

# REPORT

06-07

Port-centric logistics  
and manufacturing

12-13

Boosting economic  
growth in the North

14-15

Lessons from Denmark's  
green transition

30-31

A new era of  
low-carbon power

## Kelly Tolhurst

The Maritime Minister on  
supply chain resilience

04-05



## In this issue

Welcome to the summer issue of Report magazine, which is published at a time when we are seeing the gradual easing of COVID-19 lockdown, whilst businesses continue to work hard to support the UK economy.

In our lead article by UK Maritime Minister, Kelly Tolhurst MP, she thanks the maritime workforce for keeping supply chains moving despite the new set of challenges presented by the pandemic.

This issue focuses on the potential drivers of economic recovery. CBRE outlines the opportunities offered by port-centric manufacturing. Martin Vickers MP and Chair of the APPG for Freeports, argues that freeports could help rebalance the economy and create new jobs in the North.

Other highlights include an update from Maritime UK on the progress made by the maritime sector when it comes to promoting greater diversity and inclusion and insights from European partners. These include lessons learnt by the port sector from Denmark's green transition and the historic importance of the UK-Dutch trade partnership, as outlined by the Port of Amsterdam.

Also in this issue, Patrick Towner, Sales Director at Metsä Fibre UK, provides an insight into the company's commitment to a sustainable future and use of technology to increase efficiency across a complex multisite operation.

Also on the theme of sustainability, this issue's concluding article focuses on the new era of low-carbon power and how ABP's ports provide the perfect blend of expertise, facilities and flexibility to serve the offshore wind sector and help catalyse supply chain decarbonisation. I hope you enjoy reading this issue. Stay safe.



Henrik L. Pedersen  
ABP Chief Executive Officer

### 04–05

#### Maritime supply chain resilience

*The Maritime Minister, Kelly Tolhurst MP, thanks the maritime workforce for keeping supply chains moving and recounts key achievements over the past year, which provide strong foundations for greater economic resilience that will help businesses recover from the COVID-19 crisis.*



### 10–11

#### The power of connection

*Chrissie Clarke, Programme Manager at Maritime UK, discusses some of the latest progress the maritime sector has made in building a more diverse workforce and describes some of the resources companies can use to help.*



### 06–07

#### The great potential of port centric logistics and manufacturing

*Bruce Robertson, CBRE's Head of Supply Chain Advisory for the EMEA region, discusses the unique set of advantages offered by ports to occupiers interested in pursuing opportunities in port-centric manufacturing and logistics.*



### 12–13

#### Levelling up and boosting economic growth in the North

*Henri Murison, Director at the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, discusses how to rebalance and grow the economy in the North.*



### 14–15

#### Denmark's green transition: lessons for the UK ports sector

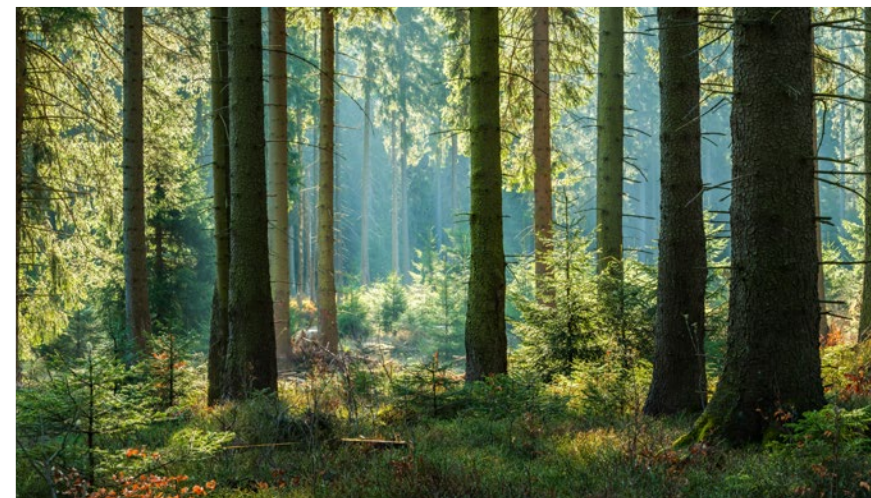
*Jakob Svane, Secretary General of the Danish Shipbrokers and Port Operators association, discusses the green transition of Danish society and its consequences for the Danish port sector.*



### 20–21

#### Metsä Group: building a solid foundation for a sustainable future

*Patrick Towner, Sales Director at Metsä Fibre UK, part of Metsä Group, delves deeper into the company's commitment to sustainability, its multisite collaboration with ABP and its resource-efficient production processes designed to help meet industry needs.*



### 16–17

#### Port of Amsterdam on the power of joint efforts

*Mark Hoolwerf, Area Manager at the Port of Amsterdam, discusses the historic significance of the UK-Dutch trade partnership and the importance of maintaining strong collaboration links to help navigate challenging times.*



### 18–19

#### Closing the South-North productivity gap

*Martin Vickers MP, Chair of the APPG for Freeports, discusses the myriad of benefits the introduction of freeports can bring, not only by driving prosperity across the UK but also by creating jobs in the North and re-balancing the economy.*



#### Also in this issue

News Wrap  
22–24

—

An estate with a view: ABP Property  
25

—

In the loop  
26–27

—

A day in the life...  
28–29

—

View from the Bridge:  
A new era of low-carbon power  
30–31

If you would like to share your perspective on the future of trade and the maritime industry, please get in touch at [report@abports.co.uk](mailto:report@abports.co.uk)

## Maritime supply chain resilience



The Maritime Minister, Kelly Tolhurst MP, expresses her gratitude to the maritime workforce for keeping supply chains moving and recounts key achievements over the past year, which provide strong foundations for greater economic resilience that will help businesses recover from the COVID-19 crisis.

Let me start by thanking everyone in the ports sector for your incredible response to the coronavirus crisis, and for everything you have done over the past few months to keep this country moving and supplied with vital goods. Without your work and dedication, Britain would have ground to a halt, and we could not have supported the vast majority of the population who stayed at home.

Everyone from port managers to marine pilots has carried out their vital tasks under very challenging circumstances. You are all among the heroes of this pandemic. So once again, thank you.

However, the journey is not yet over. We undoubtedly have more difficult days to face, and no one can know for certain what the future holds. We may see changes in trade – such as changes to supply lines and new routes opening up around the world. So while it is vitally important that we take action

*“Without your work and dedication, Britain would have ground to a halt, and we could not have supported the vast majority of the population who stayed at home.”*

together to see through this crisis, we must also build resilience, secure the smooth recovery of the industry, and emerge in a strong position to take advantage of new opportunities.

My department and I are in regular discussion with every corner of the maritime industry but as an island nation, ports are particularly crucial to our future prosperity. Your continued engagement and support remains critical in ensuring that we make the right decisions for ports and their users, and I will continue to work closely with you.

Over the last year there has been much to celebrate within the industry. During London International Shipping Week, we launched the first Port Economic Partnership (PEP) with ABP at Southampton Port. PEPs represent a new approach by government and ports to create greater synergy between the private and public-sectors, to improve port infrastructure and boost capacity to help the industry grow.

Alongside this, we granted millions of pounds to ports across the country to increase their resilience in preparation for the UK's exit from the EU. This support allowed ports to prepare extra capacity and other resilience measures so that our critical trade routes are ready for us to come out of the transition period at the end of the year.

We also began planning up to 10 freeports around the country. This ambitious and exciting programme will help maximise the potential of our maritime industry and regenerate communities across the UK. Freeports will be national hubs for trade, innovation and commerce, and I welcome the substantial interest they have prompted within the industry. We'll be progressing this as soon as practicably possible.

After some of the most challenging and turbulent months in our recent history, I know we have a lot of hard work ahead. But I also know Britain's ports will continue delivering for the nation. And I look forward to a time where I can come and see all the fantastic work taking place, and thank you for your efforts in person. **I**



## The great potential of port-centric logistics and manufacturing



**CBRE**

Bruce Robertson, CBRE's Head of Supply Chain Advisory for the EMEA region, discusses the unique set of advantages offered by ports to occupiers interested in pursuing opportunities in port-centric manufacturing and logistics.

Many UK ports have development land and want to know how best to use it. This requires an in-depth appreciation of each port's value proposition to potential occupiers and the value to the ports themselves. Such a win-win scenario would offer the occupier a long-term economic solution for their operations and offer the port a profitable operation, often securing import and export volumes over the quay.

Development land, either within the port boundary or in close proximity, could be used to develop manufacturing and logistics operations that would be able to take advantage of the facilities and services that ports naturally provide, such as easy access to import and export routes, import and export administrative processes, rail heads and terminals, container and cargo handling expertise, green energy supplies and an abundance of labour. The recent Freeports initiative, likely to be implemented within the next two years, will enable certain nominated ports to potentially offer further economic and ease-of-planning benefits to prospective occupiers.

However, by their very nature, ports are often not necessarily front of mind when it comes to optimal location i.e. they may be far from the heartland of midlands manufacturing and the 'golden triangle' of UK logistics and distribution operations. This means that ports need to work doubly hard at attracting occupiers, being crystal clear about their value propositions

and being willing to work collaboratively with potential occupiers to build up mutually attractive business cases.

Recent industrial property trends suggest that anyone with development land should be well-placed to offer occupiers the capacity they need. This is because the market for industrial space in the UK is booming, with take-up growing year-on-year and vacancy rates as low as 5%. The dynamics behind this are complex but one major driver is the rapid recent growth in online retailing, which typically needs three times the space of traditional store and wholesale fulfilment. Online penetration is forecast to grow even more rapidly over the next few years, increasing the need for UK industrial space.

Third party logistics providers (3PLs) and online retailers dominate recent space take-up at almost 50%. At the same time manufacturing take-up is less than 10% but growing slowly.

There is also an increasing need for design-and-build properties, i.e. those that are designed to an occupier's exact specification rather than speculative 'generic' builds or unsuitable second-hand properties.

This increase in demand for design-and-build puts the onus on ports to have their development land physically ready. For example, they need to complete environmental checks, planning applications and plateauing so that occupiers need wait no longer than

necessary once they commit to a build. Build and fit-out that takes 18 months or less to hand over in operational condition is the benchmark.

Although manufacturing is a small proportion of the UK's GDP and recent industrial space take-up, it remains a key target sector for ports due to the relative insensitivity of transport cost to location, their need to often import and export and the potential to offer Freeport incentives.

*“Ports need to work doubly hard at attracting occupiers, being crystal clear about their value propositions.”*

Parcel carriers build and operate dense UK networks of depots, sortation centres and cross-docks, established in order to achieve high service levels (short transit times) at acceptable transport costs. This means that they build capacity nationwide, not only in locations that would be considered 'optimal' in less dense networks. This makes certain port locations attractive for parcel carriers, or indeed any other occupiers with high service-level aspirations.

Online businesses that use parcel carrier networks may also find port-based operations attractive. This is because parcel carrier rates in the UK tend to be very insensitive to the distance from occupier warehouse to customer –

# LOGISTICS

and often do not vary with distance at all. Proximity to a parcel carrier location, depot or sortation centre, is important to enable a late order cut-off time to be achieved, and many UK port locations are within a just few miles of such injection points. In addition, many online businesses import their volumes to the UK in containers, again making certain ports attractive locations.

Similarly, 3PLs build capacity nationwide to make themselves attractive to many types of occupier and so could benefit from establishing operations at or close to certain UK ports. Traditional UK outbound distribution networks made up of a central national distribution centre and several regional distribution centres (RDC) often have RDCs that are close to ports.

Container ports are natural places to establish inbound logistics centres where containers can be de-stuffed and products shipped to retailers' and wholesalers' distribution networks, branches and stores. Such a facility can provide cost-effective transport, e.g. Northern ports serving Northern locations. In addition, container import centres can remove the need for the retailer or wholesaler to establish complex, non-core and capacity-intensive activities at their own capacity-constrained warehouses.

In summary, port locations are attractive to many types of occupier. Especially where ports have land physically ready and are sure of different value propositions to specific occupier sectors. They also need to be willing to work collaboratively with occupiers to establish win-win operations in order to deliver projects successfully. This combination of factors offered by ports, together with the ability to establish an expert supply chain, labour, real estate, development, planning, port operations and financial terms is key to ensuring the best outcome for any potential occupier. **■**

# PORTS

# MANUFACTURING

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## The power of connection



Chrissie Clarke, Programme Manager (Skills and Diversity) at Maritime UK, discusses some of the latest progress the maritime sector has made in building a more diverse workforce and some of the resources companies can use to help them along the way.

On Tuesday 5 May, Maritime UK, the industry body for the maritime sector, celebrated a key milestone on the road to achieving greater diversity in the maritime sector by launching its new 'Diversity in Maritime' programme.

This is in line with the UK government's Maritime 2050 strategy, which states that: "The maritime workforce of the future will be diverse. New roles, new technologies and a changing image of the sector will draw in people from all backgrounds across the entire UK."

*"The maritime workforce of the future will be diverse. New roles, new technologies and a changing image of the sector will draw in people from all backgrounds across the entire UK."*

Maritime UK has launched 'Diversity in Maritime' in direct response to the flagship strategy's recommendations, alongside the establishment of the new Maritime Skills Commission. Taken together, these steps will ensure the sector has a continuous pipeline of highly skilled, diverse people across its shipping, ports, services, engineering and leisure marine industries. The UK government has provided £730,000 to boost diversity, well-being and skills in maritime.

A central part of the Diversity in Maritime programme, is the 'Women in Maritime' network, established in 2018. The network continues to grow and operate as an open, safe-space community to discuss barriers and deliver a range of gender-focused programmes and initiatives. According to the Maritime HR Association's 2019 Gender Market Analysis report, which captured data for over 30,000 employees working in shore-based positions around the globe, the number of women working in the sector increased by 7% over the last 12 months.

The Diversity in Maritime programme includes the establishment of networks across diversity challenge areas with two inaugural new groups, 'LGBT+ in Maritime' and 'Mental Health in Maritime'. There are four working groups that support the programme: Retention, Recruitment, Total Package and a new group focusing on Communications and Events. Maritime UK is calling upon individuals in the sector to join them.

On Sunday 17 May, the 'LGBT+ in Maritime' network celebrated International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia and shared a blog piece written by its Chair, Danny McGowan, International Organiser, Nautilus International. In addition, the Chair of the 'Mental Health in Maritime' network, Stuart Pollard, and Vice Chair, Caitlin Vaughan, have been encouraging the sector to join the new network and share best practice guides during #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek (18-24 May).

The Diversity in Maritime programme involves a range of initiatives including 'The Pledge', signatories of which make clear their support for creating positive change within their respective organisations, and collectively, across the UK maritime sector. Each pledge signatory has the opportunity to profile

*"The number of women working in the sector increased by 7% over the last 12 months."*

their work to improve diversity within their respective organisation. To date over 120 companies have signed the Pledge and Maritime UK is working to increase this number.

The second programme element consists of 'The Charter'. The Women in Maritime Charter was launched in September 2018 during Maritime UK Week. The Charter creates a framework to challenge companies to make progress on gender diversity and is supported by the network to realise those targets. Charter companies are required to agree an 'action plan', setting out individual targets for each participating company. A key commitment is that companies identify a member of senior management responsible for implementation of the action plan as well as distributing a survey to staff on workplace culture. Performance against action plans will be self-assessed via an online portal. Seven companies are Charter Certified, and Maritime UK are looking forward to announcing more Charter companies soon.

Thirdly, there is also a 'Speaker Bank', which provides a portfolio of female speakers spanning a range of different roles, levels and sectors across the maritime industry. Maritime UK, with the networks, are now expanding the Speaker Bank to profile people from the maritime sector with expertise on mental health and LGBT+.

In addition to this, an interview pool has been set up to assist maritime organisations by linking them with women already working in the sector who can help them with recruitment by taking part in gender balanced interview panels.

*"The networks are now expanding the Speaker Bank to profile people from the maritime sector with expertise on mental health and LGBT+."*

Lastly, there is a wide range of toolkits available in the form of resources designed to help companies make progress against diversity commitments, including case studies, long-term projects and quick wins. Maritime UK is working to update the toolkits to ensure there is a range of best practice guides and resources to assist our sector.

While a lot of positive progress has been made over the past years when it comes to diversity and inclusion in the sector, there is still more that can be done if industry and government continue to work together. If you are an individual who is interested in joining a diversity network or a company willing to share a toolkit, please get in touch. [R](#)



## Levelling up and boosting economic growth in the North



Henri Murison, Director at the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, discusses practical ways in which the government can rebalance the economy and create economic growth in North as part of the UK's economic recovery following COVID-19.

The Northern Powerhouse can play a major role in the UK's economic recovery from the coronavirus. Focusing on green energy investments, providing targeted educational support for the North's most disadvantaged families and communities, and funding major infrastructure improvement in both transport and connectivity could allow the government to level up the UK economy.

To help with this, the Northern Powerhouse Partnership has assembled five recommendations for how the government can rebalance the economy and create thousands of jobs and significant economic growth by maximising the potential of the North. As a global outward-facing country, trading successfully, the UK needs the Northern Powerhouse with its strengths in manufacturing, digital, health innovation and energy.

The proposals are backed by a cross-section of major UK businesses and supported by polling of more than 1,700 people across the North. Results show high levels of support for greater local control in the form of devolution from communities from the north and south banks of the Humber to Cumbria. More than 80% support increasing funding for training and education and around one in two back investment in roads, rail and fibre broadband.

The results also reveal only one in five Northerners are satisfied about the availability of good jobs, and over half of those who gave an opinion supported increasing taxes or reducing spending in other areas to fund investment in rebuilding jobs and infrastructure in the aftermath of the lockdown.

Central to the economic recovery is improving northern infrastructure. The High Speed North project is expected to set out a way forward for both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail to be delivered. But there are a number of road and rail upgrade schemes – such as improving the Hope Valley Line between Sheffield and Manchester, upgrading the West Cumbrian freight line, and enhancing the A66 across the Pennines, as the Transport Secretary recently confirmed which must be started immediately, providing shovel-ready schemes to get the economy moving. These will improve freight as well as passenger services, enabling us to maximise use of our northern ports, most importantly on the Humber.

Ensuring that fibre broadband connectivity is as good in 'left behind' towns in the North as it is in major cities is also seen as vital to allowing those who can work from home to be as productive as possible during the crisis and beyond.



*“The Northern Powerhouse Partnership has assembled five recommendations for how the government can rebalance the economy and create thousands of jobs and significant economic growth by maximising the potential of the North.”*



### The five NPP proposals are:

1. Providing training for those who have lost their jobs or left school during the coronavirus lockdown: devolve all of skills funding to existing Mayors alongside accelerating devolution to areas in North which are still waiting for it, including Cheshire and Warrington, and Cumbria.
2. Providing extra teaching for children who have fallen behind in school work during the crisis: initial £300 million of funding across England in addition to better targeting of projected higher pupil premium spend next year, from free school meal entitlement.
3. Green energy jobs: roll out of Small Modular Reactor factory-based building programme, establishment of at least one carbon capture and storage cluster in Northern Powerhouse and expansion of jobs in wind, tidal and battery storage supply chains for major schemes.
4. Building new railways and roads: shovel-ready projects to create and secure jobs and cut carbon emissions in the longer term. Specifically, accelerate elements of High Speed North, such as Leeds to Newcastle and Sheffield to Manchester, as well as starting on new lines between Leeds and Manchester/Liverpool where possible.
5. Providing faster broadband to every household: full fibre to the premises accelerated for left behind towns, from Winsford to Whitehaven, Castleford to Consett, alongside 5G rollout.

By prioritising these recommendations the government can accelerate economic prosperity in the North while rebalancing the UK economy in order to ensure that the North can fulfil its potential and play a key role in economic recovery following the end of the global pandemic. **1**

## Denmark's green transition: lessons for the UK ports sector



Jakob Svane, Secretary General of the Danish Shipbrokers and Port Operators association, discusses the green transition of Danish society and its consequences for the Danish port sector. This article was written during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, when it was still difficult to predict the future economic effects of the crisis. Still, the critical function of ports was as apparent as ever, especially in countries such as the UK and Denmark, which benefit from coastlines and well-developed networks of islands and ports.



Photograph of an offshore wind farm in the Kattégat sea outside Denmark

Society in Denmark is undergoing a rapid green transition, which has brought into sharp focus the critical role played by ports in the process. For instance, it has seen a commitment to transition electricity production to achieve almost complete carbon neutrality by 2025. Therefore, the Danish experience could be quite interesting in a UK context.

The shift in energy production away from oil and coal to biomass and wind energy has also meant a shift in the Danish port community – both physically and mentally.

Physically, it has meant that quite a different type of port is needed for energy production based on wind and biomass, rather than oil and coal. For instance, the energy density in oil and coal is a lot higher than in biomass, so a greater port area is needed. In addition, offshore wind projects require an even greater port area for construction, handling, and other operations.

*“The trend within the offshore wind industry towards using ever bigger units is also the reason why the largest mobile harbor cranes in the world are found in Danish ports.”*

This is why, during the last decade, Danish ports have embarked upon an enormous investment effort, adding around 9 million m<sup>2</sup> of new port areas (some areas have been sold to city development, so the net increase is a bit lower), as well as longer quay walls and port deepening to accommodate bigger vessels. The total size of all these new port areas is almost equal to London Gateway and its entire logistics park.

While this extra space is only spread out across ca. 25 small and medium sized ports, it is quite a lot for a country with a population of 6 million people.

A lot of these areas are now used for handling windmills, biomass and other cargoes in relation to the green transition. Other parts are used for decommissioning oil and gas installations in the North Sea. The trend within the offshore wind industry towards using ever bigger units is also the reason why the largest mobile harbor cranes in the world are found in Danish ports.

This has been possible because, in addition to handling and servicing the national offshore wind parks, the green transition in other countries has resulted in a veritable Danish export adventure.

For instance, more than half of all offshore wind capacity in the world has been shipped out of the West Danish Port of Esbjerg. Private port companies have specialised in windmill solutions, with investments from heavy lift machinery to education and safety.

The green transition, therefore, underlines investments – in infrastructure, equipment and skills – as key issues for the port industry. And the train keeps rolling.

On top of the large-scale investments of the last decade, Danish ports have further expansions planned in the coming decade. So we may add what is equivalent to another London Gateway to our port areas by 2030. Less might do it though, and it remains to be seen if the crisis underway will put some of this on hold. But the necessary green transition of Denmark and other countries will not stop because of COVID-19 or a crisis.

This is part of the mental shift. Because of the green transition, the Danish port sector now thinks more and more in sustainability terms – not only regarding its own activities (which is important enough, though I will not elaborate here), but increasingly also as a means



to attracting new business and playing an active part in the green transition.

For instance, the Central Danish Port of Aarhus has recently announced that two factories will be constructed within its port area, one for the production of sustainable concrete, the other for the production of sustainable bioplastics. In this way, the port will not only contribute to the green transition of the energy sector, but to society as a whole.

The mindset of how to develop and market ports is clearly shifting – and this different mentality might be just as important as the physical investments.

With Danish society going increasingly in the direction of the circular economy, the Danish port sector is determined to play a key role not only servicing the transition, but actively fostering it. ■

*“More than half of all offshore wind capacity in the world has been shipped out of the West Danish Port of Esbjerg.”*



## Port of Amsterdam on the power of joint efforts



Mark Hoolwerf, Area Manager at the Port of Amsterdam, discusses the historic significance of the UK-Dutch trade partnership and the importance of maintaining strong collaboration links to help navigate challenging times.

*“Now more so than ever, it is of vital importance to remain committed to the British-Dutch relationship, as jointly we can fight through these difficult times.”*

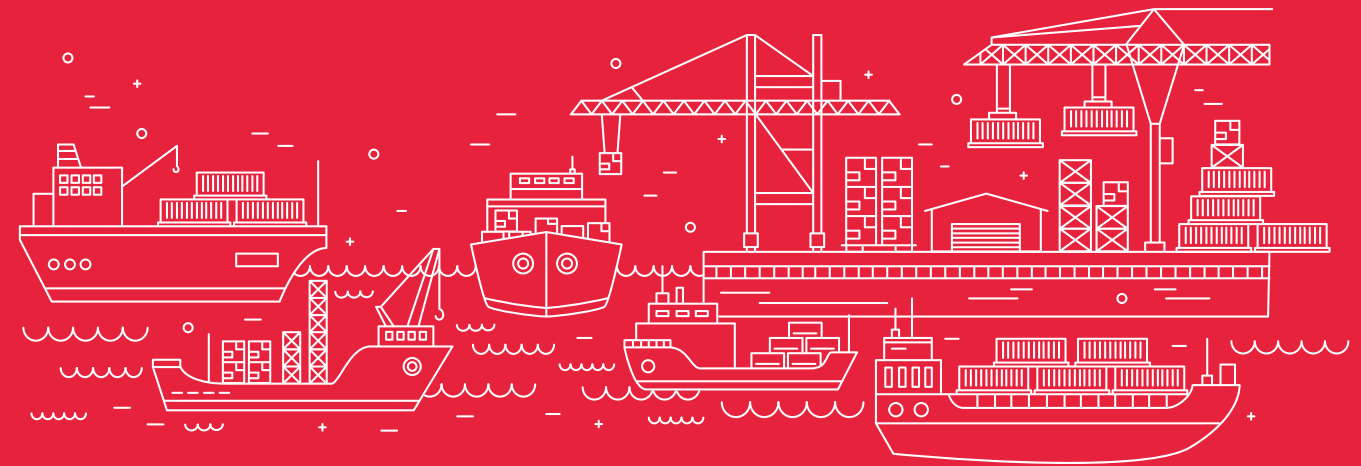
The close historical relationship between Great Britain and the Netherlands is undeniable. We not only share marginal results on the football pitch by our respective national teams, but close political, economic and personal bonds as well. On these very same pages, the Netherlands Business Support Office has previously championed the close and historic ties between Great Britain and the Netherlands. These ties have always to a large degree centred around international trade, the core of the British and Dutch economies. To say that trade has been under pressure over the last years is an understatement, with Brexit and now COVID-19 wreaking havoc. However, now more so than ever, it is of vital importance to remain committed to the British-Dutch relationship, as jointly we can fight through these difficult times. The combination of the mottos of ABP and Port of Amsterdam represents in my opinion the formula to tackle these challenges, now and in future: ‘Keeping Britain Trading’ and ‘Port of Partnerships’.

Currently nearly all Zoom, Skype and Microsoft Teams meetings touch upon the hard truths of the impact of the COVID-19 virus. Volumes are down, operations have become more complex, and there is a lot

*“For the port of Amsterdam, Great Britain is our number one trading partner, with roughly 10% of our total annual volume (105 million tonnes in 2019) either coming from or going to British ports.”*

of uncertainty regarding when this situation will end and what the lasting effects will be. This holds true for all parties involved, including ports, in whichever supply chain.

For the port of Amsterdam, Great Britain is our number one trading partner, with roughly 10% of our total annual volume (105 million tonnes in 2019) either coming from or going to British ports. The port of Immingham is the largest trading partner, with the port of Hull showing the biggest growth after the establishment of a direct short sea container line between our



ports, which is operated by Samskip and facilitated by TMA Logistics. Cargo is moved between nearly all ABP ports and Amsterdam. We therefore have a joint interest in facing the COVID-19 virus and the impact of the Brexit. In short, we are focused on ‘Keeping Britain and Amsterdam Trading’.

At the Port of Amsterdam, we strongly believe in the power of partnerships, which provides the basis for our motto. By combining forces throughout the supply chain, including other ports, shipping lines, stevedores, freight forwarders, governmental authorities, logistical providers, etc., it becomes a lot easier to identify bottlenecks, maximise existing opportunities, and create new opportunities. Ports are international hubs where many different supply chains come together. We believe that ports are therefore uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role as international matchmakers and facilitators for trade. We have found in ABP a partner with the same mindset. Together, we have undertaken multiple initiatives to bring different parties to the table from the UK and the Amsterdam side, in order to discuss challenges, solutions and opportunities. Of course, focus lies on the short sea trade, as this presents many

opportunities, but it extends to areas such as offshore developments, the circular economy and sustainability, and other trades as well. Our partnership can bring benefits in a plethora of fields, in good times and bad.

As mentioned, the current situation brings with it a lot of uncertainty. From the side of Port of Amsterdam, we do know for certain that we will continue to work with ABP to facilitate trade to the best of our abilities. We want to continue to maintain strong connections between ABP’s ports and our port in Amsterdam. This is currently difficult, but we are committed to all ports users. All interested parties should feel free to reach out to me with any questions they might have and I will do my best to answer them. I cannot promise better results for our football squads after this is all over, but I firmly believe that we can weather this unprecedented storm together. May everybody remain in sound health and have a lot of success and strength in getting through this situation. **A**

*“We believe that ports are therefore uniquely positioned to play a pivotal role as international matchmakers and facilitators for trade.”*

## Closing the South-North productivity gap



Martin Vickers MP, Chair of the APPG for Freeports, discusses the myriad of benefits the introduction of freeports can bring, not only by driving prosperity across the UK but also by creating jobs in the North and re-balancing the economy.

When Boris Johnson first mentioned freeports during the 2019 Conservative Leadership Election, it was the first time that a high-profile politician had publicly and unreservedly supported a policy which could have a transformational impact on UK trade, boosting jobs and investment in some of the areas that need it most.

Freeports have garnered a lot of media attention over the last six months. However, prior to this a great amount of work was going on behind the scenes to push the concept to the top of the political agenda. In 2016, a newly elected and relatively unknown backbench MP published *The Freeports Opportunity*, with support of the Centre for Policy Studies. That MP is now the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Having read Rishi Sunak's proposals with great interest, a local conversation began engaging ABP's team on the Humber, local businesses and the local authority to gauge interest. Unsurprisingly, interest was high.

In 2018, I launched the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Freeports which lobbied the Government for the creation of freeports across the UK. The Group successfully convinced scores of ministers, including two Secretaries of State for International Trade, Liam Fox and Liz Truss, of the merits of the proposal.

The argument was straightforward. As an island nation, we have always been reliant on ports for trade. Post-Brexit, we had an opportunity to implement a policy that would turbocharge our ports



by discarding red tape, bureaucracy and costly tariffs thereby creating jobs and boosting local economies.

The point could not be made often enough that there are already 3,500 freeports in operation around the world, but not a single one in the UK. This put us at a considerable disadvantage with a serious risk of slipping behind some of our trading partners and competitors.

The moment when most individuals we lobbied became supportive was when

they realised that this was a policy that would disproportionately benefit the North. Former Treasury economist Chris Walker found that declaring seven northern ports (Grimsby & Immingham, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester Airport, Teesport and Port of Tyne) as freeports would boost trade by £12 billion and create 150,000 jobs in the North. This represents more than 80,000 new highly skilled jobs and £4.7 billion extra in Yorkshire and the Humber alone.

ABP owns and controls much of the port infrastructure in my constituency and surrounding areas and is incredibly positive about the prospect of freeports being rolled out across the country. ABP's operations in the Humber are extensive and the potential opportunities that freeports present, particularly in relation to the Grimsby/Immingham complex – the largest in the country by tonnage – were hard to resist.

A freeport programme would, by default, target areas of high unemployment and

“*Projections show that freeports could close the North-South productivity gap by 15% which would be a welcome step to rebalancing the UK economy.*”

Re-balancing the economy to correct the North/South divide is a mission of every government but we have yet to achieve it. In 2016 the northern economy created £330 billion of economic output but, had North and South been balanced, this would have been around £400 billion. That's £70 billion more – equivalent to £1,500 per northern household. It proved difficult not to be excited by a policy which could unleash the untapped potential of the North.

Projections show that freeports could close the North-South productivity gap by 15% which would be a welcome step to rebalancing the UK economy. High skilled jobs could be created in some of the most deprived parts of the country. Furthermore, this can be done through organic growth, providing northern businesses with the tools they need to drive their own success and, consequently, that of the country.

If done properly, there would be numerous benefits for major port operators like ABP. The Government has consulted on its plans with an initial commitment to create 10 freeports across the country. The aim is to open the bidding stage later this year, following a careful consideration of the consultation submissions. Whether this may be set back owing to COVID-19 is unclear. However, the APPG will work with the industry to push the Government to act as quickly as possible and create a freeport programme that gives the UK ports sector the best chance of thriving. ■

“*Numerous benefits for major port operators like ABP.*”

deprivation. These tend to be found in rural and coastal communities which have weak or no links with the UK's large cities. Grimsby and Immingham have been ranked in the bottom quartile of deprived areas so a policy which leads to a boost of investment in these areas should be universally welcomed.

## Metsä Wood: building a solid foundation for a sustainable future



Patrick Towner, Sales Director at Metsä Fibre UK, part of Metsä Group, delves deeper into the company's commitment to sustainability, its multisite collaboration with ABP and its resource-efficient production processes which help meet industry needs.

*“We believe that building with wood is a sustainable solution. This is why our wood comes from sustainably managed northern forests where growth exceeds use. We always know the origin of the wood we source and ensure sustainable forest management with forest certification. We safeguard the biodiversity of forests by various means.”*

As cities continue to grow, there is an increasing need for efficient, ecological buildings as well as light transport solutions to serve them. We believe that building with wood is a sustainable solution. This is why our wood comes from sustainably managed northern forests where growth exceeds use. We always know the origin of the wood we source and ensure sustainable forest management with forest certification. We safeguard the biodiversity of forests by various means.

At Metsä Wood, we provide premium-quality wood products for our construction, industrial and distribution customers. We are in the wood products business for the long-run. As part of my role I am responsible for the commercial development of joinery redwood and whitewood sales both direct from northern forests and from landed sites within the UK.

We operate from multiple upgrading sites around the UK, including ABP's Port of King's Lynn, and actively provide wood products to support different industries. In December 2019, we celebrated a milestone in our partnership with the Port of Ipswich when the port handled its first shipment of 2,000 m<sup>3</sup> of timber as part of a new service launched for our customers.

This new service is built on a long-standing relationship between both businesses in the ports of King's Lynn, Hull and Swansea and followed the opening of our newest UK terminal, located in Shed 10 at the Port of Ipswich earlier that year. The new terminal specialises in receiving, storing and distributing a range of both pine and spruce sawn joinery products.

With this new addition, we now have terminals in the South and North of England, which is great from a logistics perspective. Effectively what this means is that by working with ABP we can very efficiently cover the whole of the UK.

Working as part of a multisite operation with several hundred people we are always looking for ways to innovate and increase employee engagement. We aim to make all our colleagues feel valued as part of one team, regardless of the location where they are based.

A great example of an exciting initiative which is led by our HR team is called 'WOW' and is an all employee team building event. The idea behind it is that everyone meets for a day of networking and team challenges to encourage a feeling of healthy competition and togetherness. While we have good



*“Technology has played a big role in making our processes more efficient as we have our own systems for forecasting. Having the best people has also been vital for supply chain management.”*

cross-departmental collaboration already, this event brings everyone closer together from production to logistics and from management to sales.

Innovation of course becomes increasingly more important in the face of commercial challenges and opportunities. At the beginning of 2020, the biggest challenges we faced were around the depreciation in prices of timber, which affected saw mills. This meant that stock rotation needed to be very efficient to help counteract this challenge. The way we overcame this at our terminals in the UK was to continue to streamline our forecasting and ordering processes to achieve maximum efficiency.

Technology has played a big role in making our processes more efficient as we have our own systems for forecasting. Having the best people has also been vital for supply chain management. Our resource-efficient production processes ensure ecologically sustainable production.

Metsä Wood's strategy can be summed up in two words – 'industrial efficiency' – which for customers means commitment, reliability and high quality. Supporting construction and industrial businesses has continued to increase in importance for Metsä Wood UK.

We have seen continuous growth in joinery sales in the UK. That is why we've expanded to Ipswich and we have seen year-on-year growth for four years. Furthermore, consumers and DIY stores appreciate the high quality products we are selling.

As part of Metsä Wood's commitment to innovation, we have started a project called 'Open Source Wood', which is a global platform for knowledge sharing and innovation related to wood construction. It connects designers and architects from all over the world and allows them to share ideas free of charge and connect with other professionals. We also operate a Timber Academy,



which offers specialist training courses online and at our Boston site.

Whilst, like most businesses, we have faced challenges due to the global COVID-19 crisis, we have continued to work closely with our customers and partners throughout this period. We believe that building with wood will continue to play an important role in industry's transition towards greater environmental sustainability and will help drive the UK's economic recovery in the years to come. **■**

# NEWS WRAP

*Bite-sized, all the latest news highlights from ABP*



## MAJOR MILESTONE FOR HUMBER CONTAINER TERMINAL EXPANSION

In July, ABP celebrated a new milestone in the expansion of the Humber Container Terminal with the arrival of two new ship to shore cranes worth £11.5 million at the Port of Immingham. The cranes are part of a £33 million upgrade and improvement programme at Immingham Container Terminal to future-proof the terminal, extend its footprint, maximise efficiencies and improve the service to customers.

*“Winners of the ABP ‘Stories of the Sea’ competition, all chosen from local schools in Norfolk, were invited to the Port of King’s Lynn to bury a time capsule, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the port.”*



## CHIEF SECRETARY LAUNCHES FREEPORTS CONSULTATION AT SOUTHAMPTON

In February, Former Chief Secretary to the Treasury Rishi Sunak MP and current Chancellor, launched the Government’s new consultation on Freeports at ABP’s Port of Southampton. Meeting with ABP senior leadership to discuss how ABP’s ports could play a role in delivering the policy, Mr Sunak learned about several of ABP’s ports that are ideal for facilitating the efficient import of raw materials and components, and export of finished products.



## ABP INVESTS IN HUMBER’S LARGEST ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR ARRAY

In January, work began on the Humber’s largest roof-mounted solar scheme, supported by an ABP investment of £6.8 million. Once installed, the solar panels will save 2,600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e every year. With this installation up and running by July 2020, 17 of the 21 ABP ports will have renewable energy facilities in operation, generating clean power for the company and its customers.



## ABP ‘STORIES OF THE SEA’ COMPETITION WINNERS ANNOUNCED

In January, the winners of the ABP ‘Stories of the Sea’ competition, all chosen from local schools in Norfolk, were invited to the Port of King’s Lynn to bury a time capsule, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the port. Judged by a local historian, the competition was organised by ABP in collaboration with True’s Yard Fisherfolk Museum and the Lynn News. The time capsule is due to be re-opened in 25 years, at the port’s 175th anniversary.

*“ABP helped celebrate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day by joining the #ShineALight campaign organised by the Royal Navy.”*



## PORT OF CARDIFF WELCOMES GREEN-POWERED VESSEL FRIDTJOF NANSEN

In March, ABP welcomed Hurtigruten’s green technology cruise ship, MS Fridtjof Nansen, to the Port of Cardiff. Alongside her sister vessel, MS Fridtjof Nansen is the first hybrid vessel of her size, and uses cutting-edge hybrid technology that allows her engines to function at optimal levels, which in turn lowers fuel emissions.

## NEW DEAL FOR PORT OF GARSTON AND AGGREGATES SPECIALIST

ABP celebrated the start of a new long-term contract with decorative aggregates importer Long Rake Spar (LRS) in May. As part of the agreement, LRS will import around 60,000 tonnes of decorative stone per annum via the Port of Garston in support of the UK construction industry.

## ABP CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY

In May, ABP helped celebrate the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day by joining the #ShineALight campaign organised by the Royal Navy. As part of this, ABP worked with shipping agents and visiting vessels to encourage them to sound their whistles and shine their lights into the sky on the day.

## An estate with a view



## TATA STEEL AND ABP SIGN NEW LONG-TERM AGREEMENT

In May, Tata Steel and ABP entered into a new and improved 10-year agreement in respect of the supply of raw materials to the integrated steelworks via the deep-water harbour at Port Talbot and the handling of export finished products through the Port of Newport. The new agreement will help facilitate investment and create a number of new employment opportunities in the region.

## LOGISTICS SPECIALIST LEASES NEWPORT DOCKS WAREHOUSE

In February, one of the largest privately owned logistics companies in the UK, Howard Tenens Logistics Limited, completed a deal to take a new lease of a 145,236 sq ft warehouse premises at ABP’s Port of Newport. The unit, known as the Neptune Works, is part of a self-contained 9.53-acre site fronting onto the junction of Usk Way and the A48 Southern Distributor Road, positioned at the entrance to the Port of Newport.

## NEW £23 MILLION DISTRIBUTION CENTRE STRENGTHENS SOUTHAMPTON’S PORT-CENTRIC CAPACITY

In May, progress continued on the construction of a new £23 million distribution centre in the Port of Southampton, which will strengthen port-centric logistics capacity for Import Services, a leading port-centric logistics company in the UK. Once complete, the 200,000 sq ft warehouse facility will adjoin Import Services’ existing distribution hub, which will double operational capacity.



## An update from Westminster



The coronavirus pandemic has brought economic disruption on a global scale and presents governments and businesses with a unique set of challenges.

The Chancellor Rishi Sunak delivered his first Budget Statement in March against the backdrop of an escalating public health emergency and global economic disruption. Faced with the rapid spread of the virus and increasing pressure on public health systems, governments around the world took extraordinary actions to limit social interaction and protect the vulnerable.

In the UK, the Government set out a series of measures to support individuals and businesses affected by coronavirus and the steep decline in economic activity caused by the lockdown, including an initial fiscal stimulus of £30 billion. This was followed by an unprecedented package of government-backed grants and guaranteed loans to support businesses through the crisis. The Government's Job Retention Scheme for furloughed workers, business rates relief, and a range of government grants and loans, helped to support thousands of businesses by extending state support to previously unimaginable levels. On 25 March the Coronavirus Act received Royal Assent, granting the UK government and devolved administrations further powers to respond to the emergency.

Throughout this period the nation's ports continued to play an essential role in keeping trade moving. The designation of port employees as key workers allowed important port operations to continue despite the challenging circumstances, safeguarding vital supply chains for food, critical fuel, pharmaceuticals and medical supplies. Through regular communication and close working with central government

and local authorities, the sector responded quickly and adopted safe new ways of working to maintain operations.

The enormity of the crisis has added greater emphasis to the Government's policy priorities. The Chancellor's budget announcement included huge public spending promises over the course of this Parliament, with around £640 billion of gross capital investment earmarked for roads, railways, communications, schools, hospitals and power networks across the UK by 2024-25. This programme will see infrastructure investment at its highest level since 1955 and is the cornerstone of the Government's plan to 'level up' the British economy.

The Chancellor announced additional measures to support the economic recovery in a summer statement in July, with further spending to protect jobs and accelerate infrastructure investment. The Government is expected to publish a National Infrastructure Strategy later this year. There is expected to be significant focus on infrastructure which can drive growth in the green economy and drive decarbonisation.

The Government's flagship freeports policy continued to progress, despite the disruption caused by the pandemic. The Government aims to establish 10 freeports in the UK to boost trade, create jobs and encourage innovation. Rishi Sunak MP launched the Government's consultation from the Port of Southampton in February and the policy remains on course to deliver exciting opportunities for port-centric

manufacturing and export-led growth. ABP welcomes the policy and continues to work closely with commercial and public sector partners to develop plans that will further enhance the ability of ports to drive trade and economic regeneration.

The freeports policy is part of the Government's plan to grow international trade, following the UK's formal departure from the European Union on 31 January. The UK remains in the EU Customs Union and Single Market until the end of the transition period on 31 December, at which point the newly negotiated terms of trade with the EU will come into effect. It is hoped that a positive trade deal can be struck that will provide a much-needed lift for trade amidst the global disruption to supply chains caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The implementation of new trading terms will bring a renewed focus on the role of ports and border infrastructure in facilitating trade and connecting businesses to important markets.

While it is still too early to know the full extent of the impact of the pandemic, and the scale of the challenge of rebuilding the economy, it is clear that the ports and maritime sector will have a key role to play in this recovery. By facilitating trade and enabling businesses and manufacturers to reconnect to global markets, ports are key to growing UK trade and economic rebalancing. Just as it has been during this crisis, close collaboration between government and industry is now more important than ever in delivering the shared ambition of sustainable growth going forward. ■

## A day in the life...

# Two of ABP's expert pilots who supported BAE System's latest submarine exit

Mark Bray, ABP Container Specialist Pilot and Richard Spenceley, ABP Harbour Master at the Port of Barrow

ABP's Port of Barrow is Cumbria's Gateway to growth, serving local industry and manufacturing and facilitating maritime trade and hosting world-class shipbuilding. For more than 100 years, the port has also been home to world-class shipbuilding and today is the site of BAE Systems' submarine design and manufacturing facility, supporting the Royal Navy and the UK defence sector.

Five years on from HMS Artful's exit in 2015, ABP has once again supported BAE Systems in the handover of their latest submarine, HMS Audacious, to the Royal Navy in April 2020. When it comes to high-profile and high-security operations of this kind, everybody at ABP's Port of Barrow plays their part in contributing to success. From coordinating the opening of the Michaelson Road Bridge to allow tugs to bring the submarine out of Devonshire Dock, to ensuring the three sets of dock gates are in full working order and dock water levels are maintained as required, there are a multitude of tasks to keep ABP's team occupied. Our Coxswain, Carl Bower, who is also Deputy Harbour Master at the Port of Barrow, has the important task of towing the submarine through the dock using the port's multi-purpose vessel, Furness Abbey. Our engineering teams ensure all necessary equipment is in working order and the Marine Operators play their part in the smooth running of operations.

*“Everybody at ABP's Port of Barrow plays their part in contributing to success.”*

This year, two of ABP's pilots; Mark Bray, ABP Container Specialist Pilot, and Richard Spenceley, ABP Harbour Master at the Port of Barrow, took part in supporting the complex operation.



Left to right: Mark Bray, ABP Container Specialist Pilot, and Richard Spenceley, ABP Harbour Master at the Port of Barrow

*Can you please introduce yourselves to our readers and tell us more about your role at ABP?*

**RS** – Before joining ABP, I had a 25-year career in the Merchant Navy, where I served as a Captain for 10 years. I started working for ABP in 2005 as a Humber pilot and seconded to Barrow-in-Furness as pilot in 2007, working between both regions. I gained Class 1 Pilot status in Barrow in 2014, and worked with Mark Bray on the last submarine exit – the HMS Artful. I decided to move across to Barrow last year when I accepted the role as Harbour Master.

**MB** – Having started my marine career as an apprentice pilot in the Port of Liverpool 40 years ago, I am now a Class One Pilot, part of the small expert team that drives the largest container ships in the world in and out of DP World's container terminal at ABP's Port of Southampton. Prior to this, I worked as an ABP pilot on the river Humber for 11 years, before moving to the Port of Barrow as a pilot and Assistant Harbour Master. Despite leaving Barrow to become a Southampton pilot 17 years ago, I have continued to provide backup pilot cover for the port and have participated in many high-profile projects involving BAE Systems.

*What was your role on the day of the submarine exit?*

**RS** – For the exit of HMS Audacious, I acted not only as pilot but also the ABP contact responsible for working with BAE Systems, the Royal Navy and Ministry of Defence to make sure all systems were ready for the big weekend.

This was certainly not your normal port operation as there was a sense of great responsibility that comes with handling one of the world's most advanced warships, worth over £1 billion. Still, the experienced and hard-working team here at Barrow has been amazing and I'm proud of them. It goes without saying it was a team effort in which everyone excelled in their part. For the two days of the move, Mark and I were on the

vessel, Mark as main pilot and I as back-up. I was glued to my phone and email, although the training and preparation we did beforehand resulted in the smooth running of operations.

**MB** – I have been involved with the Astute submarine exit programme since its beginning 12 years ago. For the first two submarine exits, I acted as the second or back-up Pilot. I acted as the lead pilot for the HMS Artful operation in 2015 and was the lead pilot again for the HMS Audacious exit with the support of Harbour Master Richard Spenceley as my back-up.

*Do you have any tips on how to prepare mentally and physically for a nationally significant operation like this?*

**RS** – This is the culmination of many hours of training and experience for a pilot. Indeed, to look after the most advanced warship in the UK is a true high point in a pilot's career. However, I do find that during the actual operation, one becomes so consumed by the practical side that there is no time left for stress. Also, in preparation we take part in regular simulator training with the submarine crews to get a good working relationship so that as much as possible is pre-planned.

**MB** – The pilots and the submarine crew undertake extensive training on a simulator in Holland as part of the evolution to navigate this high-profile submarine out of the challenging narrow channels of Barrow and get it safely out to sea.

*Have you been involved in similar operations?*

**RS** – I have been involved in a similar operation once, with HMS Artful. Realistically, it's just another day at the office but in reality, it is a feather in the cap and certainly something to tell the grandkids.

In fact, I moved across from Hull to take on the Harbour Master's job in Barrow

*“To look after the most advanced warship in the UK is a true high point in a pilot's career.”*

mainly because of the submarine building programme. To be involved on a basic planning level, not only in Astute but also the future Dreadnought operations is very rewarding considering its importance not only within ABP but also for the country.

**MB** – I have been involved in multiple operations since the start of this submarine building programme, and this will be my fourth submarine exit. Throughout this time, I have built up valuable experience that helped us make this operation a success.

*What advice would you give to anyone interested in becoming a marine pilot?*

**RS** – Learn to give the answer, “No, not airplanes!” when someone asks you what you do.

Seriously, if anyone is given the opportunity to train to become a pilot either through the Merchant Navy route, or via the ABP apprenticeship scheme, I'd say leap at it. It's different, interesting, very rewarding and offers a way of life that would be difficult to beat in any other profession.

**MB** – Being a pilot can be very challenging, rewarding and stressful, sometimes all at once. We pilot vessels in and out of ports 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. No two jobs are the same and there is no room for complacency even on a bright and sunny day let alone on a dark rainy night in the middle of winter.

The route into piloting is generally by going to sea and gaining maritime qualifications before starting to train as a pilot, which could take many years, but it is a career worth investing time and effort in. ■

# View from the Bridge: A new era of low-carbon power



Gareth Russell, ABP Offshore Wind Development Manager, discusses the impressive growth in the UK offshore energy sector over the past decade and how ABP's ports provide the perfect blend of expertise, facilities and flexibility to be able to serve its ambitious goals on the road to achieving supply chain decarbonisation.

The UK is a world leader in offshore wind. Over the past 10 years, growth in the sector has continued to accelerate, attracting investment and creating many highly-productive, skilled jobs. According to government research, the annual share of UK power generation attributed to offshore wind has risen from 0.8% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2017 and it is expected to reach an impressive 10% by the end of 2020.

To help put this in perspective, the sector already powers the equivalent of around 4.5 million homes annually, and this number is set to increase significantly. With the cost of new offshore wind projects falling by around a half since 2015, it is now one of the lowest cost options for new power generation in the UK, which is fantastic considering its capacity to help decarbonise global supply chains more quickly.

March 2019 saw a key milestone with the launch of an offshore wind sector deal with government, which sets out ambitious plans to generate tens of thousands of new jobs across the UK and make offshore wind the backbone of a clean, reliable and affordable energy system.

A further focus of the deal is to increase the opportunities for companies to play a greater role in the UK's global leadership in offshore wind generation while enhancing their competitiveness internationally.

*“The sector already powers the equivalent of around 4.5 million homes annually, and this number is set to increase significantly. With the cost of new offshore wind projects falling by around a half since 2015, it is now one of the lowest cost options for new power generation.”*

As the UK's leading and best-connected port operator, ABP is an ideal partner for offshore energy businesses. We have over 30 years' experience in servicing the UK's growing offshore energy industry, supporting developers through the full offshore wind project lifecycle.

We use the slogan 'No one can get you closer' as shorthand for the fact that our ports provide unique strategic locations and an extensive land bank to support the success of offshore wind energy projects and provide space for manufacturing and development sites.

We also share the sector's strong commitment to safety and diversity. When it comes to safety, we firmly believe that a safe operation is the only way to run our business. That is why we are committed to a proactive safety culture, always aiming to achieve zero accidents within an environment of good health and in promoting wellbeing for everyone.

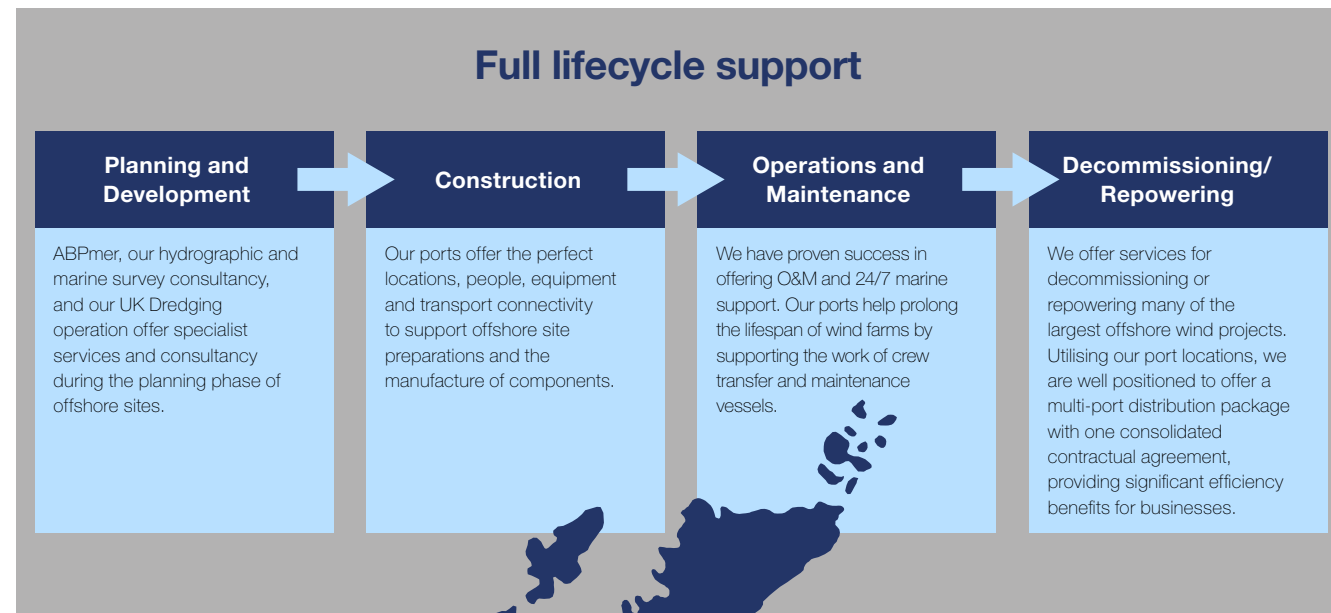
We are also committed to diversity and inclusion, because we know that to feel valued, colleagues must feel empowered to speak up and share their views. We believe that a diversity of perspectives makes our business better and ultimately more resilient and will continue to focus on promoting diversity and inclusion across our locations and the wider industry.

The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges for businesses across the UK in 2020 but we made a very conscious decision to work with our customers to help them through this difficult period. It is evident that decarbonisation will play a central role in the UK's economic recovery.

In offshore wind this means building on the facilities that we have today, in the Humber, Barrow and Lowestoft, to help ensure that the country delivers on its ambitions to have up to 40GW of installed capacity by 2030 that could support 27,000 jobs, including in manufacturing, according to the sector's estimates.

The Port of Grimsby is the largest O&M port in the world and is located on the Humber estuary on the east coast of England, meaning that it is ideally situated for access to operational and planned offshore wind farms in the North Sea. It is already home to Ørsted's East Coast hub along with RWE and XceCo's O&M bases and has the space, facilities and flexibility to suit future offshore requirements.

The Port of Grimsby has also recently been chosen by the Offshore Renewable



Energy (ORE) Catapult for its new O&M Centre of Excellence to develop research and innovation projects to improve the way offshore wind farms are operated and maintained.

Across the estuary in the Port of Hull, leading wind turbine supplier Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy has been manufacturing offshore wind turbine blades since 2016 and has facilitated the load out of over 2GW of turbines from the 54-hectare, £310 million state-of-the-art production and assembly facility.

Elsewhere in ABP's network, the Port of Barrow plays a key role in serving the offshore energy industry in the Irish Sea whilst in East Anglia, the Port of Lowestoft has rapidly emerged as the East of England's Renewable Energy Hub supporting developments in the southern North Sea.

We look forward to Global Offshore Wind 2020 in October this year, which will emphasise the important role offshore wind has to play in the global push for decarbonisation.

At ABP we stand ready to play our part in building a future where green power is the cheapest power, enabling the UK to retain its position as a leader in the global clean growth movement and increase supply chain resilience.

