

Midland Lead



At Midland Lead, we are proud of our 35 years of lead sheet manufacturing expertise



Boudewijn Tuinenburg,
managing director

Midland Lead has been producing lead sheet for over 35 years. They are a family-owned company with a strong manufacturing heritage, and now create products for both British and global construction from recycled lead. According to managing director Boudewijn Tuinenburg, key to the company's success and longevity is a highly-skilled workforce. They are the only UK manufacturer offering machine-cast, rolled and sandcast lead, and they take pride in combining traditional craftsmanship with a 21st century technology-led approach.

Lead is an extremely environmentally friendly material. In sheet form, lead can be handled safely, is totally recyclable and, in our case, guaranteed for 60 years. It can even last up between 100 and 200 years, if fitted correctly, before it needs to be removed and recycled again. By comparison, lead alternatives are only guaranteed for ten years and are currently not recyclable.

Lead has one of the highest recycling rates in the world, higher even than glass or newspaper, and is the most recycled metal ahead of aluminium, copper or zinc. We are passionate about minimising the pressure on our earth's natural resources – our lead is sustainable. We are proud of our legacy and, importantly, the future of lead.

Increasing efficiency – partnership with Cranfield University

Keen to understand the science within this raw material, we are three years into a knowledge transfer partnership (KTP) between Midland Lead and the Sustainable Manufacturing Systems Centre (SMSC) at Cranfield University. This partnership

FACTS ABOUT MIDLAND LEAD

- » Managing director: Boudewijn Tuinenburg
- » Established in 1983
- » Based in Swadlincote, Derbyshire
- » Services: manufacture of machine cast lead & sandcast lead
- » 50 employees
- » Produces 15,000 tonnes of lead a year
- » Turnover in 2017: £30 million
- » ISO 9001, 14001 and 18001 certified
- » www.midlandlead.co.uk

» USES OF OUR LEAD

We supply lead products to be used as:

- » Weatherproofing material
- » Radiation protection in the medical and research sector
- » Ballast in the marine and other race sport industries
- » Radiation protection for security screening
- » Counterbalance in heavy machinery

“We are keen to develop innovative ways to further increase our efficiency”

involves extensive research and development of products and processes. We have run several projects focusing on reduction in energy consumption and continuous improvements in manufacturing.

Professor Mark Jolly, head of SMSC at Cranfield University, said: “Midland Lead have taken on board the challenge of getting to a fundamental understanding of the process of direct machine casting of lead sheet by engaging academics and supporting research studies. The research they are supporting will ensure that they will have the most energy efficient process with a lower CO₂ footprint than any competing process for lead sheet production across all the sectors to which they supply. We at Cranfield have found the company open and willing to take on board changes and to really drive them through.”

Our academic researcher presented highlights of these studies at the Minerals Metals and Materials Society (TMS) annual meeting in Phoenix, Arizona, and early indicators confirm that our process is more efficient compared to others of its kind. As we are keen to develop innovative ways to further increase our efficiency, and to be recognised as a market leader in high quality lead manufacturing, we are now running further experiments and models to identify further improvement opportunities.

Proud to promote diversity within the construction industry - our Midland Lead female team



Green credentials

The construction sector has a huge impact on the environment. It is an intensive energy user, the largest consumer of materials in the UK and the largest producer of waste. Despite efforts to reduce landfill waste, little is being recycled or reused. We strongly advocate the sourcing of recyclable products, and our lead is a leading example.

Throughout the supply chain, by reducing waste disposal and CO₂ emissions while also creating sustainable design and developments, the use and reuse of lead will set a new and improved standard for future construction – where recycled, sustainable materials will be an automatic choice.

Supporting skills and diversity

We are also mindful of the future skills our industry needs, as the National Federation of Roofing Contractors' (NFRC) latest report confirms the skills shortage in the roofing sector will reach an all-time high within ten years.

We supply lead sheet free of charge to a number of colleges in the UK, as well as additional tools, sealants and patination oil to support the real-world learning of future roofers. We invite students to our facility so that they can see first-hand how our lead is manufactured while educating them about best practice in handling lead, compliance with health and safety and product-specific guidelines. Nothing is wasted; once colleges have finished with the lead, they return it to us and it is recycled.

This collaboration is helping to build a strong future for the industry and for the application of sustainable products, highlighting the durability and dependable nature of lead for the next generation. Chris Messenger, from Leeds College of Building, considers



Our lead is made of 100 per cent recycled material and has a 60-year guarantee

» LEAD FACTS

- » Our lead is manufactured from 100 per cent recycled material.
- » Unlike most materials, lead can be recycled over and over again.
- » Lead is the most recycled common metal in the world.
- » Lead has a higher recycling rate than newspaper and glass.

it a vital partnership: “Midland Lead takes you on a first-class journey of the lead manufacturing process from plant to site. It makes students really get to grips with using such a long-lasting material. Starting these conversations early on is a fantastic thing for colleges to be able to do; it informs their learning and fully prepares them for the world of work.”

Our people

We take a keen interest in the wellbeing, safety and health of our workforce. We employ a considerable number of long-term and returning staff, demonstrating impressive levels of employee engagement. We recognise, however, that improvement is always possible, and ensuring we have the right people in the right place at the right time has enabled us to navigate the recent recession.

At the end of 2015, we reviewed how we could improve in this regard. With the support of ACAS, staff participated in an open and honest evaluation process of what they like, didn't like and what would make life easier working at Midland Lead. Most importantly, we listened to their views; training opportunities have increased, new shower and canteen facilities were installed and a regular half-yearly business update and progress report has been implemented. We repeated this exercise with ACAS in 2018, recognising the cycle of continuous improvement and thus highlighting

specific areas to support our future business growth.

Customer experience

Excellence in our customer journey is of paramount importance to us. For over 35 years we have worked hard to provide our customers with exactly what they need in numerous sectors. Our orders are predominantly delivered within two to three days, and wholly customer-specific. By understanding our customers' individual business requirements, we can deliver a personal service using the latest CRM system and by working closely with our logistics partner.

Lee Sharland, managing director of Sharland Roofing, agrees: “Midland Lead's range is very good, very user-friendly. They are very informative; the website and all of the literature you get from Midland is great. They have regular bulletins and offers. They are far and away better than the others – noticeably.”

Quality customer service helps us to develop new business and improve sales, but also aids employee satisfaction and motivation. We have invested heavily in the technology to understand clients' requirements and expectations. After working with research experts to integrate the latest thinking concerning customer focus, we can conclude that the future is exciting.

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