealth of experience to the role, having joined the business in 1990. He has fulfilled various roles, latterly leading our QC inspection teams successfully.

Congratulations also to Sean Warren, who will assume responsibility for the existing QC teams alongside his current responsibilities including QA and Environmental, Health and Safety.

We wish Ian and Sean every success in their new roles.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Congratulations to the following staff who are celebrating milestones of service here at Stovax and Gazco:

Tom Ahearn (Warehouse Operative), who has reached 15 years of service, and Steven Nicks (Warehouse Operative) who has now reached 10 years of service.



NEW PRODUCTION ENGINEER

A warm welcome to Gavin Hitchcock, our new Production Engineer. Based at Gazco, Gavin will be working alongside Harry Lee supporting the Design Engineers, improving production processes, and providing help to those on the shop floor. The Production Engineering department are focused on bringing new products to fruition through the new product review board, which is instrumental in guiding the manufacture and assembly of new products.

Gavin is joining us from Centek, where his previous role was Production Supervisor, specialising in laser cutting and sheet metal manufacturing. Prior to this Gavin spent 7 years in the Royal Navy working up to the position of leading hand marine engineer.

Going forward, new products are going to be regulated by the Gazco Product Envelope. This envelope will take into account existing products and their features, such as size, weight, and manual handling operations. This creates constraints of new products to ensure all product families are able to follow similar processes through the factory and fit within our capabilities.



IMPRESSIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE

We'd like to commend E-Commerce for the following complimentary thank you from an end-user. Stephen Lomas was contacted and thanked for the help to rectify a mistake, offering a solution that made sense to both the customer and company reputation:

"I'm writing to express my thanks and gratitude for all the help you have provided me with resolving this problem. Mistakes happen but how we go about fixing them tells you a lot about an individual and the company they work for. I'd like you to send this message onto the relevant people within your business so they know that from start to finish your customer service has been 10/10.

You have exceeded my expectations at every step. You are a credit to Gazco. As discussed on the phone, this is the second Gazco fire I've had, and through your resolution the third has just been purchased. I believe your products are second to none. You've shown me that your customer service levels match your product quality. You've owned this problem from start to finish and made me feel like you really cared. This might sound like it should be a given but as someone who works in a service industry I know it isn't always the case.

Thanks to you and Gazco for your first class service." Well done to all involved in ensuring this customer left the phone lines happy, and helped to uphold our quality brand.



SUPPORTING THE SOLID FUEL INDUSTRY

Recent headlines and media hype misinterpreting the Government's 2019 Clean Air Strategy have resulted in public confusion regarding stoves and fires. As a member of the stove industry, it is important we help educate the public with a consistent, positive message regarding air quality, Ecodesign and the Government's proposed plans for stoves. We are using everything at our disposal to combat the misinformation and to bring clarity to the confusion whilst supporting our retailer network. We ran a thorough campaign to counteract negative press and confusion, which included:

- Over a quarter of a million consumers reached through our dedicated social media campaign across multiple platforms
- Released a national press piece explaining how good fuel and Ecodesign products play a 'central role' in the government's plan to improve air quality
- Launched a dedicated central advice resource – stovax.com/ecodesignready
- Comprehensive Google Adwords Campaign to spread positive awareness
- Created dedicated showroom Point of Sale
- Extensive national PR and advertising campaign underway

We are supporting the SIA to educate consumers and the media on Ecodesign, and are also supporting the Woodsure 'Ready to Burn' label across our communications.

Our campaign efforts have been well received by retailers, one of which passed a very complimentary message for their new point of sale banner. Paul & Charley at Firecraft (West London) were delighted to receive the Ecodesign banner and have proudly put it in their front window. They have thanked the Stovax Heating Group for being the 'only proactive supplier' that has provided them with any information (and ammunition) to discuss the merits and facts about Ecodesign confidently with their customers.



OUR CLEAN AIR EDUCATIONAL VIDEO REACHED A QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE!



POINT OF SALE MATERIAL SENT TO RETAILERS HAS RECEIVED POSITIVE FEEDBACK





FRANCE GETS SOCIAL!

Our French Facebook page was launched in the Autumn, with humble beginnings at 1,051 followers compared to our UK page, but growing steadily ever since. A Pinterest account was created in December, with Gazco and Stovax



products posted several times a week.

This, plus press coverage in magazines such as Elle Décoration seem to be paying off – members of the French public are now approaching retailers to ask specifically for Stovax and Gazco products.

Along with our social media and press efforts, a much-awaited French version of a retailer version of Ignite is underway and will be reaching our French customers in February. Like its UK counterpart, it will keep our customers up-to-date on new products, brochures, price lists, promotions and any information that may help boost their sales. Stovax products in particular have seen strong growth in France over the past few years and we hope that this newsletter will bridge any gap caused by distance and create a close link between our French retailers and ourselves. C'est parti!



CAR HIRE

A reminder that all enquires relating to Car Hire deliveries and collections to and from Gazco need to be directed to Andreea Giurconiu (Extension 1931) or in her absence, Paulina Leniart (Extension 2031). This is important as they check and note any damage or anything missing from the paperwork.

Keys or paperwork also need to be left with Andreea or Paulina, as this can cause unnecessary delays and confusion as to whether a car has been delivered or collected.



WHAT TO DO WHEN THE WEATHER TURNS...

In the event of weather disruptions, such as snow and ice in our region, remember to check the Weather and Adverse Conditions Policy and Procedure which is in Section 43 of the Employee Handbook.

There is also a company information web page that is updated with important information for staff, in the event of extreme weather conditions, or any other eventualities relating to the business. You can access this from home, here:

www.stovax.com/staff

WINNERS OF 'ONES TO WATCH' AWARD

Run by BUILD Magazine, we have been selected as the winner of the 'Ones to Watch in the United Kingdom' award. Solely research-led, this award is coordinated by BUILD Magazine's own team of researchers and judges. Rather than base this award on open nominations or votes, our selection has relied entirely on their extensive research over the past few months where an initial shortlist of candidates were compiled for consideration. The research was based on industry news and whitepapers, other journals and media, along with recent projects, testimonials and our company's online presence.



RED DOT AWARDS

Renowned internationally as one of the most sought-after 'seals of approval' when it comes to quality design, the Red Dot Awards looks for prestige products of the highest calibre.



reddot design award

We have entered the awards this year with the Reflex 75T multi-sided from Gazco. With its innovative design, energy-saving features and WiFi and app connectivity, we are hoping this product will stand out to the judging panel. Fingers crossed!

PROJECT OF THE MONTH - NISSEN HUT

The renovation of HMS Owl, a World War II Royal Naval Air Control Tower, saw Justin Hooper escape to Scotland with his family, away from London's hustle and bustle.

Justin then turned to his next project – the Nissen Hut. The vision for the Nissen Hut was to re-create the shape of the original hut and turn it into a contemporary space that paid homage to its roots.

Heating the hut was an essential part of the renovation. Due to the availability of wood in the area, Justin's requirements were that the building needed to be heated entirely by wood burning appliances, leading him to choose Stovax products.

Read more about this renovation at stovax.com/review

