



## Dear Colleagues

Some of you may know that I took a short sabbatical this Summer to drive a Land Rover to Mongolia with a group of friends on motorcycles. After 14 weeks and 26 countries, we all arrived back safely, but it struck me that in every country we saw composites in use. Whether it was in wind turbines, on ferries, or in trains, there were our products, working as designed but totally hidden from view. So it's good to have an audience who not only know what engineered composites are, but also appreciate how vital they are in all sorts of applications from nuclear power stations to tap shoes. Let's continue to spread the word to even more countries!



## Massive Automotive contract



**Attwater has recently turned round its largest order to date, on time and in full – despite the challenges of using a material it had never used before, and a very tight schedule.**

“Pressing composites is a science in itself” explained Tom Eland, technical director. “Balancing the different combinations of pressure, temperature and cure time is a real skill and no two products are alike in terms of processing.”

Pressures can be as low as 7 Bar or as high as 70 Bar (1000 psi) and for this particular material, the layup of the pre-preg, the cure time and pressure were critical in order to achieve the required properties.

“Pressing bespoke materials for our customers has become an important part of our business. Attwater’s range of processing equipment and flexibility in manufacturing has been a big bonus in helping to develop this area of the business.”

“Despite this particular product being new to us, the whole project from process development through to delivery of the final machined parts was completed within the customer’s tight timescale - enabling him to deliver a major contract on time.”

## Be nice to Nicola

**How often do we ever hear someone saying they love their job? But that’s exactly the sentiment from Attwater’s youngest recruit, sales office administrator, Nicola Reid. “It’s like a family here, I get on with everyone. With luck, I hope to be here till I retire,” she says.**

And that’s a long way off. Nicola, 21, joined Attwater three years ago. It was her first office job and since then she has done an NVQ level 2 in Business Studies and Administration, and is now doing an HNC in Business in preparation for her degree.

“I’m the one who puts on the orders, deals with late supplier deliveries and that sort of thing” she says. Nicola’s certainly someone to get to know - she’s a truly organised and efficient member of our team.



# Thank you!

*A big thank you to all Attwater employees, customers and visitors who have raised money this year to help the children at Derian House Children's Hospice. The local charity provides relief to children suffering from life-threatening illness and to support their families.*

## Custom Composites recruit new operations manager

**James Saunders has joined glass and carbon-fibre tube manufacturer Custom Composites (part of the Attwater Group) as operations manager.**

With over 15 years experience in the plastics and rubber sector, his role will be to grow the business and continue to improve customer relations.

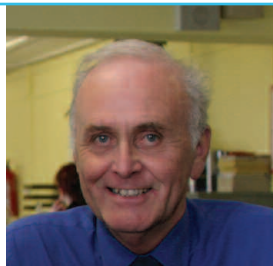
One of his first tasks will be to develop the production process. He will oversee planned investment to maximise efficiency by introducing systems for end-to-end visibility of the business.

“Our customers tell us that in today’s current market, lead times and product quality are everything. We are continually looking to improve the order-to-delivery-time, and we will be investing to make sure it happens.”



## Ken retires

**We wish a very happy retirement to Ken Sutcliffe, who has enlivened Attwater over the past 11 years with his engineering knowledge and his dry sense of humour.**



“I’ve always been a team player, so what I’ll miss the most is the craic with my colleagues and customers. However, once I’ve ploughed through all my outstanding home jobs, you might find me working at B&Q!”

He’s looking forward to having more holidays, and hopes to jet off to see relatives in Australia.

When asked what people would say about him, he said “I’d be pleased if they said I was helpful. I’d like to think they’d say ‘he was pleasant enough!’”

## Making sense of composites

*Does the sheer range of composite products available baffle you? Do you know how the new standards compare with the old ones? Do your purchasing departments think materials specs are just a load of letters and numbers?*

*Technical help is at hand. We are happy to come on-site and help your team unravel some of the mysteries of engineered composites in an informal and approachable way. We will provide a short presentation and you will have lots of time to ask questions too.*

*If you would like more information on this, contact Rachael Kennedy on 01772 258245.*



## Contacts

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## The sky’s the limit



**It never ceases to amaze us just how many applications there are for our materials. One of the most unusual requests we’ve had recently is for our phenolic/paper tubes, which are to be used in the latest rocket from Starchaser, due to blast off this summer.**

Starchaser is the UK’s only private rocket research development company, and not only builds and launches rockets, it also has an educational outreach team encouraging school children into science.

“This ‘eco-rocket’ cleanly burns recycled polythene and car tyres, so from an environmental point of view it’s a real winner,” enthused James Saunders, operations manager at Custom Composites, who will be making the tubes. “In fact, we are so excited about the whole prospect we’re donating the materials to help get this project literally off the ground.”

Steve Bennett, CEO of Starchaser, said ‘We’re passionate about getting rockets and equipment into space but it’s an expensive business. We’re delighted that Attwater can help us out in this way.’”

As yet, this new eco-rocket doesn’t have a name, but if you have any suggestions, email them to rachael.kennedy@attwater.com.

