



'All my customers crying out for sweepers'

A COMPANY set to expand its premises at Vantage Point Business Village is sweeping all before it.

Stock Sweepers is the only British-owned roadsweeper maker and success in its specialist market is prompting the expansion into 34,000 sq ft of factory space next to the 12,000 sq ft it currently occupies. The firm is used to making headlines – last year the Earl of Wessex took the wheel of a Union Flag-liveried roadsweeper at the premises during a Royal visit to the Forest of Dean.

Stock Sweepers was founded by its managing director Jeff Stock, whose entrepreneurial spirit was evident during his childhood.

He and his brother used to offer to cut people's grass and he washed cars for cash in his native Kent.

Mr Stock had his first business at 18, when he bought a JCB and used to dig holes for crash barriers on motorways including the M5.

He got into the roadsweeper sector when he and a partner both invested £3,000 in buying one of the vehicles.

"We bought this roadsweeper and carried on digging our crash barriers," Mr Stock explained. "That carried on till we had probably five or six sweepers."

He then struck out on his own, running a sweeper hire company.

It was at about that time he got into refurbishment of the vehicles and soon realised he was operating in a niche sector.

"People understood what I was doing and started asking me to refurbish their equipment," he said, adding: "At one point I



The Earl of Wessex has a tour around Vantage Point Business Village and gets to drive a liveried roadsweeper supplied by Stock Sweepers Ltd, inset

was the 10th biggest spender for roadsweeper spare parts, not including distributors."

Having reached a point where the company was making its own parts, the next progression was manufacturing its own vehicles.

In 2009 it built its first, which went to Poland.

The business has another facility, at nearby Abenhall Saw Mills.

With the expansion at Vantage Point, the Abenhall works will concentrate on finishing work, as Vantage Point absorbs

the welding operation and assembly on one site.

"It will give us more control and more flexibility to build the trucks we're looking to do," said Mr Stock.

He indicated how business was booming, saying: "All of my customers are crying out for sweepers."

It is selling its vehicles to Australia and Canada and is looking to do business in Greece.

Stock Sweepers has a £3.2million turnover and last year made 25 roadsweepers, which sell for around £110,000.

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