

# cranes & access

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July/August 2021 Vol.23 issue 4

**Loader  
cranes**

**Scissor  
lifts**

**Vertikal  
Days guide**

**Software &  
technology**





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## On the cover:

Loader crane manufacturer Palfinger is starting to use artificial intelligence to improve after sales support from forecasting parts usage, wear issues and repair techniques.



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New 110/120t Tadano ATs, 110t Grove tele crawler, Sinoboom to launch 53ft RT scissor, Lithium boom from Snorkel, Uplifter 'Beast', Another Potain MCT tower crane, Ritchie Bros to acquire Euro Auctions, New 70t Tadano ATs, TVH ownership change, New investor for Klubb, Discover targets access market - plus a roundup of the latest financials, acquisitions and news highlights.



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With the development and spread of knuckleboom loader cranes continuing at a relentless rate, Will North reviews some key innovations before examining how these adaptable cranes are increasingly being used to great effect within the arborist sector.



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In our third look at scissor lifts over the past 12 months, I einh Sparrow takes a sideways look at some of the more niche sectors of the market and notes the rapidly changing production and technology trends that seem to be gathering pace.



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After two postponements due to Covid-19, Vertikal Days is back and raring to go with a record number of innovations and new products making their European and UK debuts. Our comprehensive guide contains everything you need to know about the show, the exhibitors and the products they plan to showcase.



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Over the past few years, the use of BIM has grown to include the various equipment used for the construction and maintenance of buildings. C&A takes a look at the adoption of BIM by the industry and the potential benefits it offers. We also sat down with Haulotte to discuss how virtual reality technology is being used to design and improve its products.



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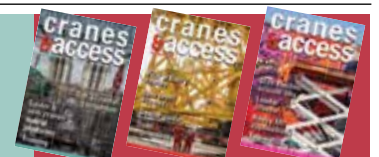
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## In the next C&A

Scheduled for the end of September, the next issue of Cranes & Access will include features on All Terrain cranes, mast climbers and used equipment. It will also contain the Top 30 fleet guide of leading crane, access and telehandler rental companies within the UK and Ireland. If you have any contributions or suggestions to make, or are interested in advertising in this issue, please contact us today.

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## The days of the quick fix are gone

Many parts of Europe and North America are experiencing severe skills shortages due to long term under-investment in recruitment and training, exasperated by the pandemic and a desire for jobs with more socially acceptable hours.

The UK has been hardest hit by a growing truck driver shortage, thanks in part to Brexit, which put paid to the long used bail-out solution of hiring drivers from the EU, but it has also been compounded by a lack of driver training and testing during the lockdowns. It turns out that the average age of an HGV driver in the UK is 56. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the requirement for regular Professional Competence training and red tape is also turning older drivers off.

You may wonder what immediate impact this may have on the lifting market. Well, most crane operators hold HGV licences, and with supermarket chains offering generous signing on fees, high pay and fewer hours, a good many are already taking the bait, while others are naturally using it as a bargaining chip for more money.

The UK government has refused to issue more visas for foreign drivers, saying that the industry needs to recruit more British drivers. That's all very well but it's a long term solution to a short term problem. And let's not forget this is just one example of a much larger skills shortage problems faced by the industry throughout many western countries.

The industry must start investing seriously to recruit long term trainees and apprentices because the quick fix/stop gap measures are drying up. Years of saying "something must be done" has yielded nothing, and action is now urgently required if we hope to pass on lifetimes of hard earned experience and knowledge to a younger generation.

I remain optimistic however, having been a judge for this year's CPA Stars of the Future Awards, which aims to find apprentices in the equipment industry most likely to become industry leaders. The judges were reminded that they were not looking for the best apprentice, so college assessments and ratings were secondary. Our focus was spotting that extra spark – the 'X factor' if you like, no easy task.

The high calibre of the young apprentices and their enthusiasm for the industry was heart-warming (although the lack of applicants for the Lifting Technician Award, disappointing). The overall experience brought to mind the number of 'industry characters' that we lost this summer. People who were 'stars' of the crane and aerial lift market. I wonder if the next generation will generate its own 'characters'?

Perhaps in a more mature, more regulated, more data driven and litigious industry, 'characters', who were in many ways pioneers, are simply not required or wanted? If so, this brilliant, people orientated industry will have lost a very special ingredient.

This is our largest issue since 2019 as it contains the guide to Vertikal Days - where you will be sure to find a good many characters.

I hope to see you there.

Leigh Sparrow

*Comment and feedback is most welcome via post, email, fax or phone stating if we may publish them or not: editor@vertikal.net*

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