



CARDIFF  
LLANELLI  
SWANSEA  
TENBY

**WG Davies**  
*Servicing South Wales*

# Customer Newsletter

**Q1 2022**

## Editor's message

I know it is too late to wish you a happy New Year but the first quarter has flown by at such a pace that it feels like only yesterday that we welcomed in 2022. So here is our first newsletter for the year and it packed with the usual updates plus a really interesting interview with Richard King at Certas. Richard has been with Certas for over 20 years and he knows exactly what he needs from WG Davies, so it was great to hear that he gets that and more from Tenby. Roger has used his

column to talk about the importance of staff retention to our ability to deliver a service which we can be proud of and how it underpins the success of the business overall.

Along side those there are updates from each of the depots, as well as news from parts, sales and social media. And last but definitely not least, you will find the headline findings from the CSI customers interviews conducted this quarter.

I hope you enjoy the read.

Rachel



## WG Davies Customer Spotlight: Richard King, Senior Transport Manager at Certas Energy

**Certas Energy is the UK's largest independent distributor of fuels and lubricants in the UK. With more than 130 depots nationwide and 2,300 employees, Certas work to ensure commercial, agricultural, industrial and public sector customers, as well as domestic users, never run out of fuel.**

That requires the delivery of more than 6 billion litres of fuel each year in the UK, using a fleet of 1,000 tankers. WG Davies has been looking after vehicles in Certas's fleet since 2007 and so it seemed fitting to catch up with Richard King, Senior Transport Manager at Certas Energy, to understand more about the long standing relationship and why ongoing they choose WG Davies to partner with them.

Certas run a mixed fleet with MAN accounting for 25% of that nationwide. When asked what they like about MAN Richard told us "The MAN product is very good and it has improved leaps and bounds over the years that I have been in the business, especially in terms of the technology, and we find that it is a very reliable vehicle."

Richard has been with Certas for almost 21 years and is responsible for looking after the Wales and West Midlands operation. His relationship with WG Davies dates back to 2004 "I started working with WG Davies in Tenby," Richard recalls, "I quickly realised that Sarah understood what we needed and our relationship has got stronger over time. So I was pleased

when Roger invested and expanded the site, it made it a very easy decision to put more work into WG Davies."

These days it isn't just MAN that WG Davies look after for Richard, "WG Davies look after non-MAN vehicles as well, they are one stop shop for me. They really do know what they're doing at Tenby and nothing is too much trouble. Most of all they truly understand our up-time principle. I think the fact that it is a family business helps with that, they take responsibility for doing whatever it takes to keep my vehicles on the road and avoid downtime."

That culture of delivering exactly what the customer needs starts with Sarah, Richard told us, "Sarah pushes her team to think about the downtime principle, it's that deep understanding of what the customer requires and they act on that. It might be as simple as ordering parts immediately but the result is they do what is necessary to keep our vehicles on the road."

As a result Richard sees WG Davies in Tenby as a part of his team "It's not a supplier / customer relationship, it's a true partnership. They genuinely work with us and crucially, WG



Davies give me consistency. With consistently high quality of work and consistently great communication. The culture of care starts with Sarah and goes all the way down to the person with the spanner in their hand. I can rely on WG Davies Tenby 100%."

That culture of care is rooted in the very DNA of WG Davies because it is a family business with family values, Richard told us, "Being a family business is key to the culture of the whole business and that is something I feel every day in my relationship with them. People deal with

## WG Davies Customer Spotlight: Continued

people and there is no doubt that WG Davies genuinely care.” Referring to the ongoing CSI programme, Richard told us “WG Davies is the only dealer which rings me up to ask how I feel about the service. It’s such a simple thing but it’s so important.”

Throughout the interview Richard makes it clear that Certas is a great place to work - that is underpinned by the fact he has been there for

more than two decades - but it is also very demanding, which means that in turn Richard must be demanding of those who support him. In that context, the feedback he has shared on the quality of the service he gets from WG Davies in Tenby is stunning.

As you might expect, there is not much opportunity for Richard to enjoy free time away from work but he still manages to find time for

his wife and three children and he loves cooking, walking the dog and going to the gym. He also plays bass in a band and sings - the band did a stint supporting Dr Feelgood which is the clue to the genre.

We absolutely loved interviewing Richard, he is such an interesting person and so articulate in sharing what he needs and how WG Davies can best work with him. The relationship has stood the test of time because of his honesty and we look forward to many more years supporting him and Certas.

## Roger Davies: The Inside Track - Staff retention is the key to success



The coronavirus pandemic has had an unparalleled impact on businesses of all sizes and across all sectors, but it has had a particularly significant and varied impact on the haulage and logistics sector.

When we look at our customers it is clear that some have been able to thrive in the face of increasing demands while others have struggled to keep their wheels turning. One outcome has been to highlight the importance of the transport sector to the UK in terms of delivering food and vital supplies, however we are not immune from the skills gap that is affecting so many right now. For businesses like WG Davies it is the shortages of skilled technicians which could threaten our ability to look after our customers - losing even a small number of key staff members could have a huge impact.

In truth, we have always enjoyed enviable levels of staff retention but now is not the time to rest on our laurels. We want to believe that WG Davies is a great place to work, however we know that is something we need to keep a focus on if we are going to continue to provide consistently high levels of customer service. Right now we are addressing this in a number of ways:

Offering internal moves and promotions: one of the keys to keeping staff is to offer them the opportunity to progress within the organisation.

It always makes me proud to see staff take on more senior roles and recent examples of that include Alun Taylor taking on the Parts Manager role and Daniel Jones stepping up to manage Llanelli. These moves mean we keep the skills and knowledge within WG Davies.

Acknowledging that apprentices are the lifeblood of our industry: at WG Davies we have always invested in and right now we have seven apprentices across our four locations working to become qualified and professional technicians and parts staff who can look after MAN vehicles. I would like to offer a job to each and every apprentice who has worked with us at WG Davies and I wish them the very best in achieving their qualifications.

Understanding our staff culture and individual concerns: we are aware that there has been a great deal of isolation, anxiety and uncertainty over the past couple of years and so we will be conducting our annual staff survey in Q2 to understand how everyone feels and what issues need to be addressed to ensure everyone feels connected and listened to.

Improving technology: we know that old and inefficient IT is demotivating and so we have continued our commitment to keep computer equipment up to date with Digitrol providing ongoing support and ensuring that no computer is in the business for more than three years.

Investing in the business: we have invested heavily in all of our sites recently and we now boast some of the best facilities, not just in South Wales, but across the UK. We have installed bio mass boilers to heat workshops, upgraded to LED lighting and acquired the latest tools and tech, as well as upgrading the offices and driver waiting facilities.



*Servicing and MOT Testing at Swansea, with LED lighting and biomass boiler heating*

I hope that all of this adds up to staff feeling like they are genuinely a part of the WG Davies family - that is a feeling of having each other's backs and working together which money cannot buy. I believe this is what underpins the enviable levels of staff retention we have enjoyed over the years but it is not something I will ever take for granted. WG Davies is the sum of the people who work within it and every one of us plays a role in our success. Thank you.

Offering internal moves and promotions: one of the keys to keeping staff is to offer them the opportunity to progress within the organisation.

## Q4 Parts Update - Alun Taylor

We have had an exceptional Q1 in parts, with our best ever sales thanks to a combination of orders from existing customers and some new customers coming on line too. So it is particularly good to be able to announce that we have a new member of the team; John Hiles has joined us as the new delivery driver working out of Cardiff.

As I mentioned in the parts update at the end of 2021, MAN have now taken over control of our stock management. This has resulted in our parts stockholding increasing by £60,000, with

an extra £40k in Cardiff and £20k in Swansea - hopefully customers will immediately feel the benefit of the increased depth and spread of stock which will allow us to fulfil more of their needs same day. Tenby has also benefited from an enhanced stock of parts and alongside that we are also adding more deliveries between Tenby and Swansea.

World events are sadly affecting availability and prices, so Q2 may be a difficult time for some. We hope the promotions we are running will help a little; MAN are offering up to 19% off selected genuine parts for truck and van, and alongside that we are giving an Easter egg for



*Parts delivery from Jeff in Swansea*

every parts order with an invoice value of £50 just to sweeten things up a bit, please contact us for details.

# Depot Round Up - Q1



## Cardiff, Tom Carroll

Q1 has been very busy at Cardiff, so it is no surprise to report that we hit our target for January and February, and March is looking good too. To help with the workload we have had a couple of new staff members joining the team: Tiago Pinto came on board in January as a Technician and more recently, James Tucker started with us as a Service Receptionist, both are proving to be great additions to the team.

Of course, everyone is very happy with the recent office and workshop changing room upgrades and we are all looking forward to COVID restrictions being lifted. On that subject, there is just a hint that things are getting back to normal, as we are seeing technicians attending face to face training courses again for the first time in two years.

Finally, it is always great to welcome new customers to Cardiff and so it is great to see vehicles from Lockwood Group rolling through our gates - we will enjoy building a good working relationship with them. And while not new to us, Certas tend to use Tenby, so we were happy to look after a vehicle for them this quarter too.



## Tenby, Sarah Spolton

Tenby had a fairly relaxed start to the year before things picked up for us. We have some wonderful loyal customers and so we have been happy to take the opportunity to do what we do for them to the very best of our ability.

Alongside that we have booked some training, this includes a workshop with BPW and Adam has embarked on the courses to gain his ADR licence, which we already

know will prove useful to us and our customers.

There is a real family feel between the team and our customers at Tenby, and so for Q2 we are looking forward to just continuing to do what we do for them.



## Llanelli, Dan Jones

This is our first report from Dan Jones, who took up the position of Service Manager at the end of 2021, so it is great to hear him so upbeat. This is what he told us:

I'm really enjoying my time looking after Llanelli and I have had a very warm welcome from both Owens and WG Davies staff.

We have seen significant investment in workshop tooling, including new bottle jacks, pullers and a hydraulic press. The work to

replace and upgrade the workshop lighting to LEDs is underway. Also we have moved the parts stores to a new space within the workshop, which is much more efficient for us to work with.

Alongside this, the staff have completed first aid and fire marshal courses, all arranged by Rachel. In addition, now that the MAN training school in Swindon has reopened, we are looking forward to booking onto MAN training courses soon as well.

Q1 has gone very well, we have exceeded all the targets that were set for us. Q2 is set to be just as busy with the majority of Owens' MOT's beginning to come through the doors - that's how we like it. The morale of the workshop is high at the moment. It is great to see the team pulling together and working well to help each other. No job is too big, we just roll our sleeves up and get stuck in.



## Swansea, Ryan Twomey

We continue to benefit from investment in every aspect of the business here at Swansea and as a result we can offer more services in house than ever before. We are now genuinely a one-stop shop for our customers, with air conditioning services, tachograph services, full steam cleaning and Class 5 MOT's.

So perhaps it is no surprise that we have been extremely busy during Q1. We recently added an extension to the workshop to give us a total of eight HGV bays, all heated via a biomass boiler to keep the technicians toasty warm - a warm tech is a happy tech! And the team have really gone above and beyond to keep the wheels turning for our customers. To help with that we are delighted to welcome three new members to Swansea; a new light technician, Josh Eynon, a new yard person, Ronald Authur, as well as vehicle steam cleaner, Anthony Griffiths.

We have been busy with training too; three of our technicians are now qualified to do tachograph calibration work. Alongside that, Craig Vyner has passed both his HGV theory and medical and is taking his HGV driving test in the coming months - good luck Craig.

In the offices we have had a bit of a reshuffle; Michelle has moved from the MOT area to the main office, to work alongside myself and Sharon. This move allows us to support each other and provide a better overall service to our customers. In addition, we're happy to welcome a new customer; ARRA Distribution who have taken delivery of six stunning new MAN tractor units and they have another eight on the way. Q2 is looking good already.



## Swansea MOT, Michelle Kidwell

With Q1 done, it is good to be able to say we have started the new year busy and that looks as though it will be our new normal for 2022.

We now have three qualified technicians; Chris, Damon and Paul all of whom have passed their Class 5 MOT Light testing and so we now offer more services than ever before, including:

- Servicing and light repairs
- Class 4, 5 Light and 7 MOT testing
- Wheel alignment
- Smoke testing

With the re-organisation mentioned by Ryan (above), we are enjoying being a fully integrated part of the team here at Swansea. This means we are able to offer all our customers the benefit of the 6.00am to 10.30pm opening hours, something which is receiving positive feedback already.

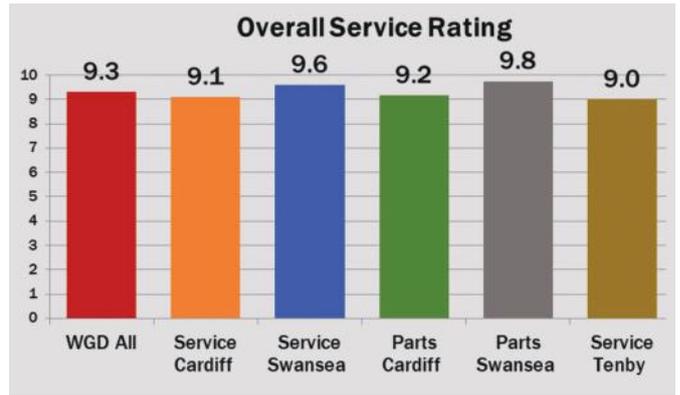
Of course, the upgraded facilities at Swansea continue to be appreciated by all of our customers. We very much look forward to welcoming customers, existing and new, over the coming months.

# CSI Customer Service Feedback - Consistency is key

We know we need to do whatever it takes to keep our customers' wheels turning, day in and day out. It is not enough to give great service just occasionally, we need to be chasing excellence every single day. And who better to judge the quality of the service we offer than our customers? That is why we ask Janet Birkmyre to conduct interviews for us to check what we do well and then crucially to understand what we could do better.

This quarter the detailed and unscripted interviews revealed a level of consistency that we can all be proud of. Across 26 interviews with parts and service customers from the three depots, not one customer rates the overall service we offer less than eight out of 10 and over half (54%) rate it a perfect 10 out of 10.

Originally, we set out to provide a service that was never rated less than eight out of 10, now we will set a new objective to be rated a perfect 10 by more and more of our wonderful customers.



## Sales Scoop, David Hopkins

Our round up of the news from the sales side of the business this quarter comes from David Hopkins, who has over 12 years of experience selling the award winning MAN product.

Obviously things are a bit more challenging at present and deliveries to the UK have been hugely impacted. It is a difficult situation to manage, however we are pleased to say that we have delivered some stunning vehicles in Q1. Here are a few.

We were delighted that Freight Systems Express Wales (FSEW) were able to take delivery of these three TGX tractor units:



We prepared and delivered a TopUsed vehicle (below right) for Stone Supplies (Wales) Ltd, while our longstanding customer, Interhaul, took delivery of this stunning TGX tractor unit (below left):



## Q1 Social Media Matters

*We've had so much to celebrate in Q1*

We've been busy on social media this quarter and the theme has been celebrations. There has been Roger's birthday, the launch of our tachograph testing service, International Women's Day, St David's Day, a visit from former captain of Wales national rugby union team, Colin Charvis and our new steam cleaning ramp.

We have also advertised new job opportunities and shared images of new vehicles. Here is our most liked post from March.

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