

ignite 16

internal newsletter - March 2021



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It's hard to believe we are already in March 2021, and while there is positive news regarding nationwide vaccination and the hope of lockdown coming to an end, I fully empathise it has been a tough Christmas, and a tough way to start a new year. As always I am a 'pint half full' person and I constantly remind myself of the positives to take away. Indeed, we are hopefully edging towards happier and healthier times where we can, once again, simply enjoy a pint!

As mentioned at the end of last year in our round table meetings, we continue to see strong order input (well done to our Sales and Customer Service teams) and as our suppliers recover/catch up we should see this converting into sales. Our financial position remains strong – we are pursuing several growth initiatives for the future (more to come on this) and we have fantastic plans underway for the future move to our new consolidated premises. We will begin to share more of the detail on the move as the plans unfold and work begins.

We also have a host of new products in progress for imminent launch, with the intention to welcome our retailer network back out of lockdown with a strong offering to generate new custom. Thank you to everyone for the hard work and part you all have to play in getting new product to market (huge efforts by Development, Prod Eng, Prototype, Sales and Marketing), especially with the challenges we currently face.

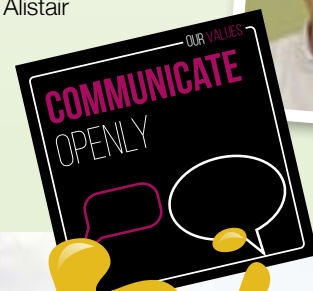
We are experiencing temporary disruption following Brexit (massive efforts to overcome this by all in Freight, Purchasing, Export, IT, Warehousing and Product Development – thank you all). COVID restrictions have impacted our suppliers which inevitably has had a knock-on effect with our manufacturing ability – thank you to all of our manufacturing, warehouse and HR teams for all of their hard work through this period of significant disruption. Marketing are doing a great job in keeping our retailers informed of the ever-changing situation which is clearly crucial to maintaining our strong relationships – a

challenge we can all pull together on to ensure they feel our support.

I have not yet mentioned our Finance teams who have worked throughout the COVID period ensuring that we have all been paid and that our business has continued with good governance and control, specifically dealing with a 'remote' audit with brand new auditors which was challenging – thanks to you all.

Lots of 'Thank Yous' here, but I am extremely proud of how all departments have reacted through these extremely challenging times. Let's keep driving our customer first initiatives, push for a strong return as we come out of lockdown and deliver a strong set of results for 2021.

- Alistair



Guess the number of eggs & win!

See back cover for full details!





WELL DONE, AND CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the following employees who have recently reached milestones of long service. Thank you for your dedication to the company!

Thank You!



Nic Freytag	Assistant Group Management Accountant	15 years
Gary Moorhouse	Group IT Director	15 years
Alan Hinton	Senior Development Engineer	25 years
Elric Flint (above)	Senior Set Builder	15 years

SME AWARDS – BEST STOVE & FIREPLACE SUPPLIER 2020!



The SME Southern Enterprise programme recognises SMEs of all sizes across the region who are endeavouring to bettering business in their respective industries. The South is a region known for its competitive edge and its unyielding innovative spirit – long considered a trendsetting space in the UK that others seek to keep pace with. It's with this context in mind that we have been recognised by the SME Awards as part of their round-up of the very best of British business.

We are delighted to have been awarded Best Stove & Fireplace Supplier of 2020. We can use an attractive digital winner's logo across our Marketing communications, alongside a striking trophy that we look forward to proudly displaying!

RECENT PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following staff for their recent promotions – wishing you all the best in your new roles! **Adam Budys, Kevin Carter, Jamie Soper and Andrew Toms**, have been promoted to Assistant Team Leaders in their respective areas in the Metal Shop.

SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAYS

Happy birthday from all of us here at Stovax & Gazco to the following employees who have celebrated or are about to celebrate some milestone birthdays!

John McWilliams, Warehouse, who turned 50 earlier this year; Jack Lew, R&D, who turned 30 in January; Julie Ryder, Gazco Returns, who turned 50 in January; David Lindsey, Quality, who turned 60 in January; Steven Cain, Metal Shop, who turned 30 in February; Michal Cichy, Metal Shop, who recently turned 40; Michael Pluves, Service Engineer, who recently turned 50; Daniel Padfield, R&D, who is soon to turn 40; Keith Mills, Production, who recently turned 60; and Elizabeth Keelor, Accounts, who recently turned 50.

'FIND A RETAILER' ONLINE SEARCHES

Over the heating season, we dedicated tremendous focus on generating sales leads for our network of retailers – particularly aiming our efforts at being visible to new customers online as people spent more time at home planning their next home projects and renovations. This huge drive translated into an unprecedented number of people using our 'Find a Retailer' search tool on our websites, resulting in almost 73,000 nearest retailer searches!



STAFF SUGGESTION AWARDS

We would like to continue to encourage you to submit your suggestions to improve business practices from both Stovax and Gazco. The amount of award given is dependent on:

- The level of benefit/improvement to the business;
- Whether it could be deemed to form part of someone’s role;
- Whether it is a good suggestion, but for various reasons may not be implemented, but should be recognised.

Therefore, not all approved suggestions will be awarded £25 and some will be £10 awards.

The following Staff Suggestions have recently been received and have been given an award. To avoid cash being handled, payments will be made via Payroll from now on.

Name	Suggestion	Feb Payroll
Christopher Luke (Technical Customer Service)	Email footer for TCS to be amended to promote servicing of appliances	£10.00
William MacLaurin (Production Planning)	Suggested to paint the pallet loading area to aid lifting and dropping pallets from/ to the mezzanine.	£25.00

All successful suggestions will be implemented as soon as we are reasonably able to do so.

IAN KINGSCOTT BECOMES VICE PRESIDENT OF CEFACD

CEFACD (Comité Européen des Fabricants de Chauffage et de cuisine Domestiques) is the European committee representing manufacturers of heating and cooking products using gas, biomass or electric throughout Europe. It consists of a President and four Vice Presidents.



Ian Kingscott, Group Technical Director, was asked to take over the role of Vice President representing gas manufacturers throughout Europe, with his appointment announced in the CEFACD’s monthly newsletter, along with the selection of a new President for the committee. In his capacity as Vice President, Ian now attends the CEFACD board meetings and general meetings, and also chairs the gas working group technical meetings – a fantastic acknowledgment of Gazco through Ian’s expertise.

Speaking on his appointment, Ian commented, “the main aim is to represent the industry within Europe and lobby both individual governments and the wider European council, especially in light of the recent issues on Biomass emissions all over Europe, the forthcoming changes to Ecodesign and the role Hydrogen will play in a net zero carbon future.”

CMI LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT RESULTS

A number of staff members have been working towards CMI Leadership & Management Apprenticeships, passing their courses with flying colours as mentioned in a previous issue of Ignite.



Congratulations to the following employees, who are the latest and final group of staff to pass - all achieving Distinctions!

- Chris Glanville – Production Metal Shop Manager
- Sean Warren – Quality Systems Manager
- Alex Sheldon – Research & Development Manager



10,000 FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM!



In early February, we hit an exciting milestone for our social media, reaching 10,000 followers on Instagram!

To celebrate, and to drive further growth and engagement, we ran a competition in partnership with our friends at Salcombe Distillery, giving away a bottle of ‘Start Point’ Salcombe Gin to two lucky winners.

Reaching this milestone is not only an impressive number, but unlocks further marketing opportunity for us. Instagram will now allow us to drive customers to our website via Instagram Stories with the ‘swipe up’ feature – the only way to provide a direct link to our website aside from our biography.

Needless to say, this is a fantastic feature we look forward to fully taking advantage of, and offers great scope for being able to directly link to new products, advice articles, or our main check-out – the Find a Retailer function.



Did you know, apparently only 10% of Instagram accounts reach 10,000?!

PRODUCTION AND PURCHASING

Laurie Bayliss, Gazco Production & Purchasing Director, offers an update from our Production and Purchasing



In a previous edition of Ignite, we shared that the company was seeking a new Trumpf Punch to revolutionise our approach to manufacturing. This investment, amongst many other benefits, supports our plans to maximise manufacturing at our Exeter site.

We have now installed a new Trumpf machine in our Sanderling unit, which is being commissioned, with prove out trials beginning in March. The preparation for the new Trumpf by the Production Engineering and Lean team, supported by component programme development by Jason Pickles, our CNC Programmer who joined us in October last year, will shortly begin to bear fruit with the first parts being produced in the next few weeks.

Aside from this investment, it is clear for many that we have a very busy and difficult season, with COVID-19 and Brexit disrupting supply of components, forcing reduction in output, and therefore leading to higher backorders. Brexit is putting considerable pressures on the Purchasing and Freight team, but to reiterate Alistair's sentiment, a huge thank you for the efforts here in tackling the challenge.

In other news, we have recently welcomed a new Planner to the team. Sharna Leigh joined the company on 1st February to support Tim, our Planning Manager, who started with us in September last year. Together, they will develop and streamline the various planning systems and processes that we need.



NEW UK TERRITORIES FOR SALES REPRESENTATIVES

We have recently expanded our sales team, welcoming Peter Brown to the company, and reduced sales areas so that we can offer our retailer network better service and more regular contact with us.

Although our sales team can't operate in the way they normally would considering lockdown restrictions, they're taking this time to make acquaintance with new contacts, and build on our extensive offering of Retailer Support during this quieter time.

UK Sales Territories



- Chris Struthers
- Mark Dawson
- Peter Brown
- Craig Marks
- Ian James / Dax Graham*
- James Bradley
- Dax Graham
- Nick Berry

* Ian James (Stovax & Gazco)
Dax Graham (Pro XQ & Nordic)

STUDIO AIR & REFLEX 105 MULTI-SIDED BOTH SHORTLISTED FOR THE 2020 BUILD IT AWARDS



The prestigious annual Build It Awards event sees the best across the self-build industry come together to celebrate the various homebuilding sectors, including architects, interior designers, and leading manufacturers. Under the circumstances and due to social distancing restrictions, the 2020 awards were held digitally this time via an online ceremony.

With its impressive flame picture, wealth of styling options and high efficiency, the Gazco Reflex 105 Multi-Sided gas fire impressed the judges and was shortlisted as one of few in the Best Heating System or Product category. Likewise, the Studio Air was also shortlisted for its innovative design and highly efficient combustion system.

Although we did not win this time, being one of few shortlisted across this sector is a great feat and something to be very proud of once again. Having shortlisted status offers great PR opportunity for use across our consumer and retailer marketing channels, especially for two new flagship products.

COVID-CONTROL INSPECTION

In early February, we received an unannounced visit from the HSE who were carrying out a COVID control inspection. The inspector initially carried out a tick box survey, followed by a visual/walk-around inspection checking:

- Risk Assessment
- Signage
- Toilets
- Kitchens
- Offices
- Warehouse

His overall opinion was that we are probably one of the best he had seen, with our signage, segregation and controls all exactly as was required in his opinion.

Well done to everyone who have helped to implement a safe environment, and thank you for the continued cooperation of staff to maintain safe social distancing measures at work.

FIVE MINS WITH... EMILY MANCEY

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE ADMINISTRATOR



How long have you worked at Stovax & Gazco?

Coming up to 4 years... Crikey time flies when you're having fun!

Describe a typical day.

I like to start at 7am as it gives me an hour to catch up on emails that came in overnight and prioritise any outstanding actions from the previous day. Throughout the day I answer any queries from suppliers and other departments, reconcile supplier statements, and distribute invoices for signing and then post onto Sage. I then look after all Stovax GBP stock suppliers, and process the invoices, and also the same with our foreign suppliers. I also complete any other tasks which may be required from me, but that is normally my typical day.

What's it been like trying to keep on top of duties during lockdown?

Lists, lists, and more lists! And starting the day off with prioritising what needs to be done. Definitely having a guide on what I want to achieve and what needs to be achieved has helped.

What is your biggest work challenge for 2021?

I don't know if I can pick the biggest challenge, as for each task we have had to adapt. You just have to try your best and turn the challenges into positives. A lot of our work before lockdown was paper based, but we soon turned to paperless invoice distribution which has helped the whole department with their duties in different ways.

If the world clicked back into place, where would you go on holiday and why?

At this rate I'm not fussy and I will go anywhere that is sunny and all inclusive! The upkeep of fake tanning is just a mission, and my team know how drastically bad it can go, so anywhere I can go and get a glowing tan...!

Which restaurant are you most looking forward to going back to?

Definitely Miller & Carter... Steak and a lovely glass of red wine. Perfection!

SUPPORT LOCAL

We know that our customers are the lifeblood of our business and our success depends on theirs. As part of our ongoing aims to provide world-class customer experience, we have launched another #SupportLocal campaign to do all we can to generate leads during lockdown and provide unrivalled retailer support.

Our latest success was launching a Support Local video campaign. This was communicated to retailers across the UK and ROI via direct email, offering them a chance to request their very own personalised Support Local video.

The video entails everything their customers can expect from an Approved Expert Retailer, from trustworthy advice to bespoke installation. Retailers were able to upload a logo and their contact details, resulting in a video that was personalised for use on their own social media communication channels.

We are currently at 80 videos in total – and counting! Aside from our videos, we are continuing to offer support via social media, directing customers to their local retailer by using the 'Find a Retailer' function on our website. Additionally, we're sharing regular retailer communication, whether that's to inform them of new images, links to useful resource, or update – all in aid of ensuring they feel supported for a strong return out of lockdown.



WIDE REACHING CAMPAIGN

EXPORT WEATHER REPORT

James Gilbert, Group Export Sales Director, shares the latest overview from an Export perspective

We started the year in Export recognising there will be many challenges with Brexit and a third lockdown. The introduction of lots of new export regulations and paperwork has needed to be incorporated into new ways of working.

Encouragingly, our order intake has remained strong but this has added to our call volumes with our retailers wanting to know when their orders will be delivered. With great teamwork, the Export Customer Service and Sales teams have united in keeping our retailers informed of progress. With additional help from many other internal departments, we are now making steady progress.

Looking ahead we will have the launch of the Vogue 700 Inset in France, eStudio for ROI and all other available Export Markets. The recent launch of the Studio Air in France now sees over 75 retailers displaying this stove with further displays to despatch. In ROI, there are also many in-store displays of the Vogue 700 Inset. Our in-store branding programme also continues to expand in the Netherlands.

Traffic to our websites has understandably increased, and we need to embrace this increased opportunity in doing business. Travel restrictions will remain difficult but with the sales teams well positioned across Europe they continue to cover their territories generating new business.



The Stovax Vogue 700 Inset is soon to launch in France

HUGE SUCCESS FOR IN-STORE BRANDING PROJECT IN THE NETHERLANDS

Hans Bouter, Sales Manager for the Netherlands, shares more about the Stovax & Gazco 'shop-in-shop' in-store branding project in collaboration with Dutch retailers.



Welcome to the world of electric!

Stovax & Gazco are opening 'shop-in-shop' stores in collaboration with retailers. My intention is to open Gazco 'shop-in-shops' in all 12 provinces in the Netherlands, and if possible with the whole Gazco electric range. The required floor space is at least 35m² and in a separate area from the rest of the retailers' showrooms. After the initial discussions with the retailer and myself, Georgie Dennis, Interior Designer, produces a 3D colour layout of the area. The retailer and I decide which products we like to place in the 'shop-in-shop'. As soon as all is agreed and the contract is signed, we get to work.

With the 3D layout in hand, the retailer is the first to get started with the preparations – decorating, arranging all the electrics, and floor. In the background, I order all products with Bonnie Venning, Export Coordinator, and the promotional material with Georgie. We ship the built-in appliances as soon as possible so that the retailer can install them right away.

The freestanding appliances, the podiums, logos and other promotional material are on standby for transport for when the retailer is ready, and there is continuous dialogue between the retailer and myself to oversee the project.

In the last phase, the retailer and I will make sure that all products and material are placed correctly. There are now three 'shop-in-shops' operational, which are: De Griffioen in Rotterdam Noord-Holland, Krul Alltech in Benningbroek Zuid-Holland and we have just finished Klaver in Dokkum Friesland.

The sales results from these first in-store branding projects is very promising. We are seeing an increase in sales of electric fires of up to 44%.

Currently, we are preparing the fourth 'shop-in-shop' in Gelderland, plus I am in discussions with a retailer in the Utrecht area for the fifth, and looking at their floor plan. In Overijssel we have a dealer who is awaiting a new building and once that is all confirmed we will get started on the sixth 'shop-in-shop'.

Thanks to these partnerships, we give consumers the opportunity to admire all electrical Gazco products together in one location and create more visits to the 'shop-in-shop' stores. It will always be the consumer who decides where to buy the product, but we're happy to welcome our customers to the world of electric!



HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - SAFE ATTITUDES – SAFE PLACES – SAFE PEOPLE

2020 Accidents and Incidents

- A huge amount of work continues to be undertaken in terms of managing hazards and risks, and preventing and reducing all accidents and incidents.
- In 2020, we only had one incident that was reportable to the HSE and we are below the national HSE statistics for ‘slips, trips and falls’ and ‘struck by a moving object’.
- Fork Lift Truck/vehicle incidents are always of significance to us and we continue to document and undertake many improvements.

But it is not all about ‘Safety’! The health of our employees is equally as important.

- We have just completed our annual noise measurements throughout the factory, which has resulted in no significant changes to the controls that we have in place, which protect all of our workers from noise induced hearing loss.
- Likewise, we have also just completed our hand arm vibration measurements, which again has resulted in no significant changes to the controls that we have in place but we will be investing in some new power tools and a new Linisher.
- Talking of investment in new equipment, we have also purchased, installed, commissioned and are operating our new ‘Metal Preparation Unit’, which presents some considerable hazards and risks. It requires significant controls and specific safe systems of work, especially for the operators who have their own air supply amongst other health and safety protection measures. All very interesting and challenging.

Fire Risk Assessments

These are not only very important to us as a business with the overriding purpose for ‘life safety’ but also a legal requirement. Due to the time involved and complexity of these, we conduct them annually for each of our premises over a number of days per site. We can then establish if our fire (and emergency) safety measures are both adequate or need improving and meet the statutory requirements, something that the fire brigade also require evidence of. Our findings so far have been very good, which demonstrates the continued improvements and progress that we are all making and now maintaining.

‘Health and Safety’ is something that we all play a part in and have an impact on, and we thank everyone for their continued cooperation and commitment.



Our new ‘Metal Preparation Unit’

SAFETY REMINDER - VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

Traffic in the workplace includes both pedestrians and vehicles. Uncontrolled, there can be devastating effects. This especially important when leaving work – slow down and look out for pedestrians!

Reminders for your safety:

- Please ensure your vehicle has good, all round clear visibility;
- Drivers: Look out for pedestrians at all times.

We must all:

- Adhere to the provided walkways, crossings, and entry/exit points at all times. NEVER enter or exit through the main warehouse, assembly or factory doors;
- Keep walkways clear;
- Comply with traffic routes & one-way systems;
- Use only designated car/bike parking. NEVER block access routes, walkways, entrances and exits and,
- Adhere to speed limits (max 5mph), at all times, that means driving very slowly.

We would also like to remind all staff and visitors that it is the responsibility of the pedestrian, or car driver, to stop and give way to Forklift Trucks and lorry movements. Thank you for your continued cooperation and commitment to Health and Safety.



STOVAX APPEARS ON NEW SERIES OF GRAND DESIGNS

Grand Designs is back on Channel 4, following some of Britain's most daring self-build home projects and renovations. Earlier this year, the show visited Sevenoaks, Kent, where Georgie and Greg renovated a 35-year-old barn into a safe and peaceful haven.

Greg and Georgie's vision was a large open plan barn conversion in rural Kent – with a modern take on an agricultural and industrial-style of barn conversion. They chose a Stovax Studio 3 Freestanding to complement that exact style.

Situated in the living area, the Studio 3 helps to create a warm and cosy zone in a big space, offering the same level of intimacy you might achieve from a smaller room but retaining all the benefits of being open plan. Greg and Georgie's local retailer was The Barn – Fires and More, Kent who helped to specify the project and make any recommendations in accordance with their vision. We were thrilled to be able to support this project – with more PR value to come!



IT SECURITY – STAY VIGILANT TOWARD HACKERS

Whilst this update may not specifically relate to everyone, the following sentiment regarding remaining security conscious does apply to all of us.

NIBE have reported that 6 of their subsidiaries suffered unauthorised system access via the official VPN method (FortiClient VPN) in December. These companies immediately had their VPN access disabled for several days.

Primarily due to system updates in these subsidiaries being outdated, hackers were able to access user login details. Unauthorised remote access to their network was then gained because the user received a 2FA (two factor authentication) approval request to their mobile phone and accepted it – despite them not being the ones who triggered the request.

For staff who work remotely and connect to our network using VPN, please ensure that the MS-Authentication app on your phone is always up to date via the updates from your respective App Store. More importantly, it is essential that you never accept a 2FA approval request that you didn't initiate. As per the guidelines in the Employee Handbook, if at any time any user suspects that any system login details may have been compromised you should contact the IT team immediately. We currently have up to 90 colleagues capable of working from home at any one time and any extended, enforced disconnection would have huge negative impact.



Thanks to everyone for your continued diligence on all aspects of electronic and physical systems security.

GAZCO ESTUDIO ELECTRIC LAUNCHES

Recently launched to the UK is the Gazco eStudio electric range, which will go live with our usual suite of marketing videos, images, plus enhanced retailer support content to maximise sales. The eStudio will also receive a national PR and advertising push to generate leads

Thank you to all that have played their part in getting this product ready for retailers post-lockdown!



COMING SOON - CHESTERFIELD GAS & ELECTRIC

Our popular Chesterfield 5 stove is soon to launch to the UK and ROI in new gas and electric versions alongside the solid fuel models, allowing our retailers the opportunity to offer this stylish traditional stove design in any fuel type a customer is looking for. We will be launching this to market with combined marketing materials that highlight the range as a whole, alongside the usual host of online video and image content.



REVIEWING OUR QUALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

As part of our commitment to our company values and the continual improvement of our management system, at the beginning of every year we review our Quality and Environmental objectives.

Although 2020 was challenging for many reasons, there were a number of positives that were highlighted when reviewing how we performed against the objectives we set.

We saw an overall improvement in supplier quality performance, with a reduction in the number of parts rejected, which not only reduces the risk of failures being identified by our customers but also helps ensure production time is not lost due to poor quality, reducing administration time across a number of departments.

Even though our turnover was similar to the previous year, we also saw a reduction in the amount of waste produced on our sites and we used less energy when comparing energy usage against hours worked.

This means that it has been agreed to change our objectives for 2021 to include:

- A continued reduction in supplier quality rejections
- To maintain energy usage vs. sales and hours at the same levels as 2020
- Ensure 90% of all our waste is recycled or reprocessed and that the weight of waste does not increase vs. hours worked
- No major environmental incidents to occur due to company activities

We will also continue to work towards reducing our warranty costs to support greater customer satisfaction, devise quality objectives for manufacturing as we continue our drive of producing more product in-house, set a target for delivery performance for our suppliers and also place a focus on our carbon footprint.

At the beginning of 2021 we started to look at how we could measure our carbon footprint, which involves investigating a number of different areas of the business. We will also investigate how to best measure the level of carbon produced through the lifecycle of our new products (from manufacture to end of life disposal).

Over the coming weeks we will update on our progress against our revised objectives and if anyone has any ideas to help us achieve these, do let your line manager or one of the QHSE team know.



ENERGY AND WASTE UPDATE

Energy Consumption

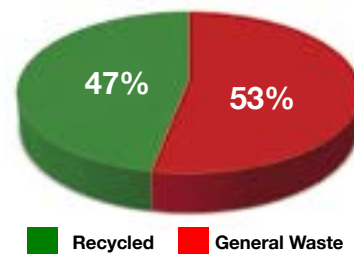
Although last year the business was closed for a period of time and working patterns were altered due to the pandemic, we managed to reduce our energy consumption by approximately 15% from 2019.



Waste Segregation

Our group target for 2020 was to recycle a minimum of 55% of our DMR, plastic, glass and cardboard.

Group Waste : Jan 20-Dec 20



Unfortunately we didn't achieve this target and recycled 47%.

Here's some of the great things we already do at work to help the environment:

- Designing and producing Ecodesign products.
- With every solid fuel appliance registered online we aim to plant a tree.
- We are unable to attend many face to face meetings and these have been held via Teams. This is likely to continue and will help to reduce our carbon footprint from travelling around sites.
- Carry out energy audits to identify areas for improvement.
- We have automatic lights in some buildings.
- We are replacing light bulbs with LED bulbs where possible.

How can you contribute to reducing our environmental impact in the workplace?

- Conserve energy by turning off lights and equipment when not in use
- Segregate waste correctly
- Review your work area and look at areas where environmental improvements could be made, this could include ideas for reducing our use of resources like energy, fuel and paper, or increasing our use of environmentally friendly material etc. These suggestions can be made via the staff suggestion scheme and you may also be entitled to a reward.

REPRESENTING OUR BRAND VIRTUALLY

With digital meetings now part of ongoing daily lives, it's more important than ever that we continue to uphold a strong, united and professional image.

With that in mind, we have created the next wave of backgrounds for use on Teams/Zoom etc, for both internal and external facing meetings. Matt Beckenham, Marketing Director, recently circulated these via email – please upload these to your background libraries and remove the others.

These can be interchanged at your leisure in line with preference and/or specific area – e.g, French representation may wish to use the Studio version. Please only use these backgrounds, and Marketing will periodically issue new backgrounds going forward alongside new launches.

A small reminder to everyone that although some of us may be working from home, we are still expected to dress appropriately in accordance with company policy, so we can represent ourselves and the company in the usual high smart standards. For example, smart shirts, rather than T-shirts and hoodies.



COVID-19 AND WORKING FROM HOME

Caroline Carr, HR Director, provides an update on the latest changes to safety procedures and plans related to COVID-19, following the recent UK Government announcement.

Whilst we must all remain vigilant, and continue to protect the NHS, a safe exit from lockdown is commencing. The route back to normality, whilst mapped out, is subject to change should the data start to go in the wrong direction, and we will keep you all fully informed of any changes to business operation.

From 8th March 2021, we will see restrictions start to lift, and government has announced a four step roadmap back to a more normal life.

From 8th March 2021, children are now able to return to schools and nurseries. Therefore, any Employee who is currently furloughed purely due to childcare issues, should return to the workplace, after discussion with their Line Manager.

From 29th March 2021, the National Lockdown will be lifted, and there will no longer be a legal requirement for Employees to work from home. Those vulnerable employees who have been shielding, should have received their vaccinations, and so be in a position to be able to safely return to the workplace.



NEW COMPANY BENEFIT — WORK FROM HOME POLICY REVISED

The Company recognises that a number of its Employees have embraced the opportunity to work from home and would choose to continue to do so. Therefore, instead of reverting back to the original policy of working from home only under exceptional circumstances, the policy has been revised and Employees are now permitted to work from home for a maximum of 2 days per week.

Working from home will be dealt with on a department-by-department basis, and by Line Managers. Not all Employees will be able to choose to work from home. Copies of the new 'Working from Home Policy & Procedure' have been communicated via email – please ask your Line Manager for a copy if required.

If Employees do work from home, for just part of the tax year, tax relief can be gained by following this link: www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home

SAFE RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE

In returning to the workplace, we will continue with the safety measures currently in place.

- Employees will be required to wear a face covering when moving around our buildings, and in common areas. This means that the only place you are not required to wear a face covering is at your workstation, and then only if you are able to adhere to strict 2 metre distancing. If you are not able to maintain this 2-metre distancing, a face covering must be worn.
- To reduce the need to move around buildings/sites, avoid face-to-face meetings and communicate via telephone, emails, and hold Microsoft Teams meetings.
- Meetings and meeting rooms to be strictly limited and controlled and only when other means cannot be used.
- If you have to attend a meeting, face coverings must be worn by all attendees, unless they are able to adhere to STRICT 2 metre distancing.
- Where close working is essential, face masks and/or PPE MUST be worn even at work stations. If this becomes a regular occurrence, please speak to your Line Manager and discuss ways of changing working practices to reduce /eliminate close working.
- Workers should not face each other at workstations, and if this is not possible then face coverings must be worn.
- There is to be no sharing of work equipment, materials, tools etc. Where this is not possible, tools or work equipment must be wiped down with an anti-bacterial wipe before and upon sharing.
- Equipment such as printers/photocopiers etc. must be wiped down after use.
- Additional sanitiser and wipes will be placed around the buildings. Please do not remove these from their situated locations.
- Microwaves, fridges, ovens, toasters etc. remain out of action and are not to be used.
- Bathroom, toilets and washbasins will continue to have limited and controlled use with additional cleaning and constant supplies.
- Additional cleaning measures will be put in place.
- Ventilation should be maximised. Air conditioning should be on a low setting, but windows should be opened where possible (and practicable).
- Sharing of food, such as brought in cakes etc. is not permitted. The only food that can be shared is if it is brought in pre-packaged and individually wrapped, even this we would discourage where possible.

- Food vans will not be returning to the premises in the near future.
- Vehicle use to return to single occupancy where possible. Where it is not sensible for single occupancy, then face coverings MUST be worn when sharing a vehicle. These should remain in place for the whole journey.
- Visitors to site should be avoided where possible. Where this is not possible these should be strictly managed and limited. All visitors to site must complete a 'Visitors Form' and any relevant Covid Risk Assessments.
- To eliminate risk at Clocking-In Machines, all machines will be adjusted so that Employees do not have to touch the machines, instead, Employees will be able to clock in by waving their fobs in front of the machine. Employees who are able to, can also clock in and out on individual PCs.

Please ensure that you do not attend the workplace if you have any of the following symptoms.

- an onset of a new continuous cough
- high temperature
- loss of, or change to normal taste of smell

However, people with Covid-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported, ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness, and these may include:

- Fever or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (this is not just tiredness)
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhoea

If Employees have any of these symptoms, they should not attend work, and should seek to obtain a test.

Should an Employee at any time feel that they have developed symptoms whilst at work, they will be immediately isolated from other Employees, and will be refused access to their area of work. These Employees will be sent home and instructed to follow current Government advice on self-isolation. Line Managers should inform HR of this in all cases.

We appreciate everyone's co-operation, and understanding. As we move through each phase in the roadmap, we must all remember that Covid-19 remains a part of our lives. We must comply with the Covid-secure measures in place, and accept the offer of the vaccination when it is our turn to receive this.

As a company we believe mental health is just as important as physical health and recognise that offering mental health support in the workplace is essential.

BUPA HEALTHY MINDS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME



From time to time we all may need a little support with our mental well-being. This is why we have subscribed to **Bupa's Healthy Minds Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** and **Bupa's Emotional Wellbeing Online (EWO)**.

This will provide our Employees with a place to go, in confidence, to talk through any worries and concerns with a qualified expert or access online information and self-help tools.

This Service is also available to our Employees' immediate families, or partners and their dependants who are aged 16 years or older and living in the same household.



WHAT IS BUPA HEALTHY MINDS?

Bupa's Healthy Minds can help you talk through any worries or concerns, before they become huge problems. From relationship worries to work stress. There is no wrong reason to use this service.

A confidential help and personalised phone line is available to all staff – 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. Support could include:

- In-depth mental health and wellbeing assessment to understand the best intervention
- Short-term counselling, either face to face, or over the telephone
- Legal and financial information and guidance
- Family support including expert advice and care search
- Assessment outcome letters which can be shared with GPs and other health professionals

WHAT DOES THIS SERVICE PROVIDE?

- Telephone access to professional counsellors (free-phone) 24 hours, 365 days a year. The telephone service provides counselling and information for a range of matters, including stress, bereavement, relationship difficulties, family concerns, depression and emotional concerns arising from legal, financial and workplace issues.
- Access to specialist helplines to support mental well-being- To provide guidance in relation to household finances, careers and legal advice in situations such as divorce or buying a home.
- Child and dependant care helpline – A dedicated support service providing information and assistance on a range of issues relating to caring for children, the elderly, and other dependants.
- Telephone access to Bupa Anytime Helpline, providing 24/7 health advice from nurses. Access to the service will be triaged by the EAP counselling team as appropriate.
- Up to six telephone or face-to-face counselling sessions (up to one hour each) for Employees, their immediate family or partner and their dependants who are aged 16 or over and living in the same household, per presenting condition.

EMPLOYEES CAN ACCESS THIS HELP BY CALLING HEALTHY MINDS ON:

0800 269 616 (UK) • 0800 650 138 (ROI) • +44 131 588 0321 (International)

OR ONLINE AT [BUPA.CO.UK/HEALTH-INFORMATION/MENTAL-HEALTH](https://www.bupa.co.uk/health-information/mental-health)

BUPA'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING ONLINE (EWO).

WHAT IS BUPA EWO?

Bupa's Emotional Well-being online (EWO) can provide help with emotional well-being online support tools for coping with day to day life including:

- Stress Management
- Work-Life Balance
- Problem Solving/Goal Setting
- Relationship worries
- Helpful Thinking
- Self-Esteem
- Resilience
- Mindfulness
- Sleep
- Coping with change

CORE PROGRAMMES INCLUDE:

Online Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy core programmes including:

- Space from Depression
- Space from Anxiety
- Space from Depression & Anxiety
- Space from Anxiety (student)
- Space from OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder)
- Space from GAD (Generalised Anxiety Disorder)
- Space from Panic
- Space from Phobia
- Space from Social Anxiety
- Space from Health Anxiety
- Space from Positive Body Image (eating disorders)
- Space from Diabetes Well-being.

LOG IN AT [BUPA.COM/CBT](https://www.bupa.com/cbt)

Using your email address and PIN which is BupaHM

The company is provided with information regarding the number of users, user focus, user session durations and time of usage.
We are NOT provided with detail of individual Employee Names/Depts etc.

UPDATE TO COMPANY LIFE INSURANCE (DEATH IN SERVICE BENEFIT)

We are constantly reviewing the benefits that we are able to offer our employees, in order to make Stovax and Gazco an Employer of Choice.

Group Life Insurance provided to Employees, provides money to Employees' families in the event of their death, helping to ease financial pressures in an extremely difficult time.

From 1st February 2021, the Company has revised the amount of life cover for all Employees. Employees will now have cover of 1x annual basic salary. Everyone should have completed a Group Life Expression of Wish form upon commencing employment, and may have updated this since. If you are unsure who, in the event of your death, would receive this benefit, or wish to update your form, please contact me, and I can arrange for a new form to be sent to you. There is no need to complete a new form, unless you wish to make changes.

Whilst we appreciate that this isn't a benefit that anyone particularly wants to receive, we hope it is a comfort to you, to know that it is there for your families, and comes at no cost to you. Providing this cover yourselves personally would come at considerable cost to you and so should be seen as a significant benefit to your employment with the Stovax Group.

Please note, that under the terms of our insurers, any Employee currently on long term sick will not be subject to this revision until they return to work. Until this time, their benefit will remain as current.

Any payment under the scheme is subject to the insurer admitting the claim, and the company's discretion as the policy holder.



LET'S TALK ABOUT STRESS

STRESS AWARENESS MONTH APRIL 2021
REGAIN CONNECTION, CERTAINTY AND CONTROL

www.wellbeing.work
www.stress.org.uk



STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

April is Stress Awareness Month, and has been held every year since 1992. Its purpose is to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. We still have a long way to go with how stress is perceived publicly, especially as it is still not taken as seriously as physical health concerns.

Things we need to understand about stress:

1. Stress is a significant factor in mental health problems including anxiety and depression.
2. It is also linked to physical health problems like heart disease, problems with our immune system, insomnia and digestive problems.

Individually we need to understand what is causing us personal stress and learn what steps we can take to reduce it for ourselves and those around us.

ACCORDING TO THE MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION, **74% OF UK ADULTS HAVE FELT SO STRESSED AT SOME POINT OVER THE LAST YEAR** THEY FELT OVERWHELMED OR UNABLE TO COPE.

Here are some of the common warning signs to recognise so that stress can be treated early:

1. Being more accident prone
2. Forgetting things
3. Showing a negative change in mood or fluctuations in mood
4. Avoiding certain situations or people
5. Using more negative or cynical language
6. Becoming withdrawn
7. Showing a prolonged loss of sense of humour
8. Becoming increasingly irritable or short-tempered
9. Having more arguments and disputes
10. A tendency to suffer from headaches, nausea, aches and pains, tiredness and poor sleeping patterns
11. Indecisiveness and poor judgement
12. A problem with drinking or drug taking
13. Looking haggard or exhausted all the time

Recommendations by the Stress Management Society. What else could you do for Stress Awareness Month?

1. Talk about stress and its effects – lets work together to reduce the stigma that is associated with stress by talking about the topic openly and freely with friends, family and colleagues.
2. Share your coping mechanisms – if something has worked for you, why not share it. It might benefit someone you care about and in the meantime it might help you take your focus off your own challenges.
3. Be nice to those who are stressed and anxious – we are all undoubtedly going to experience stress and anxiety in our lifetime so treat others going through it with compassion and empathy.
4. Look after yourself – we all need to think more about self-care. Take time out of your day to relax or do something that you enjoy. Don't forget to exercise and eat well, even when you feel too stressed.

Our Mental Health First Aiders

Don't forget, we have a number of trained Mental Health First Aiders across the business who are available to guide you towards mental health support should you need it:

- Caroline Carr (HR)
- Amanda Severs (HR)
- Keith Pike (Assembly)
- Chris Glanville (Metal Shop)
- David Mardon (Warehouse)

The Impact of Workplace Stress

A 2020 study by ORACLE and Workplace Interlligence uncovered some alarming statistics. Out of 12,000 participants:

78%

Admit the pandemic has negatively affected their health.

76%

Believe their company should be doing more to protect the mental health of their workforce.

85%

Say their mental health issues are causing sleep deprivation, poor physical health, reduced happiness at home, suffering family relationships or isolation from friends.



THE RESULT?



1 in 4

Say their productivity has plummeted



1 in 10

Say they make poor decisions at work



Almost 9 in 10

Say work-related stress, anxiety, and depression effects their home life

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING ADVICE, GUIDES, EXERCISES AND CHALLENGES, GO TO WWW.STRESS.ORG.UK

PLAYING OUR PART IN THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Sometimes it's easy to get lost in our own bubbles for our place in the product lifecycle and the impact that we each have on the wider business. But when we take a holistic approach to a product lifecycle and what that means for the company, we'll find that every single one of our roles is crucial for completing the wider customer journey, and that it's very much a cyclical process.

THE KEY STAGES ARE:

'Provide the fuel' – a potential customer sees something on TV, in a magazine, or received a strong recommendation from a friend or family member, making them aware of our brand

'Build the fire' – the potential customer researches what is available on the market, browsing websites and shortlisting products based on their comparisons with other brands. They may check our Google Reviews or Trust Pilot score, or get in touch with us with questions.

'Ignition' – the journey so far has ignited the decision making process. The customer has chosen their brand, and hopefully it's us! They find their nearest retailer, and go on to in-store interaction for advice, or to arrange a site survey to understand their options.

'Stoke the flames' – the customer books their delivery and installation.

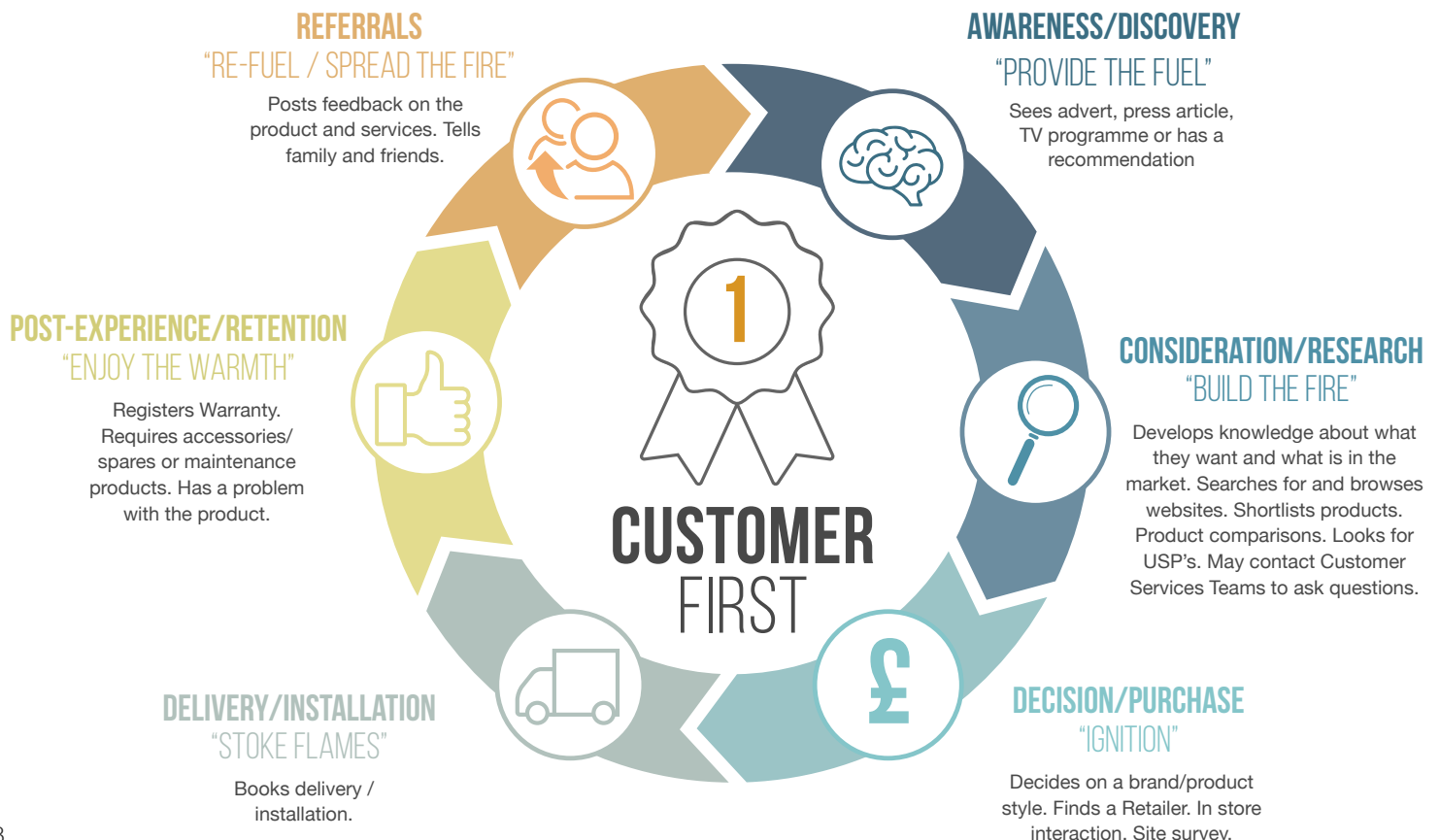
'Enjoy the warmth' – here, the customer enjoys their fire. It's in the post-installation experience that we have chance to retain their positive custom, for example registration of their warranty. During their post-experience, they may even require spare parts, or potentially require help for a problem with their product.

'Re-fuel / spread the fire' – following their experience of the post-installation stage, the customer's perception of the brand will be likely be cemented as to whether they felt looked after or whether they were left frustrated by our service. This will feed into how they engage with us online – will they leave a positive review? Will they engage with us on social media positively? Will they recommend us to family and friends, and start the cycle again?

Below, you can find a breakdown of the entire journey. Whilst this does not go into the extensive areas of the business behind the scenes, we all have a part to play in bringing a product to market in the best way we can, from its design conception, to supply and production, to getting the product out of our doors, and to upholding the Stovax & Gazco brand reputation in all we do – wherever we sit in the business.



CUSTOMER JOURNEY - PUTTING CUSTOMERS FIRST



ANSWERING QUERIES TO BAD PRESS

The debate on wood burning and air quality is ongoing. Some of us may have also come across articles in various publications which draw negative focus on the impact a woodburning stove has on indoor air quality.

Naturally, this may prompt customers to approach us directly for advice, or to show concern, for their own home environments. As an example, we recently received a letter from a concerned customer who drew upon some recent negative press regarding particulate matter in the home.

As we believe we should openly communicate with our customers, here are some key points and methods that will help us all when returning our response. For all cases, we can follow a basis of offering:

- Care and concern
- Control of the situation
- Commitment

What can we tell them regarding indoor air quality?

- We can show concern for their query, but also advise there is very little data available regarding the effects of a woodburning stove on indoor air quality
- Some anecdotal studies suggest there are many sources that are more impactful than a woodburning stove, such as toasters, cleaning products, vacuuming, or even room fragrances
- The tests we have seen carried out so far were on a very small sample with unclear methodology and test equipment which, in our opinion, makes it hard to draw significant scientific conclusions

We can also offer reassurance

- Anecdotally, in order to ensure the safety of our development staff, we have carried out our own air quality monitoring within our laboratories, which can see between 5 and 10 appliances burning and being refuelled at any one time in one space.

- The conclusion was the air quality was consistently at a low concentration level with limited if any health risks, and therefore there was no requirement for the wearing of PPE by staff working exclusively within the laboratory.

- This was not a scientific study under any controlled conditions so cannot be published or used as fact, but may offer some verbal reassurance.

What can we recommend as a committed manufacturer?

In order to minimise any effect that may be caused by a woodburning stove. We recommend:

- Burn dry wood – poor quality/wet wood has a high moisture content, resulting in poor combustion and the production of harmful emissions. Look for wood between 14-20% moisture for optimum burning
- Keep stove door closed – when the stove is closed, the products of combustion almost exclusively exit through the chimney
- When refuelling, open door carefully to allow pressure to equalise and keep door opening time to a minimum

- Use an Ecodesign Ready stove. We are proud to hold the UK and Ireland's largest range of Ecodesign Ready appliances. www.stovax.com/ecodesignready

- Ensure the stove is sized correctly for the environment – a 5kW stove run at 2kW will not burn at required optimum clean burn temperatures

- In all cases, please ensure that you comply with any smoke regulations in your area.

We can summarise:

- In summary if the appliance is sized, installed correctly by a HETAS qualified installer, maintained and operated correctly in accordance with our instruction manual, we believe woodburning stoves can be used and enjoyed in our homes
- We do believe there is a further emotional benefit from owning a woodburning stove, such as reducing stress as a result of having a relaxing environment

We are sharing a useful guide to indoor air quality to our UK and ROI network in the next retailer newsletter, which will also point customers towards a handy URL for further information. We will circulate this URL around the business when it is live.



Guess the
number of
eggs & win!

Win

A bottle of Salcombe Gin!



Feeling clucky? Get involved with our fun company Easter competition to be in with a chance of winning a bottle of Salcombe Gin!

The rules are simple...

- Eggsamine the picture (left)
- Guess how many Creme eggs are inside the stove
- Submit your guess to your line manager by 9th April '21
- One entry per employee
- Winner to be announced and prize provided shortly after Easter

Please note: Stovax do not recommend the use of Creme Eggs as an approved fuel type!

STOVAX  GAZCO