



# ON BOARD

SPRING 2021 | EDITION 2

# A WORD FROM THE CEO



**Welcome to the second edition of our new newsletter 'On Board' which aims to bring you all the news and views from Warrenpoint Port. Thank you for taking the time to find out a bit more about life at the port and our place in the local community.**

It has been an extremely busy start to the year as we continue to navigate the challenges of Brexit and the ongoing global pandemic. We said farewell to the Chairman of our Board Stan McIlvenny who provided a steady pair of hands over the past five years. We thank Stan again for all his work. In February we welcomed our new Chairman, local man Dr Gerard O Hare who is a well-known businessman in the area. We look forward to working with Gerard going forward.

We released details of tonnage for 2020 which held up significantly. It was down by less than 5% on 2019 volumes and only 0.9% behind pre- Covid expected volumes. This is despite lockdown and a complete drop off in volume for part of the year.

The robust figures have been attributed to several factors: - including a strong relationship with our customers, an investment in our Port team; and a focused effort by hauliers to front load prior to Brexit and; to find routes that minimise disruption, post Brexit.

In early March we were successful in a bid for support

for the Port's covid recovery and investment plans. Infrastructure Minister Nichola Mallon allocated £1.5million to the port which will allow us to take forward a programme of continuous investment. This will be used for a range of measures to support long-term covid safety measures, new equipment, and further capital investment in the site.

We worked closely with DfI, and our local representatives in relation to our Brexit and Covid response so we were delighted to see the Department's confidence in and commitment to the Port.

The last 12 months have been extremely challenging for all sectors. We cannot thank enough our team for their unstinting support in their role as key workers throughout the pandemic. This has not been an easy year for our Port team but hopefully we are starting to see some light at the end of the tunnel. In the coming weeks we welcome our new Project Manager Kerri Farrell to the team and we know that Kerri will bring new experience in innovation and estates management to our team. We look forward to Kerri helping to deliver our vision and helping us to live our values.

The Port is very much open for business, we are optimistic and poised for continued growth. We look forward to continuing to build and recover for the remainder of 2021 and beyond.

**David Holmes, CEO, Warrenpoint Port**



# WARRENPOINT PORT WELCOMES NEW PROJECT MANAGER



**Warrenpoint Port is delighted to welcome a new member to the senior management team. Experienced construction and estates manager Kerri Farrell will join the team as Project Manager next week.**

**On Board had a chat with Kerri before she commenced the role to find out a bit more about her background. Welcome On-board Kerri!**

**Kerri, where did you interest in construction come from?**

My interest in construction came from my family business, H&P Campbell in Newry where I spent my teenage summer holidays painting timber in the joinery workshop. There was always plenty to do but it had a friendly atmosphere and a sense of camaraderie. I thought, even at this early age, that it might be something I would like to do.

**Construction isn't a typical choice for teenage girls, how did you overcome that?**

I went to University of Ulster to do BSc in Construction Engineering and Management. There were a few girls in the class, but we were a definite minority. It wasn't

much of a shock therefore, to go out into industry and to remain in a minority. Generally, though I have been well respected and the people I have worked with or come across have had more of a 'fair play' to you attitude, than a 'what would she know' one.

**Do you think there are more opportunities for women now in what would have traditionally been male dominated industries?**

Absolutely. During the last 20 years, the number of women in construction has steadily increased. We still have some way to go but I have been lucky enough to work with some outstanding women in my career to date.

I worked in contracting for two of Northern Ireland's most successful contractors before moving to the client side as a Project Manager firstly in retail and then in the education sector.

My most recent role was the Head of Estates for Southern Regional College. My career to date shows that any woman can choose to have a varied and successful career in construction, and I hope that we can inspire more women to consider careers in places like Warrenpoint Port.

**What are your plans for the new role?**

I am really looking forward to starting at Warrenpoint Port at a time when there is opportunity for growth and promotion of the local and regional economy. There will of course, be associated challenges but I am looking forward to helping overcome these. I hope to bring with me some of the innovative digital practices I have been involved with recently in construction and look at how these can be implemented at the port.

I can't wait to be part of the Port team and to be able to work in the town where I grew up and which I am lucky to still call home.

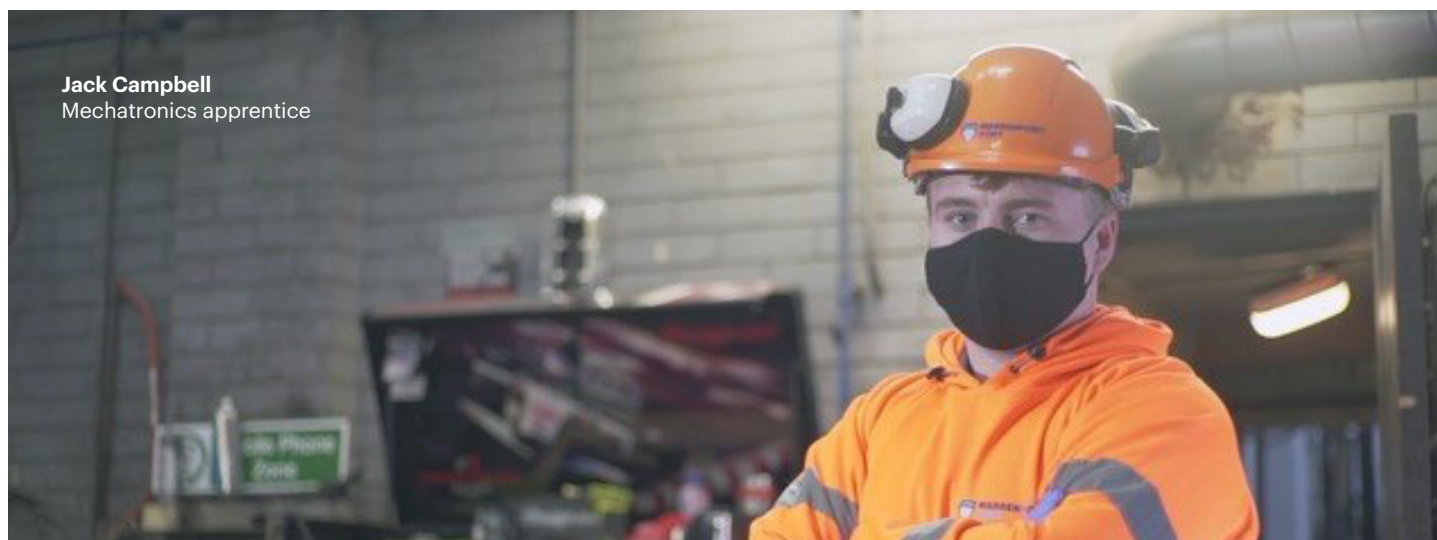
Thank you, Dr McCavitt, for permission to use this extract.





# APPRENTICESHIPS

We marked National Apprenticeship Week in February with an interview with Jack Campbell our Mechatronics apprentice. You can read Jack's interview in full on our website or check out the snippet below.



**Jack Campbell**  
Mechatronics apprentice

## Q: What is your apprenticeship in?

**A:** I am studying a higher-level apprenticeship in Mechatronics, which is a mix of electrical and mechanical engineering.

## Q: What does a typical workday involve?

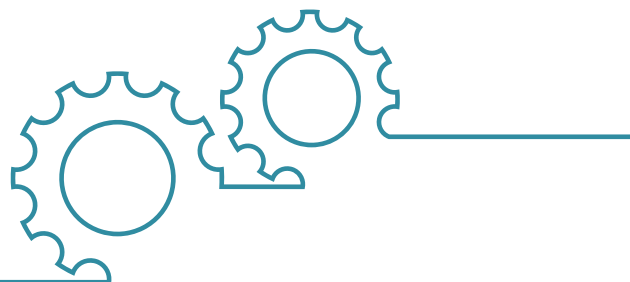
**A:** We could be doing anything, no two days are really the same, but mainly it is machinery maintenance with regular crane and lighting work.

## Q: How does your apprenticeship work?

**A:** So, I learn on the job and as I go. This is my 2nd year and I'm much more hands on now. In year one I would have watched the other ones and only done a few jobs. I have a mentor, Micheal, who I work alongside and he's great.

## Q: Would you recommend an apprenticeship at Warrenpoint Port?

**A:** I definitely would, everyone here is friendly and they look after you well. It's a great experience because of the amount of things I am doing. I had offers to go to university at the time but I'm happy I did the apprenticeship. I prefer a more hands-on approach. I know that would not suit everyone but for me it is perfect.



## CO2 Plant Visual Softening

The visual softening at the CO2 Plant will deliver 'forest canopy' mesh on three sides of the plant. The sample mesh banner is currently in place. The remainder will be delivered when restrictions are eased to allow the contractor to return to site.



## QUARTERLY UPDATE

**At the end of January Warrenpoint Port Hosted a quarterly update with elected representatives. The meeting took place on 29th January. In attendance was Sinead Ennis MLA, Cllrs Mark Gibbons, Glyn Hanna, Karen McKeivitt, Declan McAteer and Michael Ruane.**

The elected representatives were given a presentation updating them on the status of the mesh visual softening at the CO2 plant. (see page 4 for more details). An update was given on Brexit in relation to its impact on the port and wider customer base before members were advised about the Port achieving AEO status. (Authorised Economic Operator).

The elected representatives were given an update on the Covid Community Christmas Fund and its impact on the local community. Mark Gibbons commented on the success of the Community Fund.

David Holmes went on to advise that a Planning Application had been submitted to demolish the Aylesforte House with a view to moving the trailer park to accommodate a longer term DAERA facility in the current trailer park. David Holmes advised that the Port was awaiting artist's impressions of the proposed DAERA facility.

David Holmes updated the attendees on the process to remove an abandoned barge at Greencastle. Voluntary contributions from a

number of parties concerned about the potential environmental impact on the Lough, including Warrenpoint Port had been secured. The process of removing the barge will begin when the contractor is able to travel to the site, post Covid restrictions.

Sinead Ennis said that David deserved kudos for the way in which he organized the programme for removal which was an environmental and community issue.



Declan McAteer asked for update on Freeport status. David Holmes advised that while this is moving on in England, and Scotland has 'Green Port Agenda', there is nothing yet concrete in NI.

Mark Gibbons commented that he was approached by Essmore/ Clermont Gardens residents regarding dust – particularly in last two weeks in December.

David Holmes confirmed that at end of 2020 additional measures were in place in relation to dust but if there were any further issues for Mark Gibbons to send them directly to the 'On Board' email.

The NI Water spillage and the Port's response to it was discussed. Karen McKeivitt praised the Port's swift reaction to the road clean-up operation.

A discussion ensued in relation to Brexit. Sinead Ennis asked if hauliers were receiving guidance with Brexit issues. David Holmes advised that Seatruck liaise directly with their customers and hauliers have support through Trusted Trader Scheme/ Irish Freight Association. Kieran Grant advised that NI exporters to GB are currently using NI ports. Rol exports to GB are mainly using Rol ports. This is for VAT and customs reasons. An action to forward a recent webinar from Freight NI to elected representatives was agreed.

The elected representatives were asked to forward any feedback they had on the first Ezine so that we can continually improve the publication. The meeting concluded at 12.15pm with David Holmes thanking all the attendees. He finished by saying that the door is open and the Port is very much open for business.





## UPDATE ON TRADING



**The first three months of 2021 were challenging but busy. The outworkings of Brexit continue to dominate our agenda. Trade from NI to GB via the RORO continues to be strong driven primarily by Brexit but there are still many unknowns as to how this will look going forward.**

We saw a slight increase in recyclable material in Q1. We were delighted to welcome a new customer to the Port-local company The Tinnelly Group. The Tinnelly Group plan to use the Port every couple of months to ship product to their customer in Spain.

We continue to see demand for animal feed. We believe this has been driven by a poor, wet winter resulting in an increased need for imported feed.

Timber, steel and cement held up in terms of volume. There are new quotas which will be in place at the start of April which could have an impact on figures for some commodities.

Overall while volume is currently holding up, 2021 will continue to be challenging as we deal with the ongoing global pandemic and Brexit. We are however, very much open for business and working on how we deliver continued investment in our facilities; our team; and our clients to help deliver growth in the future.



## BOARD UPDATE

**We were delighted to welcome our new Chairman Dr Gerard O Hare to host his first Board meeting on 23rd March 2021. We will have further details of the outworkings of this meeting in the next edition of On Board.**

At the end of March 2021 Infrastructure Minister Nichola Mallon announced a recruitment campaign to appoint two non-Executive Members to the Board of Warrenpoint Port. The competition closes on 16th April at 12 noon. For details and an application pack please see 'Public Appointments' on NI Direct.



## MEET OUR TEAM



**Christy McShane**

### **Crane Driver/Port Operative**

I'm born and bred in Warrenpoint so before joining Warrenpoint Harbour, I was working with another shipping company in the harbour estate for seven and a half years. I joined the port team in 1997 as a casual operative. When I brought my fork-lift certificates to the Harbour Authority, they gave me many opportunities to drive the different machines. In 1998 there was an opening for a casual crane driver position. I am very lucky to have got it. I knew that's what I wanted to do as I've always enjoyed driving machinery.

I was put through the proper training and I haven't looked back since. In 2001 I was offered a full-time position, so I've been here a while.

When there's shipping in and the Port is busy, I'm always usually on a crane. I could be unloading anything from timber to steel or grain. I deal with all the commodities, the loading and discharging of the containers and setting up cement vessels. I deal with project cargo usually in tandem with a second crane, for example for wind turbines, and even through the years I've lifted pleasure boats in and out. If there's a gap in the shipping I'd be operating the forklifts, the container reach stacker and doing the day-to-day duties.

Outside of work I enjoy the weekends with my kids. I also do hill walking and I'm involved with underage GAA for Cumann Pheadair Naofa. With lockdown we couldn't do much so I'm looking forward to getting back to it.

I've always enjoyed working in the Port. My favourite thing about it is discharging a boat and supporting the health and safety. Keeping my team and those that work with us safe at all times is my main priority. It's different every day, which I like, especially with the variety of boats that come in. No two vessels are ever the same they're all loaded differently. I'm working with a team of people which helps get the jobs done.





**Name: Sharon Davis**

**Job Title: Finance Manager**

I have worked in Warrenpoint Port from August 1997. I am originally from Warrenpoint and still live here. When I was working in Dublin, a job opportunity came up for Warrenpoint Port, and I was delighted to come back home to work and live.

As the Finance Manager my role is to oversee the day-to-day activities of the Finance Department which includes working alongside Port Personnel, Customers and Suppliers.

Outside of work and being a busy working mum to three children, I like to give back to my community. I am on the Warrenpoint Pantomime Committee and I was the Chairperson of Friends of St Dallen's for three years and still remain on the Committee. Through these groups I volunteer my time and fundraise, so

these Community groups are able to help the people in our town.

I enjoy working at the Port and work with a great team of people. We have a great team ethos here and we all work well together. We are all lucky to work and live here in such a beautiful area.



**Name: James Russell**

**Job Title: Port Control Officer**

I started working for Warrenpoint Port five years ago. I am originally from Rostrevor but living in Burren almost 20 years. I retired from the Irish Defence Forces. A job became available in the Port, I applied and got the job. Initially it was casual hours, but a full-time position came up and got it. It was similar to what I was doing before in the army such as security, night patrols, the hours were the similar, so I was used to the 12-hour shifts.

My main role within the Port varies on a daily basis but includes port control which involves controlling the traffic coming in and out of the Port. This includes checking all vehicles and their ID. We are also responsible for the Weigh Bridge, this is for the freight that needs to be weighed in and out. We cover port security, doing controls, checking the perimeter fences and gates.

We also carry out searches of vehicles coming in and out of the Port, as well as

the Seatruck. As well as all of the above, we liaise with and control the marine traffic as well as checking the boats coming into the Port. There's a lot to do but that's why I love working here. There is always variety and very little time to be bored.

I am the chairman of the Warrenpoint Rostrevor District Angling Club so I'm never too far from the water. We have about 60 members and we try to keep it going especially at times like these. We keep to the social distancing and try to keep everyone happy and follow the rules. I am also a Liverpool football supporter but don't have too much to say on that matter at the minute.

My favourite thing about working in the Port is that every day is different. There's great variety as there's different boats coming in, different people, visitors, different lorry drivers and I get to meet loads of people which I enjoy. It's definitely more than just pushing a button and lifting the barrier.



## RECENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Over the past three months we have had several enquiries via [onboard@warrenpointharbour.co.uk](mailto:onboard@warrenpointharbour.co.uk). This email address is open to all members of the public who wish to enquire about anything in relation to the work of the Port.

### Noise:

We had two enquiries from neighbours in relation to early morning noise. Please see below an extract from the responses.

We are so sorry that you experience noise from the Port in your home. We fully understand this inconvenience for you, our neighbours, especially in the mornings.

It is unfortunately an outworking of having a busy, working port operating in what is now a densely populated area.

We do try to do everything we can to alleviate the noise. I would love to say we have a solution, which would prevent noise travelling but we don't, at the current time. We will continue to engage with our team and look at any other measures we can take.

### Speed:

We also had an enquiry in relation to the speed limit on the Newry Road approaching/leaving Warrenpoint where vehicles are turning into businesses including Warrenpoint Port. This is something the Warrenpoint Port and elected representatives have raised on several occasions with Department for Infrastructure. David Holmes, CEO has again written to DfI to seek further investigation into safety signage improvements and/or reducing the speed limit to 30 mph on this stretch of the road.

### CO2 Plant Venting Process:

We had an enquiry in relation the venting process from the Nippon Gasses CO2 plant. This venting process happens each time a delivery is made from the ship. This is normally every two weeks. The hose is depressurised by venting the CO2 left in the hose for one to two minutes to the atmosphere. We understand it may have caused alarm if it was the first time a person has observed it.





## THROUGH THE PORT HOLE

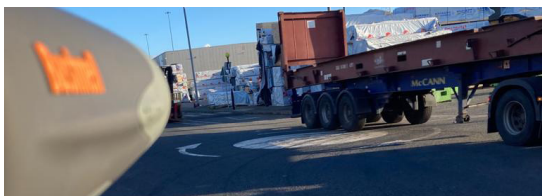
**Make sure to follow our social media to keep up to date with our stories, videos, and pictures. Here is a snapshot of some of our recent news:**



After a prolonged stay at Warrenpoint Port, the Barge 'Aran 250' departed at the end of March following maintenance work to prepare it for its next Irish Sea Sailing. We were delighted to have it docked here, after spending the last 18 months in Greenore.



In January, all our team were provided with new PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) including 'snoods' as an alternative to masks for Covid safety. Pictured is Pearse Boyle, Operations Supervisor wearing some of the new gear.



Did you know that we operate a 15mph speed limit within the Port? We carry out random weekly speed checks on vehicles coming in and out of the facilities as well as on our own machinery, to help create a safe working environment for our team.



We were delighted to welcome the 'Kamilla' who sailed from Turkey with its cargo of steel to the Port in March. This impressive boat measures at 141m. It isn't the longest ship we've ever had but it certainly isn't far off it.



In the first quarter of the year, we experienced every type of weather from the snow and the harsh biting wind which is extremely difficult to work in to full sunshine. Never knowing what the weather will bring from one day to the next or how it will impact our work is very much part of life here at the Port.





## PORT ROUND UP



### Infrastructure Minister

We were delighted to receive a note from Minister for Infrastructure Nicola Mallon MLA recently to thank our team for their work during the pandemic. This type of acknowledgement from the Minister is extremely welcome and really gives the team a boost.



### Update from Women's Aid Newry & Armagh

We were delighted that as part of our Covid Community Christmas Fund & Employee Raffle,

Women's Aid Newry and Armagh received £2,434 towards improvement works at a local mother and children refuge. We received this fantastic message from the team about how the funds have been used.

"We have one of double beds delivered, assembled and already in use. The bed is in one of our family rooms. The mum and children were delighted as we surprised them by replacing an old set of single bunk beds with the new double bed when they were out. The mum said the next morning she felt like a queen and her one year old daughter slept right through the night for the first time. Thanks again. This funding was very much appreciated."

### MarPAMM

David Holmes, CEO attended the February meeting of MarPAMM -Marine Protected Area Management and Monitoring This is a meeting of local stakeholders with a number of objectives to protect and maintain the ecology of Carlingford Lough.

