



**Retaining the crown**  
 Inaugurating the Maidstone site, Scania (GB) boss Claes Jacobsson said quality of aftermarket and service support will be "the biggest differentiator between manufacturers" going forward. And he added: "We are determined to remain the best in the UK. When we look at the Heavy Truck Study [independent annual customer satisfaction survey], we've been number one, we are number one now and we will ... stay number one."  
 "Maidstone is another step in that direction. We will become even more efficient. And our new location is even more central to the many operators we have in Kent."

# Service level

Scania's new state-of-the-art dealership, adjacent to junction six of the M20 near Maidstone, is another step towards the Swedish truck maker's goal. With 90-plus sites across the UK, it wants to ensure that no customer is ever more than 30 minutes from a Scania service point.

Officially opening the £6 million, 2.5 acre flagship site last month, Scania (GB) managing director Claes Jacobsson promised more to come. "We have plans to develop ... similar workshops," he stated. "Together with our purpose-built Inverness premises [opened in May], Scania Maidstone represents the latest major investment... The programme will continue in 2016."

Maidstone is now part of the OEM's wholly-owned South East dealer group. Sitting astride the two major routes to Dover, it is in a strong position to pick up passing trade from Continental traffic, as well as supporting local Scania operators in Kent. That's no accident, says regional executive director Adrian Inscoe: "Part of Scania's strategy across Western Europe is that all new [dealer] builds are either on motorways or major arterial roads for easy access."

## Scania's impressive new Maidstone dealership offers a template for truck and bus sales and service excellence in 2016 and beyond. Brian Weatherley reports

As for the site itself, Scania Maidstone has five drive-through workshop bays and a DVSA-manned ATF (authorised test facility). And, in addition to providing 24-hour HGV and PSV servicing (from 06:00 on Monday to 17:00 on Saturday, with Sunday opening on request), this dealership also offers new and used-truck sales, an all-makes truck and trailer parts business plus a Scania Truck Rental operation.

The Sittingbourne site will now close, with all 35 staff transferred to Maidstone. But Inscoe says the aim is to "double the productive workforce", which could see 18 more technicians added over the next 18 months. Meanwhile, Scania's existing four-bay service facility at Dover remains unaffected.

Importantly, Maidstone represents the first UK rendition of the Swedes' global workshop template - a point emphasised by Kjell Örtengren, managing director of Scania Real Estate Services. "We have a standard modular concept [for] purpose-built workshops. This is not the first: we've been using it since 2007, but it's being developed and improved all the time."

Incidentally, this facility was developed by Aylesford-based civil engineers Gallagher Group (which also purchased five Scania mixers - pictured above). It boasts several green highlights. Not only was local wildlife habitat preserved, but the site has been equipped for rainwater storage while 300m<sup>2</sup> of roof-mounted photovoltaic cells supply electrical power. Other initiatives include motion-controlled lighting, while surplus heat from the ventilation system is also re-used. **TE**

