

OCTOBER 2024

# The Micron



The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo



NEWCo at Fort William

## EXPANSION UNDERWAY AT NEWCO

**NEWCo has embarked on a £539,000 project that will significantly increase productivity and efficiency, and help meet growing demand for its services.**

Its premises will be expanded by 50 per cent and two new overhead cranes will be installed.

The company secured a £172,700 contribution from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) towards building and plant and equipment costs.

The improvements will enable the company to continue its growth through increased capacity and efficiencies in production.

Overhead cranes will make handling materials and projects more efficient, as well as improving safety and cutting carbon by reducing forklift use.

The expansion project will support five jobs, including an apprentice, and bring about an estimated £800,000 increase in annual turnover within three years.

Alan James said: "We are very pleased that the works to expand our base at Fort William are progressing. NEWCo was bought in 2015 and since that time the workload there has been increasing month on month, and we are now at a point where we need to look at what we have in place for our hardworking

team and make it even more efficient for them and therefore our growing customer base.

"The building currently houses offices and a workshop, but we need more space to meet the increased demand and to install the new overhead cranes which will make the fabrication processes more efficient. We are very pleased that Highlands and Islands Enterprise has seen the value in supporting this expansion and thank them for their support."

NEWCo general manager, Neil Worsdall said: "The works on this expansion are ongoing. The fabrication of the steelwork for the extension is underway and will be ongoing and the civil side of the extension is also in hand. It is flat out at the NEWCo facility as we work hard to look after our growing customer base."

Elaine Jones senior development manager with HIE's Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross team said: "We're very pleased to be supporting this great project. NEWCo has grown steadily over the years and this latest expansion will enable it to continue that growth. The increase in capacity and productivity of the business will strengthen its position as a valuable provider of skilled job opportunities in Lochaber, including apprenticeships. It will also contribute to the region's just transition to net zero. We look forward to continuing to work with the company as the project takes shape."

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## DOORS OPEN DAY PROVES POPULAR



Lee Evans explaining the work carried out in the workshop

**Over 60 visitors attended AJE's site at Waterford as part of the annual Doors Open Day celebration last month.**

Visitors, with the youngest being just five-years-old were given a tour of the former sawmill building which was officially opened in 2021 by The Princess Royal.

They were greeted by MD Alan James and then shown the different areas of the complex. Joe Finlayson explained and demonstrated the use of the newly installed Anglemaster HD Angle Line. Phil Stephens took control of showcasing the FICEP Automatic CNC Drilling & Saw Line and workshop foreman, Lee Evans who, on the day, was based in the fabrication/welding workshop further explained the work carried out in the workshop. One of the highlights was when Bomber aka David Bain showcased the side loading forklift.



Alan James welcomes a visitor to Waterford



Bomber showcasing the side loading forklift

## REMOTE RETURN

**Another remote location for a return customer is one of the latest projects underway for the team at AJE.**

Lead by Kevin Smith, the components for a new substation control building will soon be getting fabricated at AJE HQ in Forres before they are transported to the remote island of Eday, Orkney.

The project is being carried out for Heddle Construction on behalf of SSE, and follows a similar project for them on the island of Stronsay which was completed in the latter part of last year.

Kevin said: "The drawings for this new control building are complete and we will soon be starting the fabrication. We intend to be on site by the end of October with the project being completed sometime in November. It's another remote location which whilst can be a challenge for some, is the norm for our teams. In some respects, the more remote the better."

Kevin added: "Last year we completed a substation building for Heddle/SSE and it's down to the competent and professional way that project was handled that we are now working on a similar project for them again."

## COUPLE FROM DOWN UNDER WIN CARTY RACE

**Soapbox Carty Races sponsored by AJ Engineering were one of the most popular attractions at the recently held Grant Park 100 celebration.**

Organised and run by graduate project engineer Jack Lowes, people desperate to have a go on the carts had to be turned away due to the time constraints of the jam-packed programme.

The overall winners were Australian couple Grace Byrne and Joel Downey who were visiting friends from their hometown of the

Sunshine Coast near Brisbane.

Grace said: "It's been incredible, and the weather has really helped. It's such a lovely community and we have had a great time. We heard that you could just take part, so we thought we would give it a go."

The races were a feature of Grant Park 100 which was held to mark 100 years since the park was gifted to the town by Sir Alexander Grant.



The winners, Grace Byrne and Joel Downey with Alan James, and some of the other Carty Race teams!