

Media release

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AkzoNobel launches world's most advanced and sustainable paint factory

AkzoNobel has officially opened the world's most advanced and sustainable paint plant in Ashington, in the UK.

The hi-tech facility – which cost more than €100m to build – represents the largest ever global investment by the company's Decorative Paints business. It will become the new center of production for Dulux, the UK's leading decorative paint brand.



To experience a virtual reality tour of the Ashington site, [click here for Android](#) or [iOS](#).

The Ashington plant uses a variety of renewable energy sources, including photovoltaic cells and a biomass boiler, alongside a highly automated manufacturing process which saves water, waste and energy. The company estimates that the carbon footprint per liter of paint produced at the site will be reduced by 50% compared with the production facilities at the plants it is replacing.

"This is a significant investment in the UK – a vital strategic market for us – and an important milestone for AkzoNobel," said CEO Thierry Vanlancker. "We continue to invest in highly innovative and sustainable production facilities to maintain and grow our leadership position, ensuring the best products for our customers in the UK and around the world."

"Our growth strategy means that we will continue to lead the paints and coatings industry, both in terms of the strongest brands and the most advanced technology."



The factory will be capable of doubling AkzoNobel's current UK production levels to 200 million liters a year – approximately enough paint to redecorate every living room, bathroom and kitchen in the UK. Covering an area of 100,000m², the facility also has capacity to expand in order to support future growth plans.

Added Ruud Joosten, COO of Paints and Coatings at AkzoNobel: "Ashington secures AkzoNobel's future as a manufacturer of cutting-edge products, including paints that improve air quality, increase energy efficiency and protect against bacteria. We have taken the best technology available globally, improved on it and put it all under one roof, ensuring that this new facility represents a significant step forward for the whole industry."

Commenting on the new plant, Secretary of State for International Trade, Dr Liam Fox, said: "The huge investment by AkzoNobel in Ashington has delivered the most advanced paint factory in the world, and an important boost to the local economy. As an international economic department, we encouraged AkzoNobel to choose Northumberland because the UK has the right skills base, infrastructure and supply chains to grow their business. Their decision is a vote of confidence in the Northern Powerhouse as a destination for foreign investment, and demonstrates the rock solid relationship between the Dutch and UK economies."

All manufacturing technologies within the plant are managed by a single integrated computer system. This means that every activity – from the ordering of raw materials to the shipping of finished products – can be initiated without operator intervention. A highly agile production system means the plant is capable of producing paint across the entire AkzoNobel range, which includes Dulux, Dulux Trade, Cuprinol, Polycell, Hammerite and Armstead.

Ashington will also house the second Dulux Academy in the UK. The customized training center is designed to provide painters and decorators with the expertise and know-how they need for business success. The first academy, in Slough, has already trained 1,600 people.

About AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel creates everyday essentials to make people's lives more liveable and inspiring. As a leading global paints and coatings company and a major producer of specialty chemicals, we supply essential ingredients, essential protection and essential color to industries and consumers worldwide. Backed by a pioneering heritage, our innovative products and sustainable technologies are designed to meet the growing demands of our fast-changing planet, while making life easier. Headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, we have approximately 46,000 people in around 80 countries, while our portfolio includes well-known brands such as Dulux, Sikkens, International, Interpon and Eka. Consistently ranked as a leader in sustainability, we are dedicated to energizing cities and communities while creating a protected, colorful world where life is improved by what we do. AkzoNobel's 2016 revenue totaled €14.2 billion: Specialty Chemicals €4.8 billion; Decorative Paints €3.8 billion; Performance Coatings €5.7 billion.

Not for publication – for more information

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