

MELDRUM GROUP FOLLOWING QUALITY



MELDRUM GROUP HAS BEEN CONTINUOUSLY GUIDED BY ITS PRINCIPLES SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED, AND THOSE SAME PRINCIPLES GUIDE ITS PLANS FOR THE FUTURE AS WELL.

FOLLOWING QUALITY

PROJECT MANAGED BY: JAKE REEMAN

Meldrum is an expanding and innovative UK construction company based in the Northeast of England. Much like its founder and Group CEO, civil engineer Dave Meldrum, the company has a strong bias towards civil projects, but as it has grown over the last 23 years it has developed into a multi-faceted construction group.

“We developed a facilities business to offer facilities management services, but also so that we could hand over projects to it once construction is complete,” Meldrum tells us. “Our facilities arm will then manage the new building during the retention period, and that has worked really well. They have 24/7 support with their own plumbers, electricians and handymen.”

By having this handover in place, Meldrum Group is able to ensure that its customers receive a building that will meet their standards down to the smallest detail.

“If there are any latent defects on a job, such as a door handle rattling, our facilities management team are there within hours to put it right,” Meldrum observes. “It is a great way to handle the service after handover.”

That the facilities management company is an arm of Meldrum Group itself rather than a subcontractor reflects the “If it

is worth doing, do it yourself” philosophy that percolates through Meldrum’s entire business. That same attitude gave rise to the firm’s steel fabrication arm when, many years back, Meldrum struggled to get steelwork to site on schedule.

“We have our own draftsman in the office, so we can get designs drawn up on Friday, manufactured over the weekend and delivered to site on the Monday!” Meldrum says. “It is all about satisfying the needs of service to the site.”

That said, haste is far from the only reason Meldrum brings jobs in-house, as can be seen in the Group’s fire stopping business.

“After Grenfell, people paid a lot more attention to this,” Meldrum says. “We saw a couple of projects that had been handed over more than 12 years ago were found to be defective in this area, and when we went to the subcontractor, if they still existed at all, there was a clear reluctance to return to site.” >>

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Dave Meldrum, Founder & Group CEO, Meldrum Group.

Meldrum Group responded by launching its own fire stopping business, which is now a year-and-a-half old, and the work it is doing is already receiving fantastic plaudits. The Group's fire stopping work is signed off through an exclusive agreement with a local fire brigade.

"We de-risk by self-delivering," Meldrum points out. "We are not just packaging sub-contractors, because that does not guarantee you the quality you need."

The company's attention to detail has also helped it navigate crises that other organisations have been hit hard by. In 2020,

at the height of Covid, Meldrum Group was one of many companies and organisations hit by a wave of cyberattacks. The NHS and EasyJet were among the groups who, like Meldrum Group, found themselves locked out of their software and issued with a ransom.

"98% of those hit paid the ransom. We didn't," Meldrum tells us. "Our IT department had us up and running in just over a week. I was really proud of how we behaved through all that. As a company, we have been in recession more than out of it, and we are pretty resilient as a result."

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BUILDING INTEGRITY

The different elements of the Meldrum Group have evolved as the company has found need, forming a unique business structure to ensure quality and innovation for its customers.

"To drive commercialism, accountability and responsibility, we have them as separate companies within the group structure, which we developed three-and-a-half years ago," Meldrum says. "They trade with each other just like any domestic subcontractor. It is a structure that drives the right kinds of behaviour, preventing familiarity even as they all work out the same office. Everything is in order, and everyone knows who is doing what, and they are all separate legal entities but cross-guaranteed financially."

Across those entities Meldrum Group has grown a turnover of £70 million, employing 230 people as well as offering 180 >>



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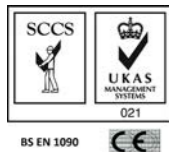
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MELDRUM GROUP

apprenticeships. Two-thirds of the company's staff have never worked for anyone else, driving a loyal workforce that is fully imbued with the culture and integrity that Meldrum aspires to.

"It is very easy to teach technical skills," Meldrum says. "It is harder to teach integrity. So, we recruit people with that quality and promote a culture that allows people to maintain it." >>

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LEAVING A LEGACY

As we talk with Meldrum, it is clear that this combination of integrity and loyalty is important to him, and more than that, he believes it should not go unrewarded.

“We have put a lot of work and time into this,” Meldrum tells us. “We have a strong succession plan in place, and some great young directors here and I am very confident, as a result, of the future of the business.”



“I am a firm believer that rather than saying ‘Let’s turnover £100 million’, you should focus your efforts on turning over a quality product,” he says. “That will lead to organic growth and attract the right people into the company. The numbers are important, but if the focus is on quality I am convinced the numbers follow. I get stats on every site we run. We consistently find the sites with the top health and safety scores produce the most profit. That is not by chance. It is because they are very well-run sites.”

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