

Making it in Leeds

News release from Leeds Manufacturing

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£130,000 Investment Launches Aerospace Export Trail

An investment of £130,000 in a new sliding head CNC machine is paying handsome dividends for a Leeds engineering business with an initial order for US aerospace parts worth a third of the machine's price.

Kingfisher (Lubrication) Limited, a £2m turnover company, is machining thousands of hexagonal grease fittings from an exotic nickel-copper alloy for a North American aerospace customer.

The tough to machine, highly corrosion-resistant material known as Monel also retains its strength at high temperatures, making it the ideal material to cope with the harshest environments and huge temperature variations experienced in the aerospace, marine, oil, gas and chemical industries.

Kingfisher chairman and managing director John Fisher says: "Machining trials began once a European source for the material was determined but, because of extended lead times, it seemed the business was going to be lost.

"However, the purchase of the new 20mm sliding head machine enabled us to process the parts from the more readily available material and fulfil this urgent order with the first batch of parts completed and air-freighted to the USA in just six weeks.

"We have long been an approved manufacturer supplying aerospace standard steel zinc-plated grease fittings into the USA. This addition to our range of Cu-Ni grease fittings for America and the first order for the larger fittings will go a long way to paying back our investment."

Paul Stephens, Leeds City Council's chief economic development officer, said: "Manufacturing has a key role to play in rebuilding the UK economy. The early payback on Kingfisher's investment shows how manufacturers can maintain their competitive edge by combining continued investment and specialised product know-how."

Ends

Notes to Editors: Kingfisher has a skilled engineering pedigree stretching back over 140 years and boasts the UK's largest multi-spindle machine shop. With sales throughout the world, the firm produces millions of essential grease fittings a year in over 350 different versions.

Photography: Nice little earners – John Fisher with the aerospace parts made in Leeds and bound for America, with the £130,000 machine that processes them in the background

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