

QUESTION & ANSWER

Jo Dawson

Chief Executive, H Dawson Wool



Where were you born?

Otley. I grew up on a 400 acre sheep farm in North Yorkshire and I travelled round the world twice before I was seven. We lived for a year in Australia in 1979 and we also travelled through China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan around that time.

Where did you start your working life?

I started working on the family farm from a very young age. I left school with four 'A' levels and studied BSc Hons International Management and French at UMIST in Manchester. After graduation I spent two years working in H Dawson Australia and New Zealand where I learned the wool trade from the antipodean angle.

What were your ambitions and do you still have any?

I would like to regain my pilots' licence.

Would you rather be doing something else?

If I had to do something else it would probably be in the humanitarian field.

What do you regard as your biggest achievement?

There's no doubt that a major achievement was when I bought the family business, H. Dawson Wool. I bought the business with my father from the rest of the family in 2006. Personally, being present at the births of my two children and bringing them home for the first time are my biggest achievements.

What are your key tips for success?

Vision is essential for any business to not only survive but thrive. Ensuring that you work with the right people is equally

important. Choosing the right product helps too.

What regrets do you have?

I wish that our children had met my mother. Sadly, she died in 2002 before they were born after a two year battle with leukemia.

How do you relax?

Watching movies. The Matrix is one of my many favourites. I love to spend time with my family, my two children are great fun; my son is very active and loves sports and my daughter just rules the house. My wife is French so we love to visit her home country to see friends.

What are your hobbies/pastimes/outside interests?

Skiing, cycling with family, swimming and walking the Dales

What is your favourite book/ film /play and song?

As a business book I greatly enjoyed Maverick by Riccardo Semler and Ben Elton's Stark is a stimulating work of fiction.

Who is your hero?

I wouldn't say that I have a hero, however I greatly admire the leadership of Barack Obama and the incredible resilience and dignity of Nelson Mandela.

What do you think of Bradford and its prospects?

I see Bradford as an opportunity. It has some very beautiful architecture set against the incredible backdrop of the rugged Yorkshire countryside. Bradford's heritage and integrity can be used as a solid springboard for defining the opportunities of the future.

'New and exciting' pub revamp

SWEEPING changes have been made to an Ilkley pub through a £250,000 investment which has created 20 new jobs.

Enterprise Inns has converted the former Rose and Crown in Church Street into a food pub – and changed its name to the Black Hat. The pub has reopened after being closed for six months.

The new name refers to the black hats worn by Ilkley tradesmen when they play the town's white-hatted shopkeepers at cricket – an event first played in 1880 which was revived in 2011 after a 20-year break.

Included in the conversion from a

weekend nightclub venue are heated beach huts outside for al fresco drinking and dining.

The UK's largest leased and tenanted pub company has recruited 20 new staff, including general manager Dean Castle, duty managers, bar staff and an Ilkley-based chef.

Dean said: "There's been massive local interest in what we're doing here and our newly set-up Facebook page very quickly got lots of 'likes', and has been viewed thousands of times already.

"We're in a prime location, and want to revive the spirit of The Rose and

Crown as many local people will remember it, while adding a contemporary twist.

"Renaming the pub The Black Hat wasn't something we took lightly, but felt it was appropriate given that we're now providing something so radically new and exciting."

Tracey Burley, Enterprise regional manager, added: "This reopening represents a major investment for Enterprise, creating a completely new offering for the people of Ilkley, and for which there's been a real groundswell of support in the build-up."

Supermarket's jobs pledge

DISCOUNT supermarket chain Aldi is turning the screw tighter on the likes of Morrisons by pledging to create 35,000 new jobs in the UK as it strives for an estate of 1,000 stores by 2022.

Aldi, along with rival budget retailer Lidl, has been eating into the sales of the 'big four' UK supermarkets, including Bradford-based Morrisons.

In its latest salvo, Aldi said it plans to invest £600 million with store numbers set to more than double through the opening of 550 new outlets over the next eight years.

Aldi's grocery market share now stands at 4.8 per cent following rapid growth. It opened 42 new stores last year and is on course to open another 54 this year, with a further 60-65 new stores planned for 2015. Aldi Group's chain has more than 7,000 stores across three continents, with local branches in Bradford, Shipley, Keighley, Skipton and Halifax.

In September, the company announced UK sales of £5.3 billion for 2013 – a rise of 36 per cent on a year earlier. Pre-tax profits were 65 per cent higher at a record of £260.9m.

It expects to have more than 7,000 new workers in 2014, including 500 apprentices and 160 in graduate positions.

Morrisons last week revealed a 6.3 per cent drop in like-for-like sales in the 13 weeks to November 2 but chief executive Dalton Philips said he was encouraged by the progress of initiatives designed to recapture market share, including investing £1 billion in price cuts over three years and Morrisons new loyalty card scheme which promises to match prices at Aldi and Lidl.

New management team at historic insurance brokers

Family group becomes one of the UK's biggest independent firms and targets future growth

by Chris Holland 01274 705355
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HISTORIC insurance broker Packetts has entered a new era following a management buy-out and has ambitious growth plans.

The Saltaire-based business, which was founded in Bradford 94 years ago by Sidney Packett after he returned from serving in the First World War, has become one of the UK's largest independent family-run brokers.

Under its new management team, led by managing director Marshall Sugden, Packetts has a target of increasing premium

income from the current £13 million to £20 million.

Mr Sugden, managing director, led the management buy-out from Sidney Packett's grandsons Charles and Andrew, who both remain directors. The new top management team also includes former KPMG man and company secretary Rob Marshall and former associate directors Wayne Cowley and Wendy Butterfield who have been promoted to board directors.

Marshall Sugden worked for national broker Bluefin Insurance for 23 years, including as managing director, and initially approached Packetts with a view to acquiring the business.

"I came to buy them and they ended up buying me. Charles and Andrew wanted to remain fiercely independent and that remains the case," he said.

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The business, which has added 70 new clients and grown premium income by £1 million in the past 12 months, has rebranded from Sydney Packett & Sons Ltd to Packetts and launched a new website as part of its drive forward.

But an ethos of providing personalised bespoke services for its 900 commercial, charitable and professional sector clients remains central to its operations.

Packetts specialises in commercial clients, the not-for-profit sector, training organisations and specialist Insolvency services. It's training arm, 'Trainure', is marking its 50th anniversary this year.

Charity clients include national bodies such as Guide Dogs For The Blind and St John Ambulance. Packetts also provides cover for all the medical Royal colleges, bar two, including in Scotland.

Its commercial clients are spread across the UK and Marshall Sugden said a key part of its future development would be a focus on winning clients among small and medium owner-managed businesses within a 25 mile radius of Bradford.

"The plan is to maintain what we've got



AMBITION: The Packetts management team (from the left) Wendy Butterfield, Charles Packett, Marshall Sugden, Rob Marshall and Wayne Cowley

and grow it. In the past 12 months we've completed the MBO and grown income by more than 12 per cent and we're very proud of that.

"While we've been going for so long, there are people who are not aware of Packetts we aim to change that by building up the number of more local clients.

"The way we operate is not just about selling insurance cover but adding value based on service and understanding our clients' businesses and operations and building trust. We have a client retention rate of 98 per cent which is about as high as you can get.

"Insurance is about trust and reputation; You have to guard that. Heritage is important in current business climate. Our business provides bespoke advice and insurance packages; we talk to business about issues such as staffing, banking and planning, all

of which have insurance connotations. We provide a strong claims service that helps keep businesses and organisations running," said Mr Sugden.

He expects Packetts' current workforce of 32 to expand significantly as the business continues to grow. The firm recently recruited an apprentice and a new claims handler.

Packetts has seen higher demand from several property owning clients whose own businesses are seeing a boost in demand due to the Westfield development in Bradford city centre.

"We're seeing definite spin-off from that and confident that we will be asked to quote for a client with significant property interests in Little Germany and Sunbridge Road area, who is seeing increased demand as Bradford's regeneration moves forward," said Mr Sugden.

THE BUSINESS WEEK



EXPANDING: David Ward MP (left) and Dan Rogerson (second right) visiting Christeys UK

Butchers able to show that they are a cut above

● COST-saving measures at Morrisons supermarkets had given its in-store butchers more scope to display their skills to customers, according to boss Dalton Philips.

The Bradford-based chain is now doing more back-room meat preparation in its factories rather than in stores, which Mr Philips said provided more time for in-store butchers to deal with customers. He said their skills remain at the forefront of Morrisons bid fight off intense grocery market competition, especially from budget chains Aldi and Lidl.

He said: "It has given them a renewed swagger, they enjoy showing off their skills and they are a key part of why Morrisons is different."

Mr Philips was speaking after Morrisons revealed another big drop in sales as it grapples with an "intense" period of competition and admitting its recovery will take time after it posted a 6.3 per cent drop in like-for-like sales in the 13 weeks to November 2.

The figure was better than the 7.4 per cent fall reported for the previous six months and Mr Philips said he was encouraged by the progress of

initiatives designed to recapture market share.

He said: "Morrisons is meeting the challenges created by a period of intense competition and structural change with quick and decisive action."

● PLANS for a major expansion at a Bradford chemical manufacturer have been outlined to a Government minister.

Nick Garthwaite, managing director of Christeys UK, told junior environment minister Dan Rogerson MP, the company had agreed to lease land next to its East Bowling site from Bradford Council for a major development.

The Belgian-owned company wants to build around 50,000sq ft of additional production and warehousing space behind its Rutland Street headquarters.

It would allow Christeys UK, which produces powders and liquids for the commercial laundry and construction sectors, to concentrate operations on one site, leading ultimately to jobs.

Mr Garthwaite said it was envisaged the premises would be a multi-million pound development eligible for support from the Regional Growth Fund.

He said: "We'd love to be on one manufacturing site. It makes perfect sense

MY VIEW

by Sandy Needham
Bradford Chamber of Commerce



Secrets of success are delivered by former BBC chief

I HAD the opportunity to hear a presentation by Greg Dyke recently and fortunately for me he didn't say too much about the Football Association, but focused on the BBC and leadership.

It was interesting to hear what he inherited as chairman of the BBC and the changes he made. There are lessons to learn from that experience. Greg's message was that key to success was getting the strategy right, but equally hard was knowing how to deliver it.

The BBC employs some clever and creative people, which is great, but they are also highly sceptical, which makes change more difficult. The solution suggested was to build a culture that is inclusive and to ask people what needs to be done to enable staff to give a better service.

Another issue was making sure that everyone in the business understands the figures. It was no surprise to hear that one of the most important factors of success was getting the internal communication right. The team needed to be encouraged to achieve more, see good examples being set and be able to engage with the management.

Time and again I hear that we all need to tell the stories – internally and externally – of what we do, the objectives and what we achieve. It was interesting to hear what life was like in the BBC, but more importantly Greg gave some great examples of what good leadership should look like and what to avoid.

On the latter he suggested that avoiding talking to staff was a big mistake.

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