

Making it in Leeds

News from Leeds Manufacturing

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Airedale opens high tech training school

Global air conditioning manufacturer Airedale International is tackling the skills shortage within manufacturing by investing in its own high tech training school, based at the company's 25,000 sqm research and manufacturing facility in Rawdon, Leeds.

The new centre of engineering excellence, featuring a purpose-built classroom and fully operational, AC, electrical and brazing workshops, was opened on Thursday, 7th July, 2011, by Lord Mayor of Leeds, the Rev'd Councillor Alan Taylor.

Combining on-the-job training and theoretical learning, the training school allows Airedale to grow its rolling apprenticeship programme and to update the skills of its 380-strong UK-based employees. The school will also provide air conditioning and industry training courses to external companies to help develop engineering skills within the supply chain.

Airedale managing director Clive Parkman said: "The decision to invest in and develop this facility was not a difficult one because of the skills shortage the industry faces. In having this official launch, we wanted to make the statement that here in Leeds is a world class, very successful British company committed to the investment in training and skills, not only for its own employees but also for those of our customers and other third party recipients."

Tom Marry, executive vice president of Modine, Airedale International's parent company and Alan Duttine, former managing director and co-founder of Airedale, were amongst guests at the launch event, also attended by Leeds City Council chief executive Tom Riordan and representatives from education, trade associations, certifying bodies, local and city government and key suppliers to Airedale.

They were welcomed by staff from the company including fourth year apprentice Daniel Carter of Yeadon (pictured), winner of 'Engineering Advanced Modern Apprentice of the Year' at Leeds City College.

Airedale International is the UK's largest chiller manufacturer and the leading UK provider of precision air conditioning and data centre cooling solutions, with a £36m turnover including £6m of exports. Airedale designs, manufactures and distributes air conditioning and cooling systems to more than 50 countries.

Employing 425 people globally and 360 employees at its Leeds HQ, Airedale is part of US-owned Modine Manufacturing Group. The parent company specializes in thermal management systems and components used in light, medium and heavy-duty vehicles. It employs approximately 6,000 people at 32 facilities in 14 countries.

Ends

Photo: Danny Carter of Yeadon, winner of the Leeds City College Engineering Advanced Modern Apprentice of the Year Award. Pictured (l-r): Steve Joyce, Airedale Director of Human Resources, Paul Cartwright, Contracts Manager of Leeds City College, Danny Carter, 4th year apprentice Test Engineer