

Hertfordshire Drydock

On 18 August the “Hertfordshire” sailed from Londonderry bound for Wierdock, Sunderland, for her first drydocking whilst under Bibby ownership. The vessel has had a busy 20 months since joining the Bibby fleet, firstly completing a number of voyages under time charter with Lauterjung, then working the spot market under the commercial management of local brokers Quality Freight based in Ellesmere Port and finally spending the last 12 months on time charter to NH Chartering based in Bremen, Germany. She has worked extremely hard carrying a wide range of bulk cargo around North West Europe and the Mediterranean.

This was to be an intense three week drydock programme. The key objectives was the removal and inspection of the tail shaft, blasting and painting of the hull, painting of the hull above the water line in new colours (green to black) and most importantly, from the charterers perspective, was the blasting back to metal and the painting of the hold in a highly resistant paint system. Proceedings were to be overseen by Stuart Hinde, the Technical Manager for the vessel.

“Hertfordshire” arrived in Sunderland in the early hours of 21 August and immediately moved to a lay-by berth. Once the yard staff arrived she had her movable bulkheads removed for blasting and refurbishing. In the early hours of 22 August she moved from the layby berth and was positioned on blocks in the drydock. By 1100hrs she was dry on the blocks and work commenced in cleaning the hull ready for blasting and painting.

Work progressed well on all fronts with only the weather slowing matters down. Unfortunately there were the occasional challenges to be overcome. Damage to the shell plating was identified by the class surveyor that required the emptying of the lube oil tanks and the stripping out of the galley to repair.



Next the servicing and overhaul of the aft winch tested Stuart’s problem solving skills. With the final challenge being the replacement of damaged sections of hatch coaming rubbers to ensure a water tight seal. All of this led to a ten day overrun but resulted in the vessel returning to the charterer in a significantly better condition than before, with a much improved cargo carrying capability.



The crew and the technical Management team, with the assistance from the yard, worked extremely hard to deliver the vessel back to Charterers in a condition that reflects Bibby Line’s standards as a first class vessel owner. The vessel is back on charter and ready to face another 30 months of gruelling work within the demanding North West Europe short sea shipping sector.