



**POOLING PARTNERS**  
FABER HALBERTSMA GROUP

## **THE MILITARY PRECISION AT THE FRONT LINE OF PALLET REPAIR AND REPATRIATION**

### **Pooling Partners creates nine jobs by supporting Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Company**

Logistics is a military term applied to the world of commerce, but its meaning has come full circle as former soldiers now form the front line of the supply chain through the repair and repatriation of millions of re-usable wooden pallets for Pooling Partners as part of a partnership that has created nine jobs for ex-service personnel.

As Britain prepares for Remembrance Sunday, The Royal British Legion Industries' (RBLI) social enterprise, dubbed Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Company (BBMC) because of the high number of injured veterans in its ranks, is parading its skills on behalf of Europe's leading manufacturer and pooler of sustainable wooden pallets at its production site in Aylesford, Kent.

The enterprise's model offers a lifeline to more than 120 people, many of whom have endured life-changing injuries in the line of fire and duty. Founded in 1919 to provide treatment for service personnel returning from World War One, now more than 70 per cent of the BBMC's team is a veteran, has a physical or mental disability, or both.

However, BBMC is not just socially thriving, but is also commercially competitive. After securing contracts through competitive tenders, the social enterprise boasts a turnover of more than £5 million as the sole provider for of lineside signage for Network Rail whilst also making road signs for numerous local authorities.

The Kent site of BBMC sorts more than 1,500 pallets each day as they return from retailers after bruising journeys from manufacturers of leading brands through distribution centres and finally to supermarket back doors. After applying Pooling Partners strict quality criteria many of the pallets processed by RBLI are in need of repair before their onward journey back into the UK's dynamic supply chain.

BBMC has just taken delivery of a brand-new shredder for waste wood which will then be used for biomass. The investment will process 20 tonnes per week and save the business £80,000 per year in reduced waste removal costs, as well as cutting the business's carbon footprint.

Geoff Streetley, a director at BBMC, said: "This is a significant operation that works extremely well because it enables pallets to be re-used and get back into circulation very quickly which is essential

in today's circular economy supply chain. The new shredder will augment that offering and provide a more effective service back to Pooling Partners – it is a win-win.

“As we are a not-for-profit enterprise, meaning that every single penny we earn goes back into helping the lives of the most disadvantaged, our strong and ongoing relationship with Pooling Partners has enabled us to hire nine members of staff – that's nine individuals who are veterans or have a disability, but have been given a second chance at life thanks to this relationship.”

Phil Storer, director at Pooling Partners, said: “The work that goes on at RBLI is critical to our 24/7 operations. The whole enterprise operates to very high commercial standards and the new shredder is an example of adding value and taking cost out of the supply chain while at the same time providing a much-needed employment boost to former soldiers and people on other recovery journeys.

“We are really proud to have worked with RBLI for the last 13 years and to be associated with the great work that they do. More front line businesses should get involved with this essential front line operation.”