

GRANTHAM NOW UP & RUNNING

Our new Plumbing Centre and Bathroom Centre are now open for business.

We are delighted with the facilities that we have created on this high profile site and look forward to welcoming our customers.

It has been pleasing to recruit some new faces locally and to combine them with some of our experienced personnel to deliver the distinctive Willbond service in Lincolnshire.

Director of Plumbing Centres, Ray Wheatley comments, 'Since we opened, new customers have all expressed their delight at our new branch and we look forward to building a very significant operation here in Grantham. We have a really enthusiastic Merchant Sales team in place under Manager, Stephen Pagram and they are looking forward to providing a 5 star service to the customer base every day of the week including Saturdays and Sundays.'

Our Bathroom Centre displays mirror the stunning creations already in place in our Nottingham and Derby showrooms which have already proved so popular with our customers.

Stuart Weedon, who opened our first Nottingham Showroom in the mid 1970s, is the Manager of Grantham Bathroom Centre and he will now be ably assisted by Amanda Humphries and Gemma Keeling.

Lisa Jepson, Director of Bathroom Centres who designed the showroom layouts enthuses, 'Our Manager Stuart lives in Grantham and we are really fortunate to have someone of his experience and expertise leading our new team here. The displays are proven winners and we cannot make it easier for people to do business with us as the Showrooms are open 7 days a week with ample off-road parking.'

New branch details are all on our website at Willbond.co.uk



From reception desk to boardroom

We are delighted to announce the promotion of Lisa Jepson to the Board as Director responsible for Bathroom Centres.

Lisa joined our business as a Receptionist straight from school some 22 years ago before graduating into sales, and then departmental and branch management.

Our Bathroom Centres Group now has 3 outlets and Lisa has designed and project managed the build projects for each of them to universal acclaim.

Chairman Tony Hogg comments, 'This is a richly deserved promotion for Lisa who has done wonderfully well managing a 7 days a week enterprise in a very competitive and demanding market place. At the same time she has taken the

lead on the creation of our new Bathroom Centres in Derby and Grantham and the refurbishment of Nottingham Showroom and, as if this is not enough, she has also handled the recruitment and training of our new staff.

Her story is an inspiration to all of our staff who can clearly see what can be achieved here.'

'This is a dream come true for me', says Lisa, 'I am so proud to be a Director of Willbond which is a really exceptional Company. After 112 years in business, we continue to represent all that is best in the way that we treat our customers, staff and



suppliers. I will do everything I can to ensure that our Bathroom Centres continue to deliver the unique Willbond experience.'

NEW FACES JOIN THE TEAM

NEW FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

We are pleased to introduce Sarah Dunn to the business as our new Financial Controller.

A qualified accountant, Sarah (26 years) already has an impressive track record in the IT, Furniture and Financial Services industries and her expertise in managing growth will be invaluable as we continue with our expansion programme.

"I have been made very welcome at Willbond", says Sarah, "and I am really enjoying Willbond's refreshingly straight forward approach to business. My prime objective is to make the Accounts function even more customer focussed and we shall be investing heavily in the department to ensure that we achieve our aims."



NEW CONTRACTS DEPARTMENT SALES MANAGER

Following the fairly sudden departure of Kevin Bosworth to New Zealand we are pleased to announce that David North is our new Contracts Department Sales Manager.



Dave (42 years) is married with a young son and lives in Leicester.

He brings us great experience from both the Merchant and Contracting sides of business.

A very positive 'can do' personality Dave cannot wait to get to grips with his new role as he reports, "I just cannot believe the depth and quality of experienced people employed at Willbond in addition to the great bunch of youngsters who are all being trained to be ready to step up to the plate in the near future.

At my last Company, Willbond was one of our key suppliers - a position earned through competitive pricing and a very responsive attitude to service and I am looking forward to delivering the same to even more customers across the East Midlands."

RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

We are delighted to welcome Mick Dickson back to the Company after several years away working with Glow Worm and another Merchant chain.

Mick returns to his previous role as Sales Manager at Sherwood branch where he takes up the reins again following predecessor Gary McQueen's decision to take up a role with one of our suppliers.

Mick comments, "It is amazing how much the Company has grown in the 3 years that I have been away but it is great to be back renewing customer friendships and working with really good professionals again."



Our growth over recent years has been rapid (6 new Plumbing Centres and 2 new Bathroom Centres in 5 years!) and it is therefore vital that we now take additional steps to ensure the consistency and flavour of our service across our branch network.

Accordingly, just before Christmas we brought all of our Plumbing Centres under the direction of Ray Wheatley and as you will have already read in this newsletter we have now put all of our Bathroom Centres under the direction of Lisa Jepson.

The Plumbing Centres and Bathroom Centres are both supported by our Purchasing and Logistics Departments under the direction of Simon Chambers and our Accounts Department under newly appointed Financial Controller, Sarah Dunn.

Cascading down we have a very experienced and dedicated management team who all share a common commitment to make it easy for our customers to do business with us.

Competitive prices, in-depth stocks of quality brands, responsive delivery and collect service, reliable administration processes, external representatives, easy access branches, extended opening hours are all boxes that we tick but beyond that you tell us that it is the friendliness, knowledge, experience and personality of our staff that makes us stand out from the rest.

Their willingness to go the extra mile, to apologize and put things right fast when things occasionally go wrong, these are the qualities that you value and that we are determined to instil in all of our teams.

Please have confidence that as we grow we shall continue to train our new staff to deliver a 'right first time' service and that our Managers will ensure that they maintain the Willbond commitment to service excellence.

Willbond service will not stand still, however, and we are now working internally on 'Service Plus' initiatives designed to bring yet more added value to our customers. We shall announce more on these initiatives later.

Despite a significant spend in Nottingham Bathroom Centre and Grantham branch in 2007, investments in our branch network will continue in the year ahead with physical refurbishments planned for Sherwood and Head Office and additional expenditure on our IT systems. As ever, these investments are all designed to improve conditions for both customers and staff and to improve our overall efficiency and cost effectiveness.

In January we always appear to have a daunting year in front of us and this year is certainly no exception!

Come what may, we shall be doing our best to support the market and not just in a reactive way. We will have a substantial proactive advertising campaign across Radio, Press and the Internet which will stimulate the Bathroom market to the benefit of all participants.

We all have a part to play in getting a share of the consumer spend for our industry and you can rest assured that we are certainly doing our bit.

So we enter our 112th year in business as excited as if it was our first with lots of challenges to meet but with an inner confidence that we have the team do the business.

Thanks for your support to date and best wishes for a healthy, happy and successful 2008.