

EXECUTIVE INSIGHT

LOGISTICS UK

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October
2026

MONEY MATTERS

Interview with

ROB BRAND

HEAD OF BUSINESS
SERVICES, HSBC UK

★ NETWORKING ON THE THAMES

*Photos and commentary from the
recent boat party*

★ INVESTMENT INSIGHTS

*A report on the recent logistics
investment dinner discussion*

EXECUTIVE INSIGHT

No 32 ★ October 2026

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Executive
Membership

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Conference season is upon us

We are now well into our autumn programme of events for Executive Membership, having successfully hosted two dinner discussions on investment and skills in recent weeks.

This month, we will be hosting our first conference of the season – our fourth Digital Transformation in Logistics conference, which this year will be moving home from Birmingham to London for the first time, and will showcase the latest innovations in the industry.

Next month we will be launching our next Insight Report on the topic of Energy for Decarbonisation at our Delivering Decarbonisation conference in the City of London. Based on 14 in-depth interviews with industry stakeholders in both the energy and logistics sectors, this report promises to shine a light on the energy aspect of the decarbonisation puzzle.

I do hope you will be able to join us at one or both of these events and look forward to hearing your thoughts on these important topics.

Phil Roe,

President, Logistics UK



EXECUTIVE DINNER: GLOBAL TRADE

Geopolitical shifts in global trade, driven in large part by the Trump administration in the US, are reshaping UK logistics, with fluctuating demand patterns, new trade routes, and evolving freight

movements across ports, airports, and road freight. These global forces create both challenge and opportunity, influencing costs, capacity and the resilience required across the sector. ■



[Find out more](#)



EXECUTIVE DINNER: CYBER SECURITY IN LOGISTICS & SUPPLY CHAINS

As logistics and supply chains become increasingly digitised, cyber resilience has never been more critical. From operational disruption and ransomware attacks to risks across interconnected supply networks, organisations face a growing range of cyber security challenges. ■



[Find out more](#)

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN LOGISTICS 2026

Now in its fourth year, the Digital Transformation in Logistics conference returns as a flagship event for senior leaders driving innovation, operational excellence and future-focused strategy across the logistics sector. This year's programme goes deeper than ever into the technologies, capabilities and regulatory shifts reshaping logistics – from AI and cyber resilience to autonomous vehicle trials, engineering implications and the skills required to power innovation at scale. ■



[Find out more](#)

Budget must address cost pressures, Logistics UK says

In its formal submission to the government ahead of its Autumn Budget, which the Chancellor will deliver on 28 October, Logistics UK has illustrated both the scale of the sector and the size of the cost pressures it faces.

As an industry with a reach that covers every inch of the UK, the logistics sector has the footprint and high value jobs to support the government in meeting its target of delivering growth in every postcode. However, achieving that will require policy measures to support logistics businesses to manage the sustained costs pressures they are experiencing and help the wider economy thrive.

“As a sector, we employ 2.6 million people across the economy and enable more than £1 trillion of trade every year,” said Logistics UK’s Chief Executive Ben Fletcher, “and that means our members are uniquely positioned to unlock regional growth by helping to shift the focus to investment, in what has been a very tough year dominated by the Middle East conflict and the cost pressures it is driving, which risk pushing up the cost of living.”

The submission from Logistics UK, the only trade body to represent the whole of logistics, recognises the importance of the previous government’s £250 million package of measures to support the industry from the effects of the Middle East conflict, which include an ongoing Fuel Duty freeze, Vehicle Excise Duty concessions and red diesel price controls for rail freight. As part of this Autumn’s Budget, Logistics UK is recommending how through continued support, the government can create an environment that encourages long-term investment and enables businesses to deliver growth.

“Our sector is starting to drive the green shoots of economic recovery,” continued Fletcher, “but there is still much to be done. We are urging the Chancellor to create a cost-competitive business environment that will nurture the improvements in business confidence that we are beginning to see.

“Key to this is maintaining the current rate of Fuel Duty, including the 5p cut. Any increases in Fuel Duty can significantly affect business viability, investment decisions and the cost of living.” ■



[**Find out more**](#)

Logistics sector showing “green shoots of recovery”, says Logistics UK

Following a turbulent first half of the year, with the conflict in the Middle East continuing to push up fuel prices and operating costs, the confidence levels of logistics businesses are beginning to show green shoots of recovery, according to research from Logistics UK.

The trade body’s latest Logistics Performance Tracker survey, published on 20 August, shows that firms are reporting greater confidence in business outlook and financial health. A quarterly barometer that uses publicly available data and information from

survey respondents, the survey shares insights into the health of the sector and long-term trends.

Results for Q2 of 2026 paint a picture of increased business confidence.

Using a scale

from 1 to 10 or 1 to 100, with the highest number representing the best score, the survey has found that business outlook has improved from 5.8 in Q1 to 6.5 out of 10, with logistics businesses feeling more positive about their prospects and the economy as a whole. Meanwhile, respondents felt that the financial health of their businesses has improved slightly from 7.2 to 7.5.

“Logistics is absolutely critical to the UK economy,” said Logistics UK’s Chief Executive Ben Fletcher. “From delivering goods for businesses and schools to supermarkets and pharmacies, the service our industry provides is essential to everyone’s way of life, as well as powering every part of the economy from factories to schools, hospitals and even our leisure hours.

“Even amidst major disruption and supply chain issues, operators across our sector have continued to maintain service reliability and deliver for their customers. After a difficult start to the year, it is encouraging that survey results for this quarter show that operators are starting to feel more confident about the state of business, with gradual signs of recovery beginning to show.” ■



[Find out more](#)



Use breathing space provided by EES suspension to ensure system works, says Logistics UK

“The EU’s decision to adopt a pragmatic approach to the implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES), to keep borders flowing, will come as a relief to the logistics sector and those operating our key trading gateways with France,” said Ben Fletcher, Logistics UK’s Chief Executive.

His comments come after it was announced that France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Malta, Portugal, Italy and Switzerland have been allowed to delay full implementation of EES to “maintain border fluidity”.

“Logistics UK has warned consistently that EES must not be allowed to create unnecessary delays for freight and trade,” Fletcher continued. “Almost 60% of UK-EU trade in goods travels via the Short Straits, and our analysis shows that even a 90-minute delay

to the 3.35 million HGVs using these crossings could cost the economy £400 million a year.

“Keeping goods moving smoothly between the UK and EU, and fixing unnecessary trade friction, is in everyone’s economic interest and essential to supporting trade-led growth. Now that France and several other European countries have been given the flexibility to ease EES checks where necessary, the priority must be to use that breathing space to resolve the remaining technical issues and ensure that further implementation is properly tested, phased and based on what works operationally at the border.” ■



Find out more



Logistics UK strengthens senior leadership team

Logistics UK has strengthened its senior leadership team with three new key appointments. Verity Davidge and Jenny McMillan OBE join the organisation from Make UK in mid-November as Executive Directors of Campaigns and Performance & Governance respectively, while Ben Garratt takes on a new role as Chief External Affairs Officer.

“I am delighted that Verity and Jenny have agreed to join Logistics UK at such an exciting time in the organisation’s development,” said Ben Fletcher, Chief Executive. “Both bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the business and have ambitious plans to help us grow and deliver more for our members in the coming months. Attracting talent of their calibre to the organisation is a great recognition of the role that logistics plays in the economy and I look forward to working with both of them.”

“Ben Garratt has done an outstanding job in the past few months as Interim Executive Director of Campaigns, and I am delighted we can acknowledge his talent to enable him to lead the public face of our campaigning activity. All three will be critical to our mission to deliver more for our members in the coming weeks and months, and I look forward to working closely with them.”

Verity Davidge was previously Director of Policy and Public Affairs at Make UK, where she played a leading role in securing government commitment to an industrial strategy. Jenny McMillan was Make UK’s Business Performance Director for eight years, overseeing its business strategy and business performance, as well as leading delivery of major services and managing external governance arrangements. ■



[Find out more](#)



Rob Brand

Head of Business Services, HSBC UK

ROB Brand has spent more than 20 years with HSBC UK in a variety of corporate banking and leadership roles. Over that time, he has worked closely with corporates across a range of sectors and now leads HSBC UK's Business Services – supporting businesses as they pursue their growth and investment ambitions.

As well as being the co-author of the *Logistics Investment Insight Report 2026*, published by Logistics UK earlier this year, he has acted as a guest speaker at the Logistics Finance Forum 2026 and at a recent Executive Member dinner on the topic of investment.

Rob Brand

You have worked at HSBC UK for more than two decades. What first attracted you to banking?

My interest in banking began with a curiosity about economics, how businesses grow and how financial markets connect companies, individuals and communities.

Banking was a natural extension of that interest, combining analytical thinking with practical impact. It helps businesses invest and grow, while supporting individuals and families with their ambitions. That mix of intellectual challenge, human interaction and real-world purpose continues to make the

industry fulfilling for me.

What does your current role as Head of Business Services entail?

My role has two connected parts: speaking directly with businesses and sharing the resulting insights across the Bank.

I meet corporate clients to understand their priorities, challenges and outlook, including investment, growth, costs, workforce needs, technology, sustainability and resilience. These conversations show how wider economic conditions are affecting businesses in practice.

I then identify common themes and differences, relate them to wider economic and sector trends, and distil the findings for senior stakeholders. This helps HSBC UK anticipate developments and remain relevant and responsive to clients.

The role brings together relationships, analysis and collaboration, connecting individual client experiences to broader implications and better outcomes across the Bank.

What made you keen to partner with Logistics UK on the inaugural *Logistics Investment Insight Report*?

Logistics UK was a natural partner because its broad membership, industry expertise and close engagement with businesses give it a practical view of the opportunities and challenges across the sector.

HSBC UK wanted a clearer view of the investment themes shaping logistics, from technology and sustainability to fleet renewal, infrastructure, resilience and workforce needs. Combining Logistics UK's sector insight with HSBC UK's understanding of business, investment and the wider economy created a practical, rounded report and helped bring the industry's voice to a wider audience.

With the cost environment difficult to forecast, what should logistics leaders consider when developing their investment plans?

Logistics leaders should avoid relying on a single forecast and instead plan around credible scenarios, testing the assumptions behind each against their own outlook.

They should assess the impact of changes in costs or demand on cash flow, margins and returns, then mitigate key exposures through measures such as phased investment, sufficient liquidity, supplier diversification and flexible contracts or financing. The aim is not to predict the future perfectly, but to remain resilient if conditions change.

Investment intentions in the report are strongest in technology, people and decarbonisation. Were you surprised by these findings?

The findings were both expected and encouraging. Technology was always likely to feature strongly, particularly AI. The most effective approach is to start with a specific business challenge, identify a practical solution and measure the return.

It was also positive to see investment in people remain a priority, as businesses need the right skills to adopt technology, improve productivity and grow. Decarbonisation is equally important, requiring a clear strategy and practical investment plan.

Together, investment in technology, people and sustainability can support businesses' longer-term plans.

Rob Brand



“Key risks include external costs and changing market conditions. Logistics businesses should test how these factors could affect performance and identify practical ways to reduce exposure.”

At a recent Logistics UK dinner, you said businesses need reliable data before they can benefit fully from AI. What did you mean by that?

Data quality is especially important for AI, as the technology is only as effective as the information it uses.

Tools for forecasting, route planning, fleet management or customer insight require accurate, consistent and accessible information. Before investing heavily, businesses should assess data quality, establish ownership, improve standards and connect relevant systems. Strong data does not guarantee success, but poor

data makes reliable, scalable results far less likely.

Fuel optimisation ranked highly as a decarbonisation priority. How should businesses balance immediate efficiency gains with longer-term investment in electric vehicles and infrastructure?

Businesses should take a phased approach. Near-term measures such as driver training, route optimisation, reduced idling, better vehicle utilisation and telematics can cut emissions and costs while building the data needed for larger changes.

Alongside this, businesses should plan for electric vehicles and charging infrastructure by assessing duty cycles, replacement dates, depot locations, grid capacity and total cost of ownership. Initial investment should focus where electrification is operationally and commercially viable.

The key is to act now without making isolated investments. Businesses should set measurable interim targets, use fleet and emissions data to prioritise spending, and adapt plans as technology and infrastructure develop.

When a logistics company approaches its bank for funding, what separates a compelling investment case from one that is likely to be challenged?

A strong funding proposal starts with affordability. The bank will want to see resilient cash flows that can support the additional debt if trading conditions worsen.

For an asset purchase, the business should show how the investment will generate enough value to cover its cost, through increased capacity, productivity, lower operating costs or stronger customer retention.

The proposal should include a realistic base case, supported by past performance and current trading, alongside a downside scenario covering key sensitivities such as fuel, energy, volumes, margins, labour, vehicle

utilisation and customer concentration. It should also set out how management would respond if risks materialised.

Ultimately, a compelling case shows how the investment creates value, how the debt will be repaid and how the business would respond if performance falls short.

What risks and opportunities are likely to be most relevant to logistics businesses as they develop their investment plans over the next three years?

Key risks include external costs and changing market conditions. Logistics businesses should test how these factors could affect performance and identify practical ways to reduce exposure.

For example, businesses should check that fuel escalators reflect underlying cost movements and ensure funding arrangements suit their cash flow, investment horizon and risk appetite. Identifying exposures early and building flexibility into plans is essential.

The strongest opportunity is using technology to improve productivity and scale without a proportionate increase in resources. Better route planning, fleet utilisation, automation, analytics and AI can reduce costs and improve decision-making, provided investment is tied to clear operational needs and measurable outcomes. ■

Networking on the Thames



NEARLY 100 of Logistics UK's Executive Members, alongside government representatives and senior stakeholders from across all modes of the logistics sector, set sail on the evening of 3 September for an exclusive evening of networking along the River Thames.

Against the backdrop of some welcome late-summer sunshine, guests enjoyed spectacular views of London while making new connections and strengthening existing relationships with leaders from across the sector. Music, drinks and a barbeque supper provided the perfect setting for conversation and collaboration.

Departing from Westminster Pier, attendees discussed the key

issues shaping the future of logistics as they networked throughout the evening.

Welcoming guests to the event, Logistics UK President Phil Roe urged members to make the most of the opportunity to build relationships, extend their networks, and reconnect with industry colleagues.

During the three-hour cruise, passengers took in many of London's most iconic landmarks as the sun set over the capital, including Tower Bridge, the O2, the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, The Shard and Canary Wharf.



[Find out more](#)



Networking on the Thames





Networking on the Thames







Logistics investment – delivering the future

Wednesday 16 September 2026 • Malmaison, Charterhouse Square • London

LOGISTICS UK's executive members and non-executive directors gathered in the City of London on 16 September to discuss how future investment in the logistics sector can help deliver its future, during a dinner discussion held at Malmaison London, sponsored by WTW.

Natalie Chapman, Head of Public Affairs, Logistics UK, introduced the discussion by remarking that investment is critical for the success of the logistics sector: "Not only does investment drive and promote innovation, drive modernisation and underpins productivity, it also supports long-term growth and resilience too. Without it, our industry risks lapsing into a state of managed decline."

The discussion was informed by the

findings of the recently published *Logistics Investment Insight Report 2026*, published by Logistics UK and HSBC UK, using research commissioned from leading insights company Analytiqa.

"We're going to be exploring the industry's investment intentions across key areas from technology to decarbonisation," she said. "And also examine attitudes towards borrowing and finance and how organisations can plan to fund their growth strategies for the years ahead."

Following a round of introductions, Chapman then introduced Rob Brand, Head of Business Services at HSBC UK, and co-author of the *Logistics Investment Insight Report 2026*.

MACROECONOMIC TRENDS

Having worked at HSBC UK for more than 20 years, when Rob Brand was appointed as Head of Business Services two years ago, he was delighted to be given a blank canvas in terms of the business sectors that he could cover. He quickly identified freight and logistics as a key area of focus, owing to its centrality to the UK economy and international trade.

On the day of the dinner discussion, the Office for National Statistics had just released its monthly inflation figures which showed that the consumer prices index had risen from 2.9% in July to 3.1% in August.

“That was seen as pretty good because people have been quite nervous about secondary round impacts from the oil price and Middle Eastern events,” Brand said. “What that tells us is that that secondary round of impact, which is what the Bank of England is nervous about, hasn’t yet happened.”

A number of theories abound as to why that should be the case, one of which is that people don’t know when the conflict in the Middle East is going to finish. When it does, the expectation is that the oil, petrol and diesel prices will come down in quick succession.

“It could be the case that your customers, ie the owners of what you are moving, are looking into this and thinking they will take a margin hit because they think [the energy



price spike] is going to be temporary.”

The Bank of England is keeping a close eye on fuel inflation, but if it raises interest rates purely to manage the inflation of fuel it is unlikely to have much impact in a global market where oil is priced in US dollars. As the UK is a net importer of oil, Bank of England base rates make little to no difference in energy markets.

However, in 2022, following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the Bank of England considered this energy shock to be transitory, one that would pass quickly through the system.

“All of a sudden wages started going up, the price of goods on the supermarket shelves went up and it got slightly out of control and you end up with inflation of 10% versus a 2% target.”

On conditions in the UK labour

“Productivity growth in the UK has been pretty abysmal since the financial crisis.”

market, Brand said that they were still relatively benign, with a headline 4.99% unemployment rate. However, this wider figure masks spikes in certain demographics. For example, unemployment in the 16 to 24 age category is almost one in six at 16.4%

“There’s a real gap there and this whole dialogue around NEETS [not in education, employment, training] means there is almost a lost generation, because the longer it takes you to find that job, the longer it is you will never find a job. So, it’s really critical for that generation that they find a route into employment.”

Logistics has a great story to tell in terms of being able to offer entry level jobs, Brand said, which can then lead to other roles within logistics and strong career progression, both for graduates and non-graduates.

Rather than consult the ONS’s quarterly Labour Force Survey, whose credibility has reportedly waned in recent years, the key number to look at on employment according to Brand was the PAYE returns. “If you look at that, employment’s actually gone down

by 0.5% over the course of this year so far. So, not great news.”

The Bank of England, however, is probably factoring that into its decision on whether to raise interest rates. Although it is not at its 2% target, inflation looks manageable and excluding fuel prices and oil price movements is not too far off.

The labour market is not seeing wage price inflation come through, with wage inflation in the private sector running at 2.9%, although that rises to 6.3% in the public sector.

“There’s a bit of differential there,” Brand said. “I’m sure we’ll see that gap close and some of that 6.3% is timing. But 2.9%, the Bank of England is probably happy with that.”

On GDP measures, the UK economy is doing reasonably well so far this year. In the first quarter GDP was 0.6%, by the second it had fallen to 0.4%, which Brand described as a “fantastic” performance, given the range of geopolitical issues buffeting the global economy, including tariffs with the US, the conflict in Iran, the ongoing Russian-Ukraine conflict, and growing imports of Chinese automobiles.

On balance, Brand said that UK GDP growth is actually “pretty solid”, but with one caveat: “For reasons unknown, we all seem to start work in January, go out great guns, the January prints are normally fantastic and from there



on in it slowly goes down and down and down and no one's quite sure why. It's just been a feature of the UK economy.”

On the topic of interest rates, Brand said that HSBC UK's house view, or 'base scenario', is that the next move will be a rate cut. However, that is at odds with the wider market which is pricing in three rate rises between now and the middle of next year. All this is largely dependent on the war in the Middle East and the next moves of the US administration.

“If people are trying to give you forecasts around base rates, take it with a pinch of salt because until we know how that is going to settle, it's very difficult to say this is what's going to happen to rates,” Brand advised.

On energy, HSBC UK's house view is that the price of a barrel of oil in Q4 would be \$95 – a forecast which is widely held. Again, this is heavily dependent on what's happening in the Middle East, and even once the conflict is finished, it will take time for the excess capacity that has built up to be unloaded, for ships to be released from the Strait and for ships around the world to be back in the right place at the right time to deliver shipments.

Summarising the macroeconomic picture, Brand said UK growth in the first half of 2026 was “pretty decent”, given wider economic headwinds. The labour market was still cooling, but he suggested that could be a result of improving productivity, when you get

Logistics investment – delivering the future

more with less.

“One of the big challenges for the UK economy has been around how do we generate more productivity,” he said. “Productivity growth in the UK has been pretty abysmal since the financial crisis.”

Brand thought the combination of GDP growth and a benign labour market could mean productivity levels could rise, which will have a positive effect on the UK economy.

KEY REPORT FINDINGS

Moving on to share the key findings of the *Logistics Investment Insight Report 2026*, Brand said that the headline statistic was that 85% of respondents

said that they were going to invest the same or more as last year, with intentions for next year rising to 90%.

“What we’re interpreting that as is resilience and businesses looking at in in terms of I need to invest, I can’t afford to stand still. So a positive lead indication.”

Delving a little deeper, the top three areas that respondents said they would invest were technology, people (which pleasantly surprised Brand) and decarbonisation. All three of these were focused around resilience, efficiency and service continuity, he claimed.

In terms of investing in tech, cyber was the number one focus, with businesses keen to build up resilience from cyber

attacks. According to Brand, there are two types of customer: those who have been hacked and those that don't know they've been hacked yet.

"No one is too small to be the targets of these sorts of attacks," he said. "We see it across the spectrum. We do business banking, startups, corporate banking, PLCs – everyone will have a story. It's just how publicised that story becomes, or whether it's dealt with in house."

The level of investment intention for cyber showed that people are taking it very seriously in the sector. Well publicised stories of the demise of the Knights of Old business and the hack on Jaguar Land Rover, meant that cyber attacks were very visible and front of mind.

The second biggest investment intention in tech is in AI, but it is difficult to measure the impact of this investment. Brand argued that integrity of company data needs to be secured before AI can be overlaid onto it.

"If you haven't got the data sorted and you're then trying to put an AI lens over the top of that, it's very difficult to drive the efficiencies out of and through AI," he claimed.

On decarbonisation, respondents were pragmatic by focusing their investment on fuel optimisation. The fieldwork for the report was undertaken by Analytiqa before the initial US-Israeli strike on

Iran. The first responses to the survey, therefore, were quite different to those received after the conflict had started, by which time fuel optimisation had become a more urgent priority.

Nor was decarbonisation all about electrification, Brand claimed. It was about driving the more efficient use of fuel and moving to cleaner fuels such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

"Electrification is definitely a part of it," he said. "We're continually seeing improvements in terms of battery life and in terms of connections to the grid and infrastructure."

Brand does not meet many logistics clients around the UK who are using electric vehicles across all their routes. "It's far more typical to be able to say, well, there are a small minority of routes that we're able to use this on and then use it as a bit of a test and learn. That is far more common."

As electric trucks are slowing improving and their cost is reducing they will become more commercially viable on an increasing number of routes. Brand observed that in China, manufacturers were experimenting with a battery changing model, rather than batter charging model.

"They're building out infrastructure where you've got the battery behind the truck, a truck will go into a station, the battery comes out, and a new one goes in."

“My gut feel is, where China leads on electrification, the rest of the world will follow, because they are leaders in terms of battery technology, in terms of EV vehicles.”

The discussion then moves from charging times to a five-minute window in which to conduct the battery swap. However, this is probably easier in China where the government can mandate business models to a large extent.

“My gut feel is, where China leads on electrification, the rest of the world will follow, because they are leaders in terms of battery technology, in terms of EV vehicles. So that's something to watch out for.”

In terms of investment and what is potentially holding back investment, funding availability was not recorded as an issue with 71% of respondents, who reported that arranging financing was straightforward or very easy. However, one in five respondents said that the business landscape and business uncertainty was holding them back from securing finance. In terms of the cost of the finance, only 3% of respondents said that this was what was preventing them from applying for

a loan.

“Even with potential future rate rises, we’re still talking about a historically reasonable interest rate environment,” Brand argued.

The whole point of base rate increases is to slow down the economy and ensure that it does not overheat, he explained. The Bank of England does not need to increase interest rates too much owing to the level of debt that consumers have.

Overall, Brand took comfort from the key findings of the report.

“People are still looking to invest more,” he said. “We’ve still got people investing in people, in decarbonisation and in tech. It was very much focused primarily around margin improvements and driving margin. That was the key theme.”

Report respondents were primarily focused on resilience, efficiency and making their businesses stronger for tomorrow.

“Yes there is growth, but we need to make sure we’re ready for tomorrow and we’re viable for tomorrow.”

TIPS AND TRICKS ON SECURING FINANCE

Sharing some advice and information on how logistics businesses might best engage with their banks, Brand said there were two parts to his role. The first was meeting with customers,

listening to what they are hearing and learning from them. The second part was trying to convey that information to his colleagues in credit and influence them by telling them what he is hearing from customers.

On what it is that bankers are trying to understand, he said the key points were around resilience and fuel escalators.

“I would really encourage people to explain to your bank manager the fuel escalators you have in place, how you were invoicing for those surcharges, and what is it doing to your P&L,” he said.

Do not assume that banks will understand how it works because the chances are that they will not, according to Brand.

“It's really getting that message out and being on the front foot in terms of how you're talking about it and what is the impact on your business and where do you have fuel escalators and are there timing differences? How accurately is that escalation and the increase you're getting reflecting the underlying costs within the business?”

Brand is currently working internally within HSBC UK to explain fuel escalators to the bank's relationship directors and frontline bankers, to get them to ask the right questions and understand their customers' answers.

In terms of investing in AI and automation, he said it was good to

show how it was driving efficiency within the business, even if to begin with that was only with back-office functions.

“If I take a step back and look at the other business services sectors I cover, there is always something in AI in terms of the back-office processing of invoices, where it can drive efficiencies before you even get into industry specifics.”

Business problems that are quite manual but straightforward can be easy wins for AI, Brand maintained.

On the energy transition, he advised logistics companies to speak to their banks in terms of where they are offering HVO-fuelled trucks to their clients and what they are doing on LED lighting in their warehouses, for example. While EVs are a major element of decarbonisation, it is a much wider topic than that.

In summary, Brand said that logistics businesses are still investing, which is a positive given the wider economic headwinds.

“There's still opportunities out there. It's a real time of a lot of change and some quite big issues. But from a banking perspective, lending into the sector is pretty good because generally it tends to be asset rich, and banks love to fund an asset.” ■



Find out more

POLICY WIN

Latest National Planning Policy Framework includes greater recognition of logistics

LOGISTICS UK has welcomed the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework, which includes greater recognition of the sector's role in supporting economic growth and resilient supply chains, than previous editions and now includes dedicated freight and logistics policies.

The framework reflects several recommendations made by Logistics UK during the consultation process, including support for locating logistics developments near strategic transport networks, expanding EV charging

infrastructure, and ensuring sufficient, secure lorry parking. It also recognises the importance of driver welfare, road user safety, alternative fuels, and the need for some logistics operations to run overnight.

While Logistics UK will continue to advocate for stronger recognition of logistics as critical national infrastructure, the inclusion of dedicated freight and logistics policy is a significant positive step. ■



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Digital
Transformation
in Logistics

2026

LOGISTICS UK

Digital Transformation in Logistics 2026

Creating the culture of innovation for logistics businesses

THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER - HILTON KENSINGTON LONDON

In its fourth year, the Digital Transformation in Logistics conference returns as the flagship event for senior leaders driving innovation, operational excellence and future-focused strategy across the logistics sector. This year's programme explores in greater depth than ever the technologies, capabilities and regulatory shifts reshaping the industry, from AI and cyber resilience to autonomous vehicle trials, engineering considerations and the skills needed to deliver innovation at scale.

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LEADING ON LOGISTICS

The latest episode of *Leading on Logistics* focuses on the role of AI and automation in logistics. Mike Young interviews Jemma James, Director of Partnerships, Logistics UK, and Toby Mills, CEO, Entropy, touching on some of the key findings of the recently published *Innovation Insight Report 2026*.

[Listen now](#)

Exclusive events and networking opportunities

AS an Executive Member, you have complimentary access to a number of our flagship events and conferences, including AI and Automation in Logistics, Delivering Decarbonisation, Digital Transformation in Logistics and Logistics Finance Forum, as well as

our celebratory black-tie Logistics Awards event.

You can also benefit from access to a variety of exclusive networking opportunities with your industry counterparts at frequent roundtables, advisory boards, drinks receptions, breakfasts and dinners. ■

Upcoming events

6 OCTOBER | DINNER

Global Trade

How are shifting global trade patterns reshaping UK logistics? Join us to discuss the impact of changing demand, trade routes and freight flows on costs, capacity and supply chain resilience.

Register now

14 OCTOBER | DINNER

Cyber Security in Logistics & Supply Chains

Join an exclusive dinner with a Senior NCSC Representative, who will discuss the evolving cyber threats facing logistics organisations and supply chains, and the actions leaders can take to improve resilience.

Register now

20 OCTOBER | WEBINAR

UK Logistics Insights

Speakers will draw on the latest data and member survey insight to explore key trade, infrastructure, skills and decarbonisation trends shaping the industry.

Register now

22 OCTOBER | CONFERENCE

Digital Transformation in Logistics 2026

A flagship event for senior leaders driving innovation, operational excellence and future-focused strategy across the logistics sector.

Register now

17 NOVEMBER | CONFERENCE

Delivering Decarbonisation 2026

Bringing together leaders from across the logistics, transport, energy and infrastructure sectors to explore the practical steps needed to accelerate the UK's transition to net zero.

Register now

10 DECEMBER | AWARDS

Logistics Awards 2026

Celebrate the very best of the logistics industry at Logistics UK's 10th Annual Awards Reception and Gala Dinner. Bringing together businesses from across road, rail, sea and air, it's set to be one of the industry's standout events of the year.

Register now

BOOK
YOUR
TABLE
NOW!

Logistics Awards

Recognising leadership
and excellence in logistics
2026

LOGISTICS UK

YEARS

Logistics Awards 2026

Book your place at logistics.org.uk/event/logistics-awards

They're back and better than ever, Logistics UK's prestigious Logistics Awards return for 2026! Now in their 10th year and well established as the go-to event for the industry, don't miss this opportunity to be part of our milestone year by booking your place at the 10th anniversary awards ceremony.

Taking place on Thursday 10 December at Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, London, the awards

Don't miss out! Book your table now to make sure you secure your place at this sell-out event at www.logistics.org.uk/event/logistics-awards

will celebrate those who have made a significant contribution to the industry.

Hosted by the hilarious Josh Widdicombe and featuring an exciting entertainment programme throughout, you can expect a night of conversation, networking and laughs.

As the leading event by the industry, for the industry, it really is an evening not to be missed!

Thursday 10 December 2026 – Park Plaza Westminster Bridge, London, SE1 7UT



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