

MARKET FORCES

The Suffolk market town of Newmarket is best known as a big centre of horse racing. But it is also the birthplace of a plant hire company that, during the last 30 years has grown to have six depots in order to cover not only Suffolk but also the adjacent counties.

Newmarket Plant Hire was started in 1987 by Carl Jarvis to formalise the external hire of machinery originally bought for use by the family contracting business. Within five years the focus was totally on the hire business and subsequently Carl Jarvis, in his role as Managing Director, grasped opportunities to expand geographically through opening new depots and strategic acquisitions.

Spreading Out

The first foray outside Suffolk was in 1999 when Newmarket Plant Hire opened a depot in Cambridge. This led, the following year, to the purchase of Sarbir Plant Hire which had a better facility in Cambridge as well as depots in Harlow, Essex and King's Lynn, Norfolk – the latter then still trading as Watlington Plant Hire.

Subsequent expansion saw a base opened in Luton, Bedfordshire during 2002 through the purchase of the tool hire business of P&R Plant Hire. Three years later Rawley Plant

Over the last three decades, Newmarket Plant Hire has developed to become a significant provider of plant and tool rental in East Anglia. Nick Johnson reports.



NPH Managing Director Carl Jarvis (right) and Operations Director Ashley Tarrant in front of the special 30th Anniversary Thwaites dumper.

Harlow, Newmarket, Ipswich and Kings Lynn. And, as the business celebrates its 30th Anniversary, Carl Jarvis says that he would like to add a facility in Norwich to reinforce the company's presence in Norfolk.

The development of the company over the last three decades can be seen by comparing the three logos it has used. As the company expanded beyond its birthplace, and all locations progressively adopted the Newmarket Plant Hire trading name, less prominence was given to the word Newmarket. So now the large three letters NPH on the current logo provide a modern looking, bold identity that is less location specific whilst making the company kit and vehicles more instantly recognisable.

The appointment of Ashley Tarrant as Operations Director at the beginning of 2015 brought in new expertise and helped NPH move forward. Since his arrival, the latest logo and an improved website have given the Group a higher profile and staff changes have been made in order to create a really enthusiastic and knowledgeable team.

Hire in Basildon, Essex was acquired. And the presence in Suffolk was strengthened in 2006 with the opening of a new depot in Ipswich. Today, Newmarket Plant Hire no longer has a base in Bedfordshire and all of its many clients in East Anglia are served from its current six depots in Basildon, Cambridge,



NPH has standardised on Kubota for all its compact excavators. This is the one-off golden KX080-4x midi.

JCB machines in the company's modern hire fleet include Loadall telehandlers and 13 tonne JS131LC tracked excavators.

This spacious workshop is part of the large Kings Lynn depot which was rebuilt three years ago.



Ashley Tarrant had previously worked for major hire companies including A-Plant, Hewden and HSS as well as smaller, more localised independents like Charles Wilson Engineers. This broad experience has helped reshape NPH and it is interesting that Carl Jarvis says: "We now model ourselves on the old Hewden – they got it right in their day with professionals providing a quality service."

NPH operates a flat, responsive management structure headed up by Carl Jarvis, Ashley Tarrant and Finance Director Chris Last who has been with the company for over 20 years. Each depot has its own experienced manager and a core fleet of machines and equipment. Hires are taken through each depot and the Group has two sales reps out on the road – each covering an area encompassing three depots.

Modern Fleet

Ashley Tarrant reports that NPH now moves its fleet around between depots to maximise utilisation. As well as modernising its plant holding, the company has also introduced a more comprehensive tool hire range and each depot has its own retail area for selling consumables, such as diamond blades.

In recent years NPH has employed more workshop personnel and each depot has at least three fitters with one being mobile. To maintain good back-up, the company is currently training two apprentice fitters but Carl Jarvis bemoans the fact that getting more is difficult as too few youngsters currently appreciate the potential of a career in this industry.

In the last few years, the depot in Kings Lynn has been modernised by getting a bigger building to provide both better office

NEWMARKET PLANT HIRE LTD.



Visual progression – from just the full company name to the latest higher profile, less town specific, NPH logo.

accommodation and a more spacious workshop. This location also has a sizeable yard so it is the base for much of the company's larger plant. Next depot in line for a rebuild is Harlow.

To benefit from running a standardised non-op plant fleet, NPH has selected telehandlers (up to 17.0m) from JCB and Manitou, compact excavators from Kubota, site dumpers (up to 9.0 tonnes payload) from Thwaites, tandem vibrating rollers (with drum widths from 800 to 1,380mm) from Hamm and portable air compressors from Atlas Copco.

The company runs 13 tonne JCB JS131LC tracked excavators and one JCB 3CX (which has its own dedicated operator). The JCB Hydradig is being evaluated and, due to demand, there may be a second 3CX purchased next year. Latest additions to the fleet are another six Manitou MT265H telehandlers, two Hamm HD14 tandem rollers and 12 Trime X-Eco mobile lighting towers.

Four of the latest Thwaites site dumpers with cabs and camera systems have also been ordered – two 6 tonners and two 9 tonners.

Access platforms in the fleet include Niftylift and Genie machines with the highest booms extending up to 17.0m. And the company runs its own delivery and collection vehicles – the biggest of which is a Mercedes Actros 2545 tractor unit with a Nootboom triple axle low loader trailer based at Kings Lynn. To upgrade control of all its kit, NPH is investing in new generation plant hire computer software.

Mobile Features

It has chosen the popular inspHire system and Carl Jarvis is looking forward to implementing all the advanced inspHire Mobile features particularly those that will better manage workshop jobs, deliveries, collections and exchanges. "The ability of our transport drivers to take pictures of our machines on their hand held devices after drop off and before pick up will greatly help reduce arguments about the responsibility for any site damage."

Not to be out done by Newmarket Race Course with its Havana Gold Newmarket Stakes, NPH now has golden plant. Its 30th anniversary has been visually marked by having three new machines delivered with special golden markings – an 8 tonne Kubota KX080-4x, a Manitou MT1335 telehandler and a 9 tonne Thwaites dumper.

i For more information on NPH please use the reader enquiry number below

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