

Dugdale



New Dugdale storage silos attest to continuous business investment



David Outen, Managing Director

Based on the banks of the River Calder in Sowerby Bridge, Dugdale Ltd manufacture technical PVC compounds and alloys. Since its foundation, its facility has always performed well, making superior PVC compounds and providing an unrivalled service in the industry, courtesy of a team with over 150 years' experience in specifying and processing PVC materials for a variety of applications. Managing director David Outen elaborates.

Our story is one of applied scientific expertise, effective manufacturing, innovative marketing and Yorkshire grit. The current management team have been cultivating these qualities since 2006, developing a portfolio that includes materials for a wealth of applications. These are then used in a variety of industries including medical, leisure and automotive, building and construction. We acquired Dugdale in 2014, through a successful management buyout, and from the first day our mission was to develop these core qualities through further researching and developing the best possible materials and supplying them to the industry through exceptional customer service.

Specialists in our sector

We recognised from the outset that we are PVC specialists and that this was our key strength. We also realised that, for too many years, PVC had been unfairly pilloried in the media as something hazardous to the environment, but nothing could be further from the truth. In order to address this common misconception, we accepted a mission to dispel the erroneous views about the material.

FACTS ABOUT DUGDALE

- » Managing Director: David Outen
- » Founded in 1896
- » Based in Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire
- » No. of employees: 132
- » Services: Manufacture of technical PVC compounds and alloys
- » www.dugdalepvc.com

“We play our part and serve a large number of end-user applications for second-life PVC materials and in the development of virgin grades and alloys”

At long last it is now being recognised that clearly identifiable and clearly labelled PVC-based products have one of the highest rates of recyclability compared to other plastics. The building and construction trades have led the way for this development. Niche markets such as the healthcare sector are also making great strides in collecting, recycling and finding reuses for the material. As the UK's leading independent PVC compounder, we are committed to these developments and understand that PVC recycling and reprocessing make business sense.

We play our part and serve a large number of end-user applications for second-life PVC materials and in the development of virgin grades and alloys. We don't dilute our technical resources or focus on a range of different polymers. Instead, we concentrate on the versatility, cost, performance and environmental benefits of PVC. We enjoy demonstrating our expertise to our customers by assisting them throughout the whole process, from concept to complete material solutions. We help with processing and production methods at our customers' manufacturing locations and introduce

them to new compounds and possibilities through our constant product innovation strategy.

We are expanding the range of social benefits provided through our materials. We are working hard in the area of health and safety, to ensure that fire hazards in the building sector become a thing of the past. Our intumescent material range will help stop fires at an early stage, sealing off gaps between doors, windows and frames, thus preventing the spread of fire and smoke. Since the MBO, we have continued to invest in our business, with over £3.5 million of capital expenditure.

Recovery and refurbishment

Every enterprise has its peaks and troughs, and Boxing Day 2015 saw our resolve and plans tested to the full. Exceptional flooding and bad weather hit the Calder Valley, with much of Sowerby Bridge underwater, including most of our refurbished shop floor to a depth of two feet. The picture was devastating, but the response of our workforce was outstanding. Many employees left their homes and families the next day to help restore the status quo, with all of us working to restore production as soon as possible. Hard work, creativity and a tranche of flood prevention investment meant we could go back to work within weeks. The following year, we hosted a summer party to thank our workforce for their dedication, loyalty and hard work.

In June 2016, a new materials silo and high output twin screw compounding machine was delivered and commissioned. We also undertook significant refurbishment of the premises and built a new, modern technical and quality assurance laboratory. This included purchasing and installing a new laboratory compounding line with reliable scalability in order to provide

New Dugdale materials laboratories provide the heartbeat for the future



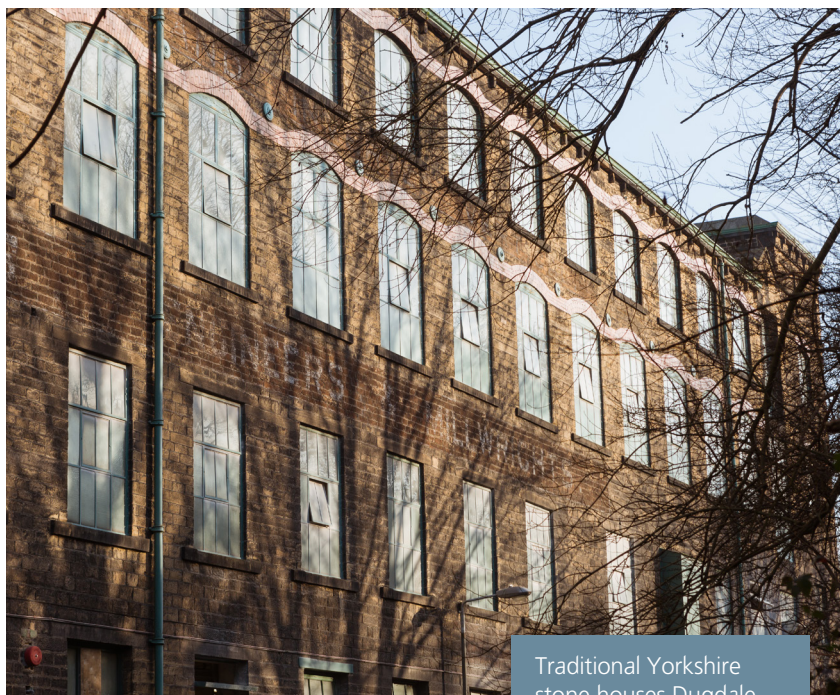
meaningful and repeatable samples for new technical products to our customers. In 2017, new mixing and further material handling systems were purchased and installed to enhance our operations further. During 2018, we have invested in compounding equipment aimed at our small lot customers in order to continue to facilitate the compressed lead time nature of this market. We have also modernised and refitted our warehouse to further bolster the company's capabilities.

Sustained success

In the five years since the MBO we have succeeded in growing our brand and business. British industrial demand for our materials expertise continues to be high. Currently, we formulate an average of 50 new PVC compounds per month. Colour matching, meeting customer performance requests, price pressures and legislative changes are the predominant drivers. Further reasons include the need for enhanced weathering, an uplift in physical properties, anti-microbial or anti-fungal requirements and surface finish modification.

In 2018, we announced that our turnover had doubled in ten years, demonstrating how far we have come. Our versatile manufacturing systems are a key reason for this success. Production changes are an essential component when specifying the company's modular arrangement of high-speed mixers and compounding lines, which are designed to allow rapid grade change and prompt customer response while maintaining manufacturing efficiencies.

We play a part in the life of the PVC sector as a whole. We are a regular Gold Sponsor of the triennial Institute of Materials PVC exhibition and conference and we play an ongoing part in the work of the Vinyls Group of the British Plastics Federation. We



Traditional Yorkshire stone houses Dugdale manufacturing excellence

also enjoyed a successful sponsorship of the Vinyl World Congress, Brighton. This provided us with the opportunity to showcase a range of colour compounds for the resurgent vinyl record industry, contributing to the sectorial debate from the podium, exhibiting and playing the new products in the breakout sessions. Our sponsorship was a hit and it was pleasing to see that our new colours for the vinyl record trade were enjoyed by music fans everywhere.

All of our innovation is made possible through our new product development team, which uses our testing and laboratory facilities and pilot line to first prove the new materials. The samples are then shipped to customers for in-house trials prior to progressing the new grades on to full production. From design to full approval, each stage of development and technical service process is focused on delivering on the end-user's requirements. Our exceptional customer focus is probably our best-defined feature. The sustained growth over the past ten years has been the proof of this, and our customers and stakeholders can be confident that we will continue to follow this strategy in the future.

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