Inflation and the Yen

The Nikkei Stock Average, buoyed by gains on Wall St during the holiday period, reopened on Tuesday 9 January and rose 0.6% on the day to reach a 26 year closing high of 23,849.99. It has continued to rise since and, by the end of trading on Tuesday 16th, stood at 23,951.81, its highest mark since November 1991.

The Nikkei’s rise, boosted by Prime Minister Abe’s Abenomics reform programme alongside increased business investment, comes on the back of Japan’s longest period of growth in more than two decades. Indeed, December results marked the seventh consecutive quarter of economic growth, the longest such period since 1994, when comparable market data was first available.

Speaking to the Japan Times, Tatsunori Kawai, investment strategist at Kabu.com Securities, put the market’s strength down to a weaker yen, global growth and expectations that third-quarter corporate earnings, when announced in late January, will prove to have been strong. He also predicted the potential for further gains, echoing the thoughts of Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda himself.

In a speech to BOJ regional branch managers on 15 January, Mr Kuroda said that “The economy is expected to continue expanding modestly”, whilst also noting inflation to be “moving around 1 percent”.

Mr Kuroda has reiterated the central bank’s resolve to maintain its stimulus program, at least until its 2 percent inflation target is reached. Some forecasters agree that evidence of sustained inflation will be required for the Bank of Japan to formally change its approach, while others are more sceptical, already betting on a normalisation of fiscal policy and consequent strengthening of the yen.

Meanwhile, the Bank of Japan’s quarterly Regional Economic Report, published 15 January, noted positive economic signs in each of the country’s nine regions, with six reporting expansion or moderate expansion and three observing moderate recovery.

Three regions in particular (Tohoku, Hokuriku and Kinki) returned improved assessments from the previous report, published in October 2017.
## UK-Japan Trade Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Imports from Japan</th>
<th>Exports to Japan</th>
<th>Balance of trade</th>
<th>Previous year</th>
<th>Balance Japanese Surplus % change</th>
<th>Year to date in brackets</th>
<th>(year to date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001 Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>9105</td>
<td>3652</td>
<td>5453</td>
<td>6492</td>
<td>-16.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002 Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>8014</td>
<td>3552</td>
<td>4462</td>
<td>5453</td>
<td>-18.2%</td>
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<td>4462</td>
<td>-3.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004 Total</td>
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<td>7973</td>
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<td>4314</td>
<td>-4.5%</td>
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<td>8556</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006 Total</td>
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<td>7989</td>
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<td>3763</td>
<td>4715</td>
<td>-20.0%</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>8110</td>
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<td>3767</td>
<td>3119</td>
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<td>2011 Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 Total</td>
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<td>8468</td>
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<td>5355</td>
<td>4107</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013 Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014 Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7017</td>
<td>4501</td>
<td>2516</td>
<td>2824</td>
<td>-11.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2015 Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6822</td>
<td>4528</td>
<td>2294</td>
<td>2516</td>
<td>-8.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2016 | Jan  | 666 | 394 | 272 | (272) | 79 | (79) | +344.3% |
|      | Feb  | 688 | 409 | 279 | (574) | 259 | (338) | +68.3%  |
|      | Mar  | 696 | 407 | 289 | (1142)| 195 | (533) | +60.0%  |
|      | Apr  | 597 | 400 | 197 | (1339)| 165 | (900) | +48.8%  |
|      | May  | 673 | 416 | 247 | (389) | 277 | (1163) | +39.0%  |
|      | Jun  | 588 | 388 | 200 | (1816)| 267 | (1430) | +27.0%  |
|      | Jul  | 685 | 407 | 278 | (2094)| 158 | (1588) | +31.9%  |
|      | Aug  | 728 | 430 | 298 | (2392)| 173 | (1761) | +35.8%  |
|      | Sep  | 709 | 520 | 189 | (2581)| 191 | (1952) | +32.2%  |
|      | Oct  | 746 | 423 | 323 | (2904)| 186 | (2138) | +35.8%  |
|      | Nov  | 781 | 481 | 300 | (3204)| 156 | (2294) | +39.7%  |
|      | Dec  | 8245| 5041| 3204| 2294 | +39.7% |               |

2016 Total | 8245 | 5041 | 3204 | 2294 | +39.7% |               |               |

| 2017 | Jan  | 635 | 493 | 142 | (144) | 272 | (272) | -48.8% |
|      | Feb  | 778 | 531 | 247 | (389) | 302 | (574) | -32.2% |
|      | Mar  | 837 | 453 | 384 | (773) | 279 | (853) | -9.4%  |
|      | Apr  | 783 | 521 | 262 | (1035)| 289 | (1142)| -9.4%  |
|      | May  | 866 | 516 | 350 | (1385)| 197 | (1339)| +3.4%  |
|      | Jun  | 808 | 456 | 352 | (1737)| 277 | (1616)| +7.5%  |
|      | Jul  | 1020| 543 | 477 | (2214)| 200 | (1816)| +21.9% |
|      | Aug  | 850 | 548 | 302 | (2516)| 278 | (2094)| +20.2% |
|      | Sep  | 841 | 584 | 257 | (2773)| 298 | (2392)| +15.9% |
|      | Oct  | 807 | 561 | 246 | (3019)| 189 | (2581)| +17.0% |
|      | Nov  | 787 | 512 | 275 | (3294)| 323 | (2904)| +13.4% |

(Unit: Million pounds) (Balance of payments-consistent basis seasonally adjusted)

Note: these figures now incorporate changes to the measurement of trade - introduced to comply with European statistical guidelines.
The fourth and final Palmerston Kai lunch of 2017 was held at Drapers’ Hall on 16 November. The guest speaker for the event was Mr Soichi Noguchi, the aeronautical engineer and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) astronaut. His theme was “Unity and Strength by Embracing Differences.”

Mr Noguchi gave a fascinating insight into his time at JAXA, his experiences working with astronauts and aeronautical engineers from other countries’ space programmes and, of course, his space missions themselves. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session during which Mr Noguchi responded eloquently and at length to all manner of questions about life in space and the future of space exploration.

The lunch meeting was once again chaired by Mr Yoshitaka Ihokibe of Japan Airlines, the Chairman of JCCI’s Palmerston Kai Committee, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

On 10 November, JCCI held a seminar on mergers and acquisitions with the cooperation of Marsh and other firms, all members of JCCI. The seminar was held at and seamlessly organised by Marsh Ltd, who also supplied a selection of delicious drinks and a fine spread of food.

Mr Hiroyuki Iwamura, Partner at Ashurst, spoke on legal strategy for risk management post-merger / acquisition. Mr Tomohiro Miyagawa, Partner and EMEIA JBS Expat Representative at Ernst & Young LLP, spoke about dealing with the risk of bribery and other illegal activity in M&A. Mr Kenjiro Harada, Director and M&A Unit Head at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Ltd, spoke about UK-EU cross-border M&A trends. Mr Daisuke Tsuchiya, Partner, Brunswick Group, spoke about the issue of cultural differences in the integration of businesses. Mr Nao Muramatsu, Managing Director at Marsh Ltd, spoke about risk management and risk finance in M&A. Ms Chisa Kakuda, Senior Associate and M&A Consultant at Mercer, spoke about approaches to retention risk in M&A.

The individual presentations were followed by a panel discussion and questions from the floor, after which a large number of the attendees stayed behind to chat and enjoy the aforementioned excellent refreshments.
Cyber Security Seminar

On 17 November, JET-RO London hosted and co-organised a seminar on Cyber Security in conjunction with Ashurst LLP and IIJ Europe Ltd. The seminar was supported by JCCI.

The first speaker was Mr Hiroyuki Iwamura, who explained about legal issues surrounding cyber security and gave example cases. Mr Iwamura was followed by Mr Norio Kubota of IIJ, who spoke on the subject of the foremost cyber-attacks at the current time and gave advice on dealing with them.

The well attended event concluded with a networking session at which drinks and snacks were available.

EU GDPR Seminar

On 30 November, JET-RO London hosted and co-organised (with JCCI and the Embassy of Japan in the UK) a seminar on new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which will come into force in May 2018.

There were two speakers at the event. The first, Ms Hiroyo Hiramatsu from the Embassy of Japan, spoke about the current state of preparedness of Japanese companies operating in the UK with regard to GDPR, and discussed the issue of moving personal data.

Ms Hiramatsu was followed by Mr Takeshige Sugimoto, Of Counsel at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, who gave an explanation of GDPR and outlined measures that should be taken to deal with it.

OTHER JCCI EVENTS/NEWS

Japan Society Retain the Collar Cup

The annual Collar Cup golf match, sponsored by BDO LLP, was held on 21 October at Buckinghamshire Golf Club. The twelve-sided match, pitting JCCI against Japan Society, saw Japan Society claim the spoils for a second consecutive year.

The Collar Friendship Cup is named after a former Secretary of the Japan Association, Mr Collar, and donated by the Chamber in 1977. Japan Society’s victory was its 23rd in total (including those won by Japan Association, its predecessor organization), and it now leads the series, which began in 1972, by 23 wins to 16.
Parliament Event with Trade Secretary Liam Fox

On Tuesday 31 October 2017, the Embassy of Japan and the British-Japanese Parliamentary Group co-hosted an event entitled “Japanese Businesses and the UK’s Future Economy” at Portcullis House in London. The event followed a visit to Tokyo earlier this year by Prime Minister Theresa May and UK International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox, where they outlined shared ambitions for future trade. Approximately 200 guests attended the reception, including more than 50 MPs and Lords, key representatives from UK government and industry, and around 100 Japanese business leaders.

The event, which featured keynote speeches from Ambassador Tsuruoka, The Rt Hon. Dr Liam Fox MP, Secretary of State for International Trade, Mr Paul Drechsler, President of the CBI, and JCCI President Mr Atsushi Kume, was followed by lively discussion amongst the assembled guests.

This was the Embassy of Japan’s third such Parliament Event.

Annual General Meeting

The 58th Annual General Meeting of the JCCI was held on 16 October 2017 at Mitsubishi Corporation. The new Council (34 members) was elected unanimously. Mr A. Kume of Mitsui & Co Europe Plc was elected President. Mr H. Hayashi of Mitsubishi Corporation International (Europe) Plc, Mr M. Kuwahara of the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ Ltd, Mr K. Kubota of NYK Group Europe Ltd, Mr K. Inoue of Honda Motor Europe Ltd and Mr T. Yokota of Toshiba of Europe Ltd were elected Vice Presidents. Mr N. Hayashi of Mitsui & Co Europe Plc was appointed Honorary Secretary and Mr T. Hanaoka, JCCI Secretary General, was reappointed as Company Secretary.

The meeting approved the report of the Council and JCCI financial statements prepared by KPMG for the financial year ending 30 June 2017 and approved the re-appointment of KPMG as auditors for the current financial year starting 1 July 2017. Reports were made to the AGM on the following: the budget for the current financial year (started 1 July 2017) – the budget had been approved by the immediately preceding Council meeting; JCCI’s meeting with the government’s Department for Exiting the European Union; Japan Matsuri 2017; the 2018 JCCI office lease renewal / search for new premises; the MAC’s Call for Evidence regarding Brexit and migration; JCCI events and projects during the operational year just ended (i.e. AGM to AGM) and those scheduled for the 2017-18 operational year.

Record Attendance at New Year Reception

On 10 January, the Chamber held its annual New Year Reception at Drapers’ Hall, London.

H.E. Mr Koji Tsuruoka was present, alongside a number of his colleagues from the Embassy of Japan, and gave a fine speech to a record attendance of around 470. JCCI President Mr Atsushi Kume, too, spoke very well, as did guest of honour Mr Michael Charlton, Chief Investment Officer at the Department for International Trade. The toast was delivered by Mr Masahiro Kuwahara, JCCI Vice President, after which three lucky attendees, chosen at random by Ambassador Tsuruoka, scooped special prizes – 2 rugby balls signed by England Rugby Head Coach Eddie Jones, and a giant 2016 ATP Tour Finals tennis ball, signed by Kei Nishikori and kindly donated by tournament sponsors and JCCI member Barclays Bank.

The atmosphere in the early stages of the event was set by Ms Keiko Kitamura’s elegant koto playing. Meanwhile, a wide range of excellent sake (courtesy of Yoshitake & Associates / Sake Samurai, World Sake Imports and Tazaki Foods) and delightful Koshu wines (Koshu of Japan) served to perfectly complement the excellent selection of Japanese food on offer from TK Trading.

On leaving, the guests’ rosy cheeks spoke both of the success of the event and, of course, the popularity of all those delicious beverages!
## CHAMBER MEMBERS NEWS

### New Members

Twenty companies have joined the Chamber since the last Review

*As Full Members:*

- **Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems Europe, Ltd.**, which designs, manufactures, commissions and maintains thermal energy power plants;
- **INPEX Corporation**, the oil and natural gas company;
- **KONAMI Digital Entertainment B.V.**, the entertainment company;
- **Shinkin International Ltd.**, the financial institution;
- **Tokai Tokyo Securities Europe Limited**, the brokerage firm;
- **NIPPON TELEVISION LONDON BUREAU**, the media company;
- **Buckinghamshire Golf Club**, the golf course owner;
- **H.I.S Travel**, the travel company;
- **Saison Information Systems Co., Ltd. EMEA Office**, the marketing and IT solutions company;
- **Koyama & Co.**, the recruitment consultant;
- **Sandton London EC1Y Limited**, the estate agent;
- **Excel Property Services**, the property agent;
- **Giken Europe B.V.**, the construction company;
- **H3P Limited**, the business consultancy;
- **J & M Davidson Limited**, the bags, leather goods, shoes and clothing retailer;
- **Newton IT Holdings Limited**, the IT firm;
- **Prestige International U.K. Ltd.**, the business process outsourcing service;
- **Ring London Advertising Limited**, the advertising agency;
- **TMI Associates London LLP**, the law firm.

*As associate member:*

- **Kreab**, the communications consultancy.

Total membership now stands at 363, of which 11 are Associate Members.
Arm delivers skills

On November 30, Arm Holdings announced that two of its employees had been appointed to the UK Department of Education’s new advisory T level panels in the biggest ever overhaul of technical education in Britain.

At the heart of this shake-up is a set of new technical qualifications called T levels, which aim to simplify vocational training in Britain. Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, announced the T panels as part of this package of reforms, designed to ensure that young people and adults benefit from a high quality technical education system that meets the expectations of modern employers.

Arm’s senior corporate responsibility manager Simon Humphrey has been appointed to the Data and Digital Business Services T panel, and Khaled Benkrid, Arm’s senior director of education and research, has joined the T panel on Engineering and Manufacturing: Design, Development and Control. In these roles, they will advise the government on content for the new T levels, helping to reshape the system of technical education for Britain and providing genuine and sustainable impact at scale.

The T panel appointments are the latest step in Arm’s commitment to making a difference to education, both by enabling educators and students to learn with technology, and increasing the number of people with relevant technical and vocational skills for employment and entrepreneurship. With 5,000 employees globally and 100 billion Arm-based chips shipped to date, along with an ecosystem of more than 1,100 partners, Cambridge-headquartered Arm considers itself well-positioned to inspire, educate and train the next generation of engineers to benefit the industry, and to properly equip the wider global workforce for employment in the 21st century.

Through its education programmes and partnerships, Arm is driving quality education, a UN Sustainable Development Global Goal which leads to improved social mobility and inclusion. Arm is investing heavily in education, with a thriving worldwide Arm University Program, inspiring young people through a comprehensive set of education, apprentice and graduate programmes, as well as work experience opportunities. Last year Arm began to offer Level 6 degree apprenticeship opportunities at their Cambridge and Manchester offices.

Arm Holdings is a multinational semiconductor and software design company headquartered in Cambridge and owned by Softbank Group.

An Arm and a tache

In November, Arm took growing a moustache to an unprecedented level, creating a giant handlebar moustache made out of donated clothes and raising funds for the Movember Foundation along the way.

Every November, Arm employees from around the world, from the UK to Taiwan to Bangalore, raise funds for the Movember Foundation, which aims to tackle the biggest health issues facing men on a global scale. In the last three years, Arm has raised more than £70,000 for the Foundation.

As part of Arm’s Movember fundraising this year, which raised £27,174 in total, a 610m² moustache was crafted from 804kg of clothes donated by Arm employees, with a drone capturing footage of the mammoth clothes collage, hosted on Cambridge University’s 1st team pitch. The clothes were then donated to mental health charity Mind, where it is hoped their sale will generate £4,000.

Arm is committed to encouraging its employees to use their skills for the benefit of its local and global communities, and in addition to building the gigantic moustache and conducting fundraising activities, Arm hosted educational sessions with guest speakers to help raise awareness and provide information on the biggest health issues facing men today; testicular and prostate cancer, and mental health and wellbeing.

Canon invests

On 21 October, Canon announced a partnership with Capital Document Solutions, an independent supplier of tailored print and document solutions in Scotland, stating that the collaboration demonstrated a shared commitment to and investment in the Scottish market from both organisations, whilst increasing supplier choice for businesses across the country.

Scotland and the partner channel are both vital elements to Canon’s overall B2B growth strategy. Through the partnership, Scottish businesses will be able to benefit from Canon’s imaging technology and Capital’s vast experience, helping to achieve growth, tackle the challenges of digital transformation, realise efficiencies and increase profitability.

Capital has been operating for over 38 years and is...
the largest independent document solutions provider in Scotland. Its wide branch network provides local, regional and national support to corporate, SME, public and third sector clients across the whole of Scotland.

Capital will be expanding its sales, support and service staff across Scotland to give comprehensive advice on the latest range of Canon solutions. The company is looking to invest over £200,000 in an upgrade of its HQ facilities and increase headcount over the next 18-24 months, in order to help achieve a double-digit percentage growth in turnover.

Synertec chooses Canon

On 24 November, Canon announced that it had secured its largest order of imagePRESS C850 digital production presses with investment in 85 units by Synertec, a fast growing consultancy which is now the world’s single biggest user of the Canon imagePRESS C850 system. One device has been installed at the company’s headquarters in Wellington, Somerset, with the further 84 split between its production sites in Bristol and Warrington.

Experts from the UK, Europe and Canon’s headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, joined forces for the complex technical evaluation and negotiations over 15 months, to help Synertec invest wisely in a deal that will be worth around £5 million over three years. Synertec, with a turnover expected to grow in excess of 20% annually, currently produces around 14 million impressions per month on the imagePRESS C850s.

Synertec has over 500 clients in various industries and specialises in outsourced communication including printing, folding and mailing, alongside electronic distribution of time-critical correspondence for the private sector and NHS patient communication.

Daikin opens new centre

On 9 October, Daikin UK announced that it had opened a new Altherma Heating Contact Centre in advance of the winter season. The service centre is operating for extended hours, six days a week, for six months from 1 October to deliver comprehensive support for homeowners across the UK in response to the increasing demand for heat pump systems in the heating market.

The Centre provides dedicated service for homeowners throughout the high demand winter season, when 70% of total calls are received, supporting the delivery of comprehensive maintenance contracts.

The centre aims to deliver first class service standards, by providing trained Daikin operators to handle heating service calls from homeowners, as well as site visit requests from installers.

Working alongside Daikin UK’s three regional service offices - which continue to handle enquiries for all chillers, air conditioning and installer-led heating service requests - the centre has access to the company’s 150 service partner engineers.

Fieldfisher expands

European law firm Fieldfisher is expanding in Manchester. On 2 November the company announced it had taken over a third floor of the Free Trade Exchange building on Peter Street in the heart of the city centre. The offices now occupy the first, fourth and fifth floors of this iconic building with the 5,700sqft expansion coming after Fieldfisher Manchester reached over 100 employees.

Fieldfisher Manchester now has 13 partners and is soon to add another. These changes have come after turnover for the Manchester office grew from £2 million to £11m in three years, an increase of 450%.

Global revenues across the company’s nine offices reached £165m in 2016/17, up from £145m the previous year. Legal Business magazine recently ranked Fieldfisher as the UK’s fastest growing law firm.

Fieldfisher’s Manchester office specialises in litigation, real estate, real estate finance, corporate, technology, regulatory, employment, intellectual property and insolvency, working for regional and international clients. The office has seen significant growth with recent appointments in the tech, real estate and dispute resolution teams and further recruitment expected as the firm continues to land high profile client instructions.

Fujifilm Expands

On 6 November, FUJIFILM Corporation announced that it was to invest a total of 3.2 billion yen on its Contract Development & Manufacturing Organization (CDMO) sites in the U.S.A. and the U.K. in order to accelerate the expansion of the company’s business for developing and manufacturing biopharmaceuticals under contract for other parties.

On the U.K. side, the company is investing approximately 1.0 billion yen at its Wilton Centre site in Redcar, which opened in September, to expand the floor area of the development site of production processes for antibodies and install an additional facility. The expanded area will be almost double the existing space of approximately 930 m², while equipment will upgraded.

From autumn 2018 onwards, the new facilities will ramp up operation, bolstering the company’s ability to accept orders from its customers for process development and manufacturing in the field of antibodies.

Fujifilm will look to expand its biopharmaceutical production capabilities, and further develop high efficiency and high productivity technology by combining group technologies, to continue to push forward the business. It is targeting sales of 100 billion yen in its CDMO business by fiscal year ending March 2024.

Fujifilm Award

In November, it was announced that The Fujifilm Award for Best Research Performance at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) had been awarded to Sarah Binte Sulaiman. The prize is given each year to the graduate in BSc
fuels and plans for the future. As many as 62% of fleets now contain AFVs - the most common types being electric and hybrid cars.

In addition, 82% of those surveyed believe that it is important to move towards AFVs. With manufacturers improving technology and governments introducing new incentives, 42% of fleets plan to add more AFVs within the next two years. However, 28% of respondents to the survey said that their organisations should be doing more to switch to alternative fuels, and 73% think the Government can do more, too.

Those surveyed cited infrastructure and vehicle costs as the biggest obstacles in the way of AFVs uptake. Other concerns include electric vehicle range, as well as the availability of UK ABWR suitability completes GDA process suitable gas and biodiesel vehicles.

Many of the respondents think that the introduction of Clean Air Zones - set to be introduced in Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton by the end of 2019 - should help. Almost two-thirds (65%) say it will make them more likely to use AFVs.

For more information: www.hitachi-capital-vehicle-solutions.co.uk/future-of-fuel-report

Hitachi Innovates

Hitachi Europe Ltd., a subsidiary of Hitachi, Ltd. hosted a Social Innovation Forum at The Berkeley Hotel in London on Tuesday 28th November 2017. The event, which formed the UK leg of a global series of Social Innovation Forums, highlighted how social innovation can lead to the creation of a safer, smarter and healthier future, and demonstrated Hitachi’s wide range of technologies.

The forum focussed on the importance of co-creation in the private sector and the industrial Internet of Things in the private sector as the key drivers for the realisation of Social Innovation. Around 150 senior influencers from UK, European and Global markets were in attendance to explore the key themes and opportunities presented by ‘co-creation’ and IoT in developing new solutions to the business challenges faced today.

Hitachi’s global business is centered on its expertise in Social Innovation, providing market-leading infrastructure solutions underpinned by highly reliable and efficient Operational Technology and Information Technology. In its 2018 Mid-term Management Plan, Hitachi aims to increase its overseas revenue ratio to more than 55%, with Europe as a key region to achieve this target.

Through its Social Innovation Business, Hitachi is committed to drive innovation with all its stakeholders to provide real benefits to society, turning the world’s challenges into opportunities and creating a safer, smarter and more sustainable world with its technologies.

Hitachi Europe Ltd., a subsidiary of Hitachi, Ltd., is headquartered in Maidenhead.

Hitachi-GE moves forward

On 14 December, Hitachi, Ltd. and Hitachi-GE Nuclear Energy, Ltd. announced that the UK Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (ABWR) had successfully completed the UK Nuclear Regulators’ Generic Design Assessment (GDA) process within the target period of 5 years. This had followed extensive assessment and scrutiny by the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), Environment Agency (EA) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Hitachi-GE has received on schedule approval for deployment in the UK, paving the way for the construction of Horizon Nuclear Power’s first unit at Wylfa Newydd on Anglesey, North Wales.

Four generation III+ ABWRs have previously been successfully built and operated – all to time and budget – making ABWR the world’s most established modern design. ABWR has now achieved approvals under four different regulatory regimes worldwide.

Hitachi has been continuously involved in construction of power plants for more than 40 years, and developed the ABWR in collaboration with various international partners. Hitachi has participated in the design, development and construction of 23 nuclear power plants in Japan, with BWRs including ABWRs.

The ABWR is a Generation III+ reactor, the most modern and well-established operational generation of nuclear power stations in the world. The main features include enhanced safety, higher operability, reduced dose

Fuel for thought

According to Hitachi Capital UK’s Future of Fuel report, published in November, businesses could save around £14 billion a year in fuel costs alone if all of Britain’s vans and HGVs were to switch to electricity.

The report estimated that electricity would be approximately 15 pence per mile cheaper than petrol or diesel for vans, and 38 pence per mile cheaper than diesel for HGVs. Over the combined 65.7 billion miles commercial vehicles travel each year, the fuel savings would total approximately £13.7 billion.

With efficient vans, trucks and HGVs crucial to many of the UK’s SMEs, Hitachi Capital UK has analysed the issues, concerns and opportunities for British businesses when it comes to green fuels.

A survey of 149 fleet professionals, included in the report, found that there is a strong will among businesses to adopt alternative...
Hitachi 800s on GWR

Great Western Railway’s brand new Intercity Express Train carried passengers for the first time on 16 October, marking the start of the biggest fleet upgrade on the Great Western in almost 40 years.

Providing more seats, more frequent trains, and shorter, more comfortable journeys, the Hitachi built Class 800 Intercity Express Train came into service initially on the line between Bristol Temple Meads and London Paddington. The new trains have over 24% more seating capacity than the High Speed Train they replace, increased legroom and luggage space, and more tables. A new timetable will be introduced once Network Rail’s electrification programme has been completed, adding even more seats and quicker, more frequent journeys.

The new Class 800, 10-carriage train was built in Britain by Hitachi and is expected to cover 803 miles on its first day, with two further five carriage trains operating as a second ten carriage train. In total the two trains covered over 1,550 miles on their first day in service, with the potential to carry over 6,500 passengers.

The trains will benefit from Network Rail’s route modernisation programme with electrification already delivered to Maidenhead; congestion-busting upgrades to the railway such as a dive under at Acton to take freight traffic off the mainline; improved stations with longer platforms and transformation of signalling, and track to help improve journeys for passengers.

The trains are being built at Hitachi’s purpose-built £82 million factory in Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, by a newly recruited workforce that is over 1,000 strong.

In total Hitachi will deliver 36 x 5 carriage and 21 x 9 carriage trains with the full fleet due in service by December 2018. A significant timetable change in January 2019 will realise the full capacity and frequency benefits the new trains will bring with journey times from Bristol slashed by up to 17 minutes, and by up to 14 minutes from Swansea.

A further fleet of 36 Intercity Express Trains – (known as Class 802s) has also been ordered from Hitachi to improve services between London Paddington and Exeter, Plymouth and Penzance. These trains are being built to cope with the more demanding geography of Devon and Cornwall and are due in passenger service this summer. Alongside new class 387 Electrostar trains operating commuter routes in London and the Thames Valley, the IETs will reduce GWR’s fleet age by more than half, and will help create 9,000 additional seats every day into London Paddington.

Hitachi on HS2 shortlist

On 2 November, HS2 Ltd revealed that Hitachi Rail Europe has been shortlisted to deliver Britain’s next generation of state-of-the-art high speed trains, which will carry tens of thousands of people every day across the UK’s new high speed network and beyond.

HS2 Ltd said: “Operating at speeds of up to 225mph (360kph), the new fleet will deliver unparalleled levels of reliability, speed and comfort as well as providing much-needed extra capacity between the UK’s major cities and giving a boost to high tech skills and expertise in the UK”

Hitachi electric In Scotland

In late November, the first of a seventy strong fleet of fully fitted Hitachi electric trains arrived in Scotland, bringing passenger services another step closer.

The new Class 385 train joined the two test trains currently completing their final phase of route testing between Edinburgh and Glasgow on the newly electrified line.

Transport Minister Humza Yousaf was able to get on-board the brand new passenger service train while it did its latest run on Hitachi’s test track at the Newton Aycliffe factory, near Darlington.

He was also able to see the final stages of work being completed by staff at the £82m facility on a number of new trains that are bound for Scotland in the coming months.

The new trains are to be introduced firstly on the Edinburgh - Glasgow via Falkirk High route, providing more seats, better accessibility, faster journeys and modern facilities before being gradually rolled out across other central belt services in the next 18 months.

The three coach unit, one of 70 trains which are being built as part of the new £370m Class 385 electric fleet, is expected to arrive in Craigtounenny depot in Scotland by the weekend after which it will undergo rigorous route testing, staff familiarisation and driver training to enable it to come into service in the coming months.

Production at the Newton Aycliffe factory is ramping up to enable the full Edinburgh-Glasgow via Falkirk High services to become “all electric” next year.

Azuma makes Highlands debut

Virgin’s state-of-the-art Azuma train made its inaugural visit to the Highlands just before Christmas, as preparations to transform cross-border rail services gathered pace.

The iconic train, which takes its name from the Japanese word for “east”, will be rolled out on Virgin Trains’ east coast later this year, ushering in a new era of comfort and style for rail passengers.

It passed through some of the most iconic scenery on the UK rail network as it journeyed first north of Edinburgh to Inverness, before travelling back to a depot in Doncaster in the early hours of Saturday morning.

The test run by manufacturer Hitachi is part of a
programme to prepare Scotland for the 65-strong Azuma fleet. The first of these will enter service in December 2018 as part of a two-year rollout programme, with Azuma services due to operate from five of Scotland’s seven cities from 2019.

The Azuma is set to be one of the most advanced passenger trains on the UK rail network, able to accelerate faster than existing trains and providing more comfort and space inside.

Hitachi is building the new trains at their Newton Aycliffe factory in the North East of England, home to 1000 train builders including 50 apprentices.

The firm has invested £18 million to modernise depots at Aberdeen, Inverness and Edinburgh to ensure they are able to service the new fleet, securing long-term engineering jobs at all three locations.

Hitachi produces

On December 19, Hitachi announced that production work had begun on two test trains in Japan which will arrive in the UK in 2018, bringing the company’s TransPennine Express intercity service, due to start in 2019, a step closer to reality.

The modern Japanese bullet train-inspired fleet is being built by Hitachi and financed by Angel Trains.

The trains will be maintained at Hitachi’s newly built £80million depot in Doncaster, home to 250 employees and four apprentices. Long-term jobs will also be secured at existing depots in Liverpool, Newcastle and Edinburgh, which all play a role in maintaining the trains.

Investment in the trains and new depot come alongside the Great North Rail Project, which will upgrade key parts of the route to enable better services.

From 2019 this fleet will connect major cities in the North of England and Scotland and will run from Manchester and Liverpool, across the iconic Pennines to cities such as Leeds, York, Newcastle and Edinburgh. The trains will provide 161 additional seats compared to the existing trains on the popular intercity route. Customers will benefit from spacious carriages, providing extra legroom and additional luggage space.

Hitachi is using its famous Japanese-bullet train technology to make the new fleet light and aerodynamic. The 19 trains will all be hybrid, meaning they can switch seamlessly mid-journey between electric and diesel power. The trains, able to run in either five or ten carriage formation, are capable of speeds of up to 140mph in electric mode and 125 mph using diesel engines. By using modern MTU engines from Rolls-Royce, the trains will cut harmful emissions under diesel power by up to 90%.

The new fleet of Hitachi intercity trains (Class 802) were ordered by FirstGroup for TransPennine Express in 2016. The trains will be built across Hitachi’s global manufacturing sites.

Testing in the UK will begin in summer 2018 ahead of the trains entering passenger service in December 2019.

JETRO Europe survey

In early December, the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) published the results of its 2017 Survey on Business Conditions of Japanese-Affiliated Companies in Europe based on information gathered between 25 September and 23 October. JETRO received 952 valid responses from the 1154 companies sent the questionnaire.

Regarding operating profit forecasts, 71.6% of Japanese-affiliated companies operating in the UK estimated “profit” for 2017, down on the 76.6% average from such companies in other EU countries. This 5% difference represents a widening gap from last year 3.1%.

48.2% of respondents expected 2018 profits to be the same as those for 2017, while 42.7% expected to see an increase. 33.5% of UK based companies responded that the British domestic market’s future prospects had slightly worsened, revealing companies’ growing concern over the economic slowdown caused by Brexit.

Regarding operational challenges, “Securing human resources” (cited by 51.7% of companies, an increase of 3.9% on last year) emerged as the biggest issue moving forward, indicating that the tightening of labour markets has pushed securing top talent to the top of companies’ agendas. “European political and social conditions” again ranked highly amongst operational challenges, particularly in Spain (where the Catalonia independence issue has raised tensions) and in the UK (Brexit withdrawal negotiations). Meanwhile, concern over “Exchange rate fluctuations” fell away significantly to 30.9% of respondents, following a year of relative stability in this area.

Regarding the business outlook for the next 1 to 2 years, 51.2% of respondents expected to expand, while 45.1% predicted no change. Only 0.6% replied that they might relocate to a third country or withdraw from their present country. For the UK only 34.7% of respondents forecasted “Expansion”, remaining in the same position as last year, the second lowest country of those surveyed. The number of UK based companies indicating “Reduction” has slightly risen since the previous year to 5.7%, with reasons such as “Due to the impact of the UK’s exit from the EU, plans to relocate to other EEA countries are now under consideration” being cited. Whilst 8 UK based companies stated an intention to expand the function of their regional headquarters, this result nonetheless represents a near halving of the 2015 figure (19). Furthermore, only 10 such companies have reported an intention to expand their regional headquarters since 2016, pointing to the possible impact of Brexit on decision-making.

When questioned specifically about the UK’s exit from the EU, 46.9% of UK based companies (against 26.9% for the rest of Europe) responded that it would have a negative impact on their future business, the highest response rate amongst all European countries. The most frequently cited reasons for this negative impact were customs tariffs, difficulty in securing human resources and changes to regulations.
and legislation, on top of currency and exchange rate concerns.

The top two concerns for both Japanese-affiliated companies in the UK and in other EU states were "Economic slump in the UK" and "Changes in UK regulations and legislation". The response rates for both choices were 20 points higher for UK based companies. Regarding future changes to UK regulation and legislation, "Customs Tariffs" was the greatest concern across the board. The issue of complying with future EU General Personal Data Regulation (GDPR) was a significantly higher concern amongst UK based companies than those in the rest of Europe.

Amongst companies who responded that they were currently reviewing or considering to review the location of their base, the largest percentage was UK based companies who selected reviewing relocation of their Sales function at 57.4%, followed by regional headquarters function at 48.1% and manufacturing function at 20.4%. Over 80% of companies from both the UK and other EU member states responded that they were already preparing or considering to prepare to "Partly Relocate to another EU Member State". Less than 20% of them selected "Completely Relocate to another EU Member State". The two most mentioned candidate countries for relocation were Germany (23 companies) and the Netherlands (6).

Companies were asked about the length of transition period necessary should the UK not stay in the EU single market or customs union. A significant number of both UK (50%) and other EU (73.9%) based companies responded that "new customs clearance procedures, including cases where there are 0% tariffs" could potentially be dealt with by the withdrawal date. For "reviewing supply chains", UK based companies responded that a transition period of at least 2 years would be necessary in the scenario where "tariffs are imposed". However, the timeframe was shorter in the scenario where "customs procedures occur even if tariffs are 0%". Concerning compliance with new UK standards and certification, a large number of UK based non-manufacturing companies replied that at least a year would be necessary after the withdrawal date. This same trend was also confirmed for EU based manufacturing companies.

Looking at Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), 14.3% of respondents Europe-wide stated that a Japan-UK EPA would be a major advantage after the UK has left the EU. Even when narrowed down to UK based companies, only 26.7% said it would be a major advantage, a much lower proportion response rate than that for the Japan-EU EPA at 45.1%. These results indicate that even for UK based companies the Japan-EU EPA is currently a higher priority than a future Japan-UK EPA.

For more information on the survey, please contact:

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**JOGMEC: ITOCHU strike oil**

Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) announced on 21 November that CIECO Exploration and Production (UK) Limited (hereinafter "CIECO UK"), a wholly owned subsidiary of ITOCHU Corporation (ITOCHU) had commenced crude oil production from the Western Isles Development Project in the UK North Sea. JOGMEC provides financial guarantee covering a part of the development loan secured by ITOCHU.

CIECO UK, holding a working interest of Block 210/24a, has been pursuing Western Isles Development Project ("WIDP") at the aforementioned block with operator, Dana Petroleum Limited. The newly-built Floating Production, Storage and Offloading System is operating and approximately 40,000 barrels of gross daily production is expected at peak, equivalent to approximately 10,000 barrels per day as ITOCHU’s net production.

**Kawasaki tests AUV**

On 21 November, Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. announced its successful completion of a verification test for an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) in UK waters.

With a focus on the growing demand for pipeline maintenance in the offshore oil and gas fields, Kawasaki has been developing leading-edge component technologies of AUVs utilizing sophisticated underwater vehicle technologies fostered in-house over the years, with support from a subsidization project by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT).

An AUV is capable of autonomously assessing and acting according to its surrounding conditions and circumstances while carrying out preassigned missions, which stands in contrast to the more widely used remotely operated vehicle (ROV), which needs a tether cable for its operation. As a result, AUVs can be operated without dedicated operators on the mother ship or special onboard equipment. Furthermore, tasks such as charging and transferring collected inspection data to the mother ship can be carried out while the AUV is underwater, which enables longer deployment time and reduces the frequency of launching and recovery work. These are expected to reduce the burden of the ship crew, offer greater safety, and reduce maintenance-related costs.

The AUV verification test was carried out from November 6 to 20, 2017, at The Underwater Centre, a marine testing and training facility in Fort William, Scotland. Tests at sea used a prototype AUV and a charging station, and included automated docking of the AUV to the charging station, contactless charging, and large-capacity optical communication operations.

During the testing period, representatives from major oil and gas companies, underwater vehicle and equipment operating companies, UK government organizations, UK subsea scientific societies and other organizations
Kawasaki’s Rea 2nd With BBC

Taking motorcycling to the mainstream media, Kawasaki rider and WorldSBK Champion, Jonathan Rea, was among just 12 nominees for the prestigious 2017 BBC Sports personality of the year awarded on 17 December.

Making it into the top three when voting ceased, the Northern Irishman placed a highly creditable second, just losing out to Sir Mo Farah, the acclaimed athlete.

Now in its 63rd year, the BBC Sports Personality of the Year reflects a huge diversity of sport but it is still uncommon for motorcycling to be represented in this way – and even more uncommon for a motorcyclist to reach the podium.

With incredible support from his native Northern Irish fans and the huge numbers of those interested in motorcycling in the UK, Rea amassed 80,567 votes during the short voting period of the televised event. Rea is the first motorcycle rider to make the top 3 since the late, great Barry Sheene, who came third in 1977.

"Jonathan is a fantastic ambassador for Kawasaki and for motorcycle racing generally within the world of two wheels," commented Race Planning Manager for Kawasaki Motors Europe, Steve Guttridge.

"His appeal and desire to widen the sphere of influence of motorcycle racing has been proved by this amazing runner up award at the BBC Sports personality of the year. Everyone at Kawasaki is proud of Jonathan’s continuing achievements”.

Mitsui’s LINK-J sign MOU

On December 15 in London, Life Science Innovation Network Japan, Inc. (LINK-J), an incorporated association founded by Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd. and a group of volunteers from academia, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with One Nucleus for the purpose of creating innovations in life science.

One Nucleus is Europe’s largest life science organization, boasting 470 members including pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies and medical equipment manufacturers headquartered in the United Kingdom, together with a number of the world’s top-ranked universities. Based on the MOU, LINK-J and One Nucleus have agreed to provide a boost to commercialization and industrialization in life science and will mutually cooperate in creating new industries through open innovation over the next five years.

LINK-J and Mitsui Fudosan aim to contribute to the development of the life science industry in Japan and generally within the world of two wheels,” comment-ed Race Planning Manager for Kawasaki Motors Europe, Steve Guttridge.

"His appeal and desire to widen the sphere of influence of motorcycle racing has been proved by this amazing runner up award at the BBC Sports personality of the year. Everyone at Kawasaki is proud of Jonathan’s continuing achievements”.

NEC sponsors tennis

NEC Corporation once again sponsored the end of year Wheelchair Tennis Masters, which saw the world’s top ranked wheelchair tennis players in action at Loughborough University Tennis Centre.

The top eight men, eight women and six quad players qualified for the tournament based on the ITF Wheelchair Tennis Rankings of 16 October.

The NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters was originally established in 1994 and has been sponsored by NEC since its inception.

NEC is also the title sponsor of the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters and an Official Partner of the UNIQLO Wheelchair Tennis Tour. In 2017, the company celebrated 26 years of partnership with the ITF.

NEC acquires NPS

On 9 January, NEC announced the acquisition of UK-based IT services company Northgate Public Services Limited (NPS), accelerating the expansion of its international safety business. NEC is buying NPS for GBP 475 million from leading international private equity firm Cinven. This acquisition is expected to be completed by the end of January 2018.

Established in 1969, Northgate Public Services develops software and services for the public sector, mainly in the UK, and employs approximately 1,400 software engineers throughout the UK and India. NPS works closely with the British police and government organizations to deploy its business platform across a broad client base that includes local police forces, tax collection offices, social security offices and housing authorities.

NEC’s international safety business capitalizes on biometrics technologies, including face recognition and fingerprint recognition technologies that have been evaluated as the world’s most accurate, and provides identification systems to more than 30% of state police forces in the United States.

NEC’s proven track record of providing more than 700 systems in over 70 countries formed the basis for its selection among the top 10 life sciences and healthcare clusters in Europe. As of December 2017, the number of members stood at 470, including pharmaceutical companies, biotechnology companies and medical equipment manufacturers headquartered in the United Kingdom, as well as a number of the world’s leading universities, making it the largest life science group in Europe.

JCCI Review No. 80 (Winter 2017/18)
BoE Enlists NTT

On 20 December, NTT DATA announced that it had secured a place in the Bank of England’s (BoE) highly regarded FinTech Accelerator programme. In partnership with German start-up Reportix, NTT DATA is investigating the power and potential of effective data analysis and visualisation for the BoE. NTT DATA is just one of the companies chosen to showcase their expertise with emerging technologies and tackle the technological challenges facing the UK’s central bank, responsible for policy, regulation and operators.

To unleash a more effective approach to data analytics, NTT DATA and Reportix are exploring ways to store, organise and combine the Bank’s regulatory and analytical data in a more flexible way, based on the XBRL standard.

The team is developing a user-friendly WebApp, capable of sophisticated data analysis, whatever the scale or complexity of the data. By improving the accessibility of the data and its mode of storage, the app enables BoE analysts to see the data at their disposal, conduct more effective analysis and data-driven decision-making. It will help the BoE make connections between data sets used for economic and financial stability analysis, visualise trends in new and more easily interpreted ways, and make it much faster to roll out new XBRL-based taxonomies in the future.

The BoE, like the broader Financial Services industry, is looking to financial technology to assist in driving efficiencies and uncovering value in its data. This year’s BoE FinTech Accelerator involves projects focusing on large-scale data storage and analysis, machine learning and cyber security. In January 2018, the NTT DATA and Reportix team will be reviewing the app’s performance and long-term potential for more business units with the BoE and reporting back to the industry.

SmartestEnergy in Newcastle

On 15 January, independent supplier / aggregator SmartestEnergy announced that it was to provide the commercial services for the operations of the Tyne-mouth lithium-ion battery storage project developed in Newcastle by multinatio- nal power utility Enel.

Under the contract, SmartestEnergy will supply energy to and handle the output from the 25MW battery. SmartestEnergy will also provide services to support the four-year Enhanced Frequency Response (EFR) contract which the standalone battery project has secured with National Grid.

SmartestEnergy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Marubeni Corporation of Japan.

Toyota: 25 in Wales

In October, Toyota Motor Manufacturing (UK) Ltd celebrated the milestone of 25 Years of vehicle engine manufacturing in Wales. Guests of honour at the ceremony to mark the occasion were Cabinet Secre- tary for Economy and Infra- structure, Ken Skates AM and Minister for the UK Government in Wales, Guto Bebb MP.

Since the start of engine production in 1992 the plant has produced over 5.1 million engines/ engine sets in total and in 2010 became the first plant outside Japan to manufacture Toyota’s class leading Hybrid en- gine. The Engine plant cur- rently supplies to Toyota plants in Europe and across the World including Africa, Turkey, Japan and South America. The state of the art manufacturing facility in North Wales currently produces 1.6ltr and 1.8ltr petrol engines and 1.8ltr Hybrid engines.

Commenting on this important milestone, the Economy and Infrastruc- ture Secretary, Ken Skates said: “I am delighted to be at Toyota to celebrate 25 year of engine production here on Deeside. As a Gov- ernment we are proud of our strong relationship with Toyota, indeed they are one of our key anchor compa- nies, and of huge strategic importance to both the North Wales and broader Welsh economy.”

“Their investment in the plant demonstrates their commitment to the region and we are proud to see them continue to grow and develop. This is a fantastic day for Toyota, the local community and of course our Welsh economy.”

“Toyota are known and respected throughout the world. As a Welsh Govern- ment we look forward to continuing our productive relationship with the company and I am optimistic that there will be a lot of more milestones ahead for us to celebrate together.”

… and in Derbyshire

On 22 December, Toyota Manufacturing UK (TMUK) celebrated 25 years of building cars at its plant at Burnaston, Derby- shire. To commemorate the
Ishida hits 20

In October, packing line solutions specialist Ishida Europe celebrated 20 years of manufacturing in the UK.

The company opened a dedicated European facility for the assembly of its market-leading multihed weighers and checkweighers in Woodgate, Birmingham in September 1997. Since then UK staff numbers have increased from around 40 to over 400 and production has more than quadrupled. Today the range of products manufactured for the EMEA market also includes filling / distribution systems, graders, tray sealers, pick & place robots, seal testers and the recently-launched award-winning AirScan leak detector.

In addition, as Ishida has further expanded its offering over the years to include the design of complete packing lines for a variety of fresh food applications, the Woodgate factory is also involved in the supply of infrastructure equipment such as gantries and conveyors for complete turnkey factory installations.

While in 1997 the majority of components for the machines came from Ishida Europe’s parent company in Japan, Ishida Europe focused from the start on the establishment of a high-quality local supplier network. This has helped to shorten lead times, while providing business for a variety of specialist UK manufacturers.

The Ishida Europe manufacturing facility also provides a valuable training operation for the next generation of engineers with a comprehensive apprenticeship programme. Currently there are 21 apprentices at various stages of learning within the business and earlier this year Ishida apprentice Emily James was named the national-level EEF First Year Apprentice of the Year.

Ishida Europe also runs an exchange programme which enables both component suppliers and end customers to visit the manufacturing operation and understand more about the processes behind the production of Ishida equipment.

Earlier this year a further £240 million was announced, upgrading the factory to enable production of the next generation of cars. Over the 25 years, the plant has attracted continual investment. In 2010 TMUK Burnaston was the first Toyota plant outside Japan to build hybrid vehicles, which now make up 60% of output.

Lucite helps students

In October, and for the third year running, Lucite International (LI), a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Rayon, collaborated with ESH Added Value on their Building My Skills program to offer expert advice on employability skills to students.

This year, employees from Lucite’s sites at both Cassel and Wilton in the North East of England worked together to create engaging sessions aimed at helping students across the region discover more about their potential career pathways.

ESH Group addresses the widening skills crisis in the UK by working with businesses like LI who can provide students with a well-rounded introduction to the world of work and help them to develop transferable skills. Through working with ESH, LI aims to better equip young people with the skills they require to enter employment while also inspiring them to begin thinking about their future careers. The Company is also keen to play a part in significantly reducing the percentage of school leavers who lack essential job skills for the workplace, which is currently high at 75%.

The primary focus of the sessions at local secondary schools was to discuss the various pathways open to young people as they consider their future career. By sharing a timeline of some of LI’s employees’ varying journeys, students were able to see that there was not just one rigid road to employment.

The diversity of roles at LI, from chemical engineering to the commercial area, provoked students to think about the sort of careers that might interest them.

During the 2017/18 academic year, the Building My Skills program will engage over 11,000 15-18 year old students in 80 secondary schools across the North of England and Scotland. By working collaboratively with over 130 businesses from 20 different sectors, this will generate around 60,000 hours of hands-on engagement in the world of work.
Mazda:
Drivers want to drive

On 14 December, Mazda announced the results of a survey into opinions on driverless cars, and concluded that most of us still want to be in control.

Mazda’s research, carried out by Ipsos MORI, revealed that the joy of driving is alive and well in the UK, with 71% of people surveyed saying they would still want to drive, even with self-driving technology available, whilst only 29% actively welcome the arrival of autonomous vehicles.

Mazda took these findings as support for their view that autonomous driving technology should act as a co-pilot, available when needed to avoid accidents, but with the driver in control of the driving process allowing the pure exhilaration of driving and the freedom it represents to be experienced by our customers.

The research – which was commissioned as part of Mazda’s Drive Together campaign – polled 11,008 adults across key European markets, including 1,002 in the UK, and revealed that across those countries an average of 66% of drivers wanted to remain behind the wheel even if self-driving cars become widely available.

Interestingly, there was no evidence of greater support for self-driving cars in younger age groups across Europe: for example 18-24 year olds (33%) were no more likely to welcome self-driving cars than 25-34 year olds (36%) or 35-44 year olds (34%).

The research also revealed a significant emotional connection between car and driver as demonstrated by the following statistics: 70% of drivers questioned in the UK “hope that future generations will continue to have the option to drive cars”, whilst 62% of respondents stated that they have driven “just for fun” and 81% of those who enjoy driving saying it is because it “gives them independence”.

In addition 55% stated that driving is about much more than just getting from A to B and 39% agree driving is in danger of becoming a “forgotten pleasure”.

Further findings from the research show that 54% of Europeans questioned have been for a drive “just for fun”, whilst 55% agree driving with family or friends can be a “special experience”, while in Spain, Italy, Sweden and Poland this figure rises to more than six in ten drivers.

Comparisons with other activities are also revealing, with 37% preferring driving for fun to computer games, 23% choosing driving compared to a drink in a bar or playing sports, with the latter as high as 37% in the UK.

Mitsubishi backs netball

On 8 January, Mitsubishi Motors in the UK announced the start of a brand new partnership with England Netball.

The development sees the brand become an official partner of England Netball – the national governing body of what is England’s biggest female team sport.

The partnership establishes Mitsubishi Motors as the official vehicle supplier to England Netball and the brand’s logo will also feature prominently on the Elite Squad’s uniforms and warm-up kits, as well as on the coaches’ kits.

Mitsubishi Motors’ support of England Netball builds on its successful national partnerships with England Rugby and Scottish Rugby, and with the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials. As demonstrated with its commitment to rugby and equestrianism, Mitsubishi Motors’ backing extends all the way from top-flight to grassroots level of the sport.

Plans are in place for the brand to assist England Netball with a variety of projects to support the growth and development of the sport across the country, while England Netball will also be provided with a fleet of Mitsubishi vehicles, including the award-winning Outlander petrol/electric PHEV and all-new Eclipse Cross SUV for their regional staff.

The partnership comes at an exciting time for both England Netball and Mitsubishi Motors. The sporting organisation celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2016 and is at the forefront of netball’s increasing popularity with over 92,000 affiliated members and at least 1.4 million women playing the game each week.

LEAF in production

On 19 December, Nissan announced that production of the all-new Nissan LEAF was officially underway for European customers.

With the first new LEAFs now rolling off the line at Nissan’s plant in Sunderland, UK, the countdown has now started to the first customers receiving their vehicles in February.

The Nissan LEAF has been in production in the UK since 2013 for European markets, with more than 85,000 units sold in Europe since 2011, when the first deliveries began from Nissan’s Oppama plant in Japan. Following an initial investment of £420m, the introduction of the new Nissan LEAF has been supported by a further £36m investment in Nissan Sunderland Plant, supporting more than 2,000 jobs at Nissan and in the UK supply chain.

In addition to the new LEAF, Nissan Sunderland Plant also manufactures the market-leading crossovers Qashqai and Juke and the Infiniti brand’s Q30 and QX30 models. Last year the plant celebrated its 30th anniversary, and this year total volume surpassed 9m vehicles, cementing its position as the biggest UK car plant of all time.

YEN rises


Onward Holdings Co. Ltd is a Japanese company
that manages group subsidiaries and affiliates engaged in the apparel, services, and resort businesses as well as related business activities.

Heptares collaborates

On 10 January, Heptares Therapeutics, the wholly-owned subsidiary of Sosei Group Corporation, announced that it had entered into a new drug research and development collaboration with Imperial College London. The strategic multi-year collaboration has brought together complementary teams at Heptares and Imperial College London seeking to rapidly advance drug discovery and translational research focused on multiple new and existing G protein-coupled receptor (GPCR) disease target opportunities associated with the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.

It aims to leverage the significant recent progress made in understanding how GPCRs in the GI tract can be modulated and will support the application of Heptares structure-based approaches to develop novel treatments for GI disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease.

Under the collaboration, Heptares will fund and support various programmes of work in terms of target discovery and validation and will be responsible for the progression and commercialisation of any compounds resulting from the collaboration. The collaboration will also support ongoing discovery and development programmes at Sosei / Heptares.

Subaru / Isuzu sponsor Wales

On 14 November, Subaru announced that it had signed a shirt partnership with the Welsh Rugby Union that will see Subaru logos on Wales’ away jersey for the next two years.

The announcement followed fast on the heels of the news that Isuzu were to sponsor the red home jersey until 2021.

The Subaru branding will be worn by Wales senior men’s and women’s teams and made its debut appearance against Georgia at the Principality Stadium on 18 November.

WRU chief executive Martyn Phillip said of the deals, “To associate with two hugely significant Japanese brands in this way as we build towards the Rugby World Cup in 2019 in Japan is a major coup for Welsh rugby and will pay dividends as it further improves the global appeal of our national game.”