

Making it in Leeds

News release from Leeds Manufacturing

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Future is Green for Dye Company

Textile dye manufacturer Town End (Leeds) plc has developed a unique product to open new markets and grow its business during tough times for the textile trade.

The £4m turnover company, founded in the 19th Century has developed the environmentally friendly 'Dyofix' range of algae inhibitors - lake and pond dyes that eliminate the build up of algae and improve the quality of water for wildlife.

Town End (Leeds) plc's remarkable diversification into supplying its unique lake and water dyes started a few years ago when it supplied Kew Gardens with bulk orders of its completely safe food dyes to colour the lakes at the world famous gardens. Following successful testing by the gardeners at Kew, who

remain customers, the company invested in developing a range of blue and black dyes especially for the horticultural sector.

When the blue and black dyes are added to bodies of water, the change in colour, although hardly noticeable to the human eye, filters the UV rays that fuel the build up of green algae and weeds. As well as turning water pea green, algae can be very harmful to fish and other wildlife, and creates unsightly scum, the bane of any gardener with even a small pond.

"The simple fact is that the very same dye types we manufacture for textiles and fabrics can be used completely safely in the countryside as they are based on organic food dyes that have been tested to the highest levels," said Peter Watson, production director at Town End.

"We started supplying Kew initially, but we have since developed a range of products that can be tailored to individual requirements of country estates, commercial fishing lakes, municipal parks, golf clubs and even private gardens," he added.

To treat a typical pond the size of a room with the Dyofix product costs less than £20, and to treat a larger area of water the size of a football pitch costs in the region of £100 eliminating the need for expensive manual cleaning and other chemical interventions for around 12 months.

Many angling clubs are now seeing things more clearly, thanks to the local product, Leeds & District Amalgamated Society of Anglers being the latest and currently treating the extensive Knotford Lagoon, Otley.

Cllr Andrew Carter, leader of Leeds City Council, said; "This is a great example of how manufacturers are responding to a tough economic climate and changing markets by diversifying and finding new markets for their existing products. There's great potential for the Dyofix product across a range of sectors, promising a prosperous future for this long standing Leeds Company."

This year the company looks set to triple turnover of its algae inhibitor as legislation surrounding the management of water bodies and environmental concerns about chemical alternatives are creating a wave of interest in the firm's products.

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Photography: 1. Peter Watson (left) and Dave Bonsells, of Leeds & District ASA at Knotford Lagoon .

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