

**PALFINGER**

**APS**  
ACCESS PLATFORM SALES



# REACH HIGHER. LIFT SMARTER.

## APS Brings You PALFINGER.

Safe, efficient working at height. Maximum uptime. Outstanding ROI.

Scan the QR code to explore our full range, speak to our experts and get your project moving.

01480 273836 | [www.accessplatforms.co.uk](http://www.accessplatforms.co.uk)





# ENGINEERING DRIVEN

Aldercote is probably one of the least known van and pickup mounted lift manufacturers, either in the UK, where it is based or anywhere else. But it could be argued, that over the last few years, it has been the most engineering driven in the industry. Mark Darwin visited the company's head office in Hull, in north east England to find out more.

**Founded in 1999 by David and Paul Dillon, Aldercote initially focused on manufacturing aircraft de-icers and washers, not being able to enter the vehicle mounted access market until 2003 when restrictions from the Dillon's previous venture - Priestman Powered Access - had ended.**

As an aside... Priestman - founded in 1870 - was a major employer in Hull, and at its peak employed about 1,500 people. The company went on to manufacture excavators, clamshell grabs and cranes both crawler and offshore pedestals. It was acquired by Acrow in 1972 around about the same time it acquired Coles Cranes. Financial difficulties, combined with an industrial downturn pushed Acrow into administration in late 1984. Coles was acquired by Grove and Priestman by Duncan Wordsworth, who also owned Sanderson

telehandlers. The Dillon family went on to build truck and trailer mounted lifts under Powered Access Platforms/Priestman Powered Access names, with the brands and products eventually acquired by Gardner Denver, which exited the market in 2011.

"Apparently there is a story that James Priestman was approached by a guy called Joe Bamford who had a design for a backhoe loader. Priestman turfed Bamford out of his office, saying the concept would never take off...and the rest is history," says Aldercote co-founder and owner Paul Dillon.

Aldercote's first model was the PA128 - a 12 metre van mounted lift aimed primarily at telecommunications work. Designed, manufactured and tested in collaboration with a local subcontractor, the PA128 proved very



reliable from the start and more than 100 were built and sold over the next 10 years or so. However, always trying to improve the product, the company pioneered the use of CAN bus systems for boom controls in 2008 and in 2009 acquired Magglo Composites, allowing fibreglass components to be manufactured in-house.

Its current managing director, Marc Paish, joined the company in 2013, having spent 10 years inventing and building systems to generate power from flowing water.

Speaking of that business, he said: "At one point, we were one of the world's leading companies in this field. Towards the end of the business, we thought of transferring the technology to rivers and were looking for a company to manufacture our hydropower machine design, which we then tested in a river in North Yorkshire."

That manufacturing company was Aldercote, and looking for a new opportunity, Paish joined as a director and shareholder with the idea to update the PA128, which was beginning to look a little dated.



Paul Dillon (L)  
and Marc Paish



The VZ range has working heights from 13.7 to 16.3 metres



Good size storage lockers on the CZ range - big enough for a chainsaw

"The more I worked for the company, the more I could see real potential and that I could contribute," he says. "That is when I designed the VZ range, which is still going strong today. Initially, the design was aimed at the five tonne Sprinter chassis, because we thought that it would be a little heavy for a 3.5 tonne, but my experience gained in optimising structures and adopting high strength steels, helped us make the product light enough for the smaller chassis. At that point we had a small technical lead over our main competitors but needed to improve our manufacturing and marketing processes."

"The initial industry reaction to the VZ range was positive, and many thought it interesting and a really good product. Paul had developed a really good control system, which combined with a more refined boom design, and an innovative arrangement of the pedestal and stabilisers made the product ground-breaking."

The end result is that Aldercote now offers a range of van and pick-up truck mounted lifts that are quite different from the rest of the market. Firstly, all use a hybrid electric E-Drive which uses two small car starter batteries to power the platform, and secondly, the innovative superstructure design means the machines are light enough to leave plenty of payload and space.

## CURRENT RANGES

Current ranges include the V, VZ and VXZ van mounted platforms, the CZ pick-up mounted lifts, the Trax machines which utilises the CZ booms mounted on Marooka tracked carrier lifts and a Custom service for customers wanting something a bit different.

The V range consists of three models - the V115, 125 and V140 - with working heights of 11.6, 12.5 and 14.3 metres and outreach of up to 8.3 metres, all with a platform capacity of 200kg. They are typically mounted on 3.5 to 7.2 tonne vans.

The VZ range includes the VZ135 to VZ165 with working heights from 13.7 to 16.3 metres with 6.7 to 11 metres of outreach respectively, 200 to 250kg capacity and 410 degrees of slew. The VZX range are designed for 5.2 to 7.2 tonne vans and have working heights of 17.5 metres on the VZX175 and the 18.3 metres VZX180. Outreach ranges from 7.4 to 11 metres.

"Most popular models are the VZ van mounts but the CZ pick-ups - launched in 2024 - are attracting

a lot of interest," says Paish. "Around half our enquiries currently are for CZ models, although it has become difficult to source chassis because single cab Fords and Toyotas are currently not available in the UK."

## WHY SO LIGHT?

"All manufacturers struggle to mount a decent sized boom on a 3.5 tonne pick-up - possibly managing 200kg of payload. Most, it not all are stuck at 14 metres working height, however we now have the 16 metre CZ160 and can offer a 450kg payload... and it is hybrid electric as are all our machines. Since 2022, they all run on battery power rather than the PTO. It is all down to the clever design. At its core is the space frame subframe that looks a bit like a pylon and is the most efficient way of resisting and transferring forces. It is very light by removing any material that does not directly transfer the load which is why we can offer 300kg more payload than the competition."

Our lattice subframe design and materials are the lightest in their class," says Paish, "while our unique axle lift stabilisers take all the load off the front wheels, eliminating uncontrolled movements and the risk of damage to the front suspension while increasing stability."

The first CZ unit was the 14.1 metre CZ140, although the latest version has slightly improved specs with a maximum outreach of 6.8 metres a platform capacity of 250kg and 450kg payload. Two larger models have been added - the 15.2 metre CZ150 and the 16.2 metre CZ160 with 7.6 metre and 8.1 metre outreach and 250kg platform capacity. The first CZ160 was delivered to UK Tool Hire last July.

Cargo payload alone is not always the only thing, Arborists for example, are more interested in the size of the storage lockers which are big enough for chainsaws, for example, and offer one cubic metre of storage.

## E-DRIVE SYSTEM

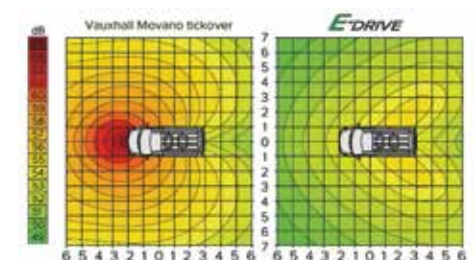
Aldercote's hybrid electric E-Drive system uses battery power for the superstructure, which is re-charged while the engine is idling or when travelling. "The E-Drive uses a permanent magnet electric motor and helical gear pump to control the motor speed to pump only the flow that is required, eliminating waste, which allows us to use smaller batteries as well as finer controls for millimetre accuracy."

"The two Ford Fiesta size batteries are sufficient for up to 20 cycles and recharge quickly when on the road, so there is rarely any need to plug in. Peak noise is no higher than 55dB, which is similar to an office conversation and if the batteries do run flat, just restart the engine and there will be enough power to carry out the work by the time you get into the basket. It is like having an electric PTO with batteries there to provide a power reservoir."

## AWARD WINNER

At the end of 2024 Aldercote introduced a line of van mounted lifts designed without stabilisers, winning 'Product of the Year' at the 2025 IAPA awards.

The VZ 140 Neo on a 'Jackless Transit' has a working height of 14.0 metres with an outreach of up to 8.4 metres and a platform capacity of 230kg. Total weight is under 600kg, so leaves 800kg payload when mounted on a typical 3.5 tonne front wheel drive Ford Transit, and 400kg gross on an EV making a 3.5 tonne full electric E-van mount a viable proposition. The van uses a pedestal that directs the load path to four reinforced points on the vehicle, saving space and weight. The whole pedestal weighs only slightly more than the slew ring at 50kg.



The E-Drive system means peak noise is no higher than 55dB - here compared to a diesel engine pickup truck

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

"There is so much opportunity left in the van mounted market, and we have plenty to be getting on with without looking at other types of equipment. But we are interested in a 25 metre 3.5 tonne truck mounted lift," says Paish. "The more progress we make with the van mounts, the more resources we have to grow the company."

"We have recently developed 'gradient sensitive outreach' - a robust system for measuring pitch and roll of the chassis and also the orientation of the boom. This means it can allow more outreach

**Aldercote's 'Jackless Transit' won the Product of the Year at the 2025 IAPA awards**



as previously it had to assume the chassis was in its worst position. The system was developed in-house and will make a big difference to the Jackless machines. Following customer requests,



we have also developed a new aluminium basket - rather than fibreglass - for all our platforms."

The company is in the process of opening Aldercote Ireland, just north of Dublin and building



its first VZ Neo machines, first seen at Vertical Days last September. The machine breaks new ground in terms of payload.

"The new VZ140 Neo for example is 100kg lighter than the VZ135 and has an extra 400mm of outreach and when paired with the Jackless transit conversion offers more than 650kg of payload."

"I think the UK van and pickup market typically averages around 1,000 machines a year. Our aim over the next few years is to become the market leader with about half that number. After that we hope to export more." ■

## PALFINGER SWITCHES FOR THE LONG TERM

In March, Austrian truck mounted lift and loader crane manufacturer Palfinger confirmed the appointment of APS as its distributor for truck mounted work platforms in the UK. The move from former distributor CPL, part of the Klubb group, is said to be part of the manufacturer's 2030 strategy, which defines aerial lifts as a 'core pillar' product, alongside loader cranes.

Until now many thought that Palfinger's heart was not in the aerial lift business that it entered in 2004 through the acquisition of German truck mounted lift manufacturer Bison Stematec, followed by the takeover of Wumag Elevant in 2008 and Italy's Sky Aces in 2013. It then seemed to lose interest dropping out of the spider lift market and many thought it would quit access altogether. But no, some 13 years later, it says it is genuine.

The APS appointment, is just one of the signs that it is getting serious, managing director Andy Bray said: "The 3.5 tonne



Andy Bray

truck mounted platform market is evolving rapidly - but specification alone is no longer enough. The latest Palfinger TEC range maximises performance within the constraints of 3.5 tonne chassis."

"The use of high strength, lightweight steel has improved outreach and payload, while hybrid and electric drive options and a 28 metre working height are all advances on the four model line-up. However, in today's market, the true differentiator lies in how they are supported, which is why we launched Platform Service & Repair (PSR)."

"These days, remote diagnostics, service engineer expertise all help improve first-time fix rates, maximising fleet availability, essential in a market with rising expectations and tighter

Palfinger PT25TJ



margins. This is almost more important than how much a machine costs or its on-paper performance."

## VERSALIFT'S V-RANGE

Time Versalift has launched an all-new, modular range of 3.5 tonne truck mounted lifts - the 'V-Range' - for sale throughout Europe. Branded as Versalift or France Elévateur depending on the market, the seven models offer working heights from 17 to 27 metres and are installed on a standard 3.5 tonne chassis. The new units are set to be rolled out throughout this year.

Models include the 17 metre V-170 telescopic, 20 metre V-200 telescopic, 20 metre VA-200-F articulated with jib, 23 metre V-230 telescopic, 24 metre VA-240 articulated, 25 metre V-250-F telescopic with jib and the 27 metre V-270 telescopic.

All are equipped with a common proportional control system, as well as hydraulic and electrical architecture, and standard 'Real Time Connect' telematics.

The company says the level of standardisation is such that it substantially streamlines operator training, maintenance and fleet management, while reducing spare parts holdings and technician training requirements. At the same time, the standard telematics suite provides remote monitoring, fault detection and troubleshooting to help minimise downtime.



The new 20 metre V-200 is one of the new V-Range of 3.5 tonne mounted lifts from Time Versalift



## GSR'S NEW B140TJV

GSR has launched the new B140TJV, a 3.5 tonne van mounted lift with a maximum working height of 13.77 metres, a maximum outreach of 8.85 metres with a 120kg in the platform, while the maximum capacity is 230kg.

Tailored to the UK markets, one of Europe's largest, the new model is said to be ideal for working in tight urban spaces such as historic city centres with narrow streets, pedestrian areas and tunnels and can be customised to suit particular applications.



GSR's B140TJV

# NEW MODELS AND FINANCIAL RESTRUCTURE FOR KLUBB

**French vehicle mounted lift manufacturer Klubb has launched a new 28 metre truck mount and 17 metre van mount, both on 3.5 tonne chassis, and has had to restructure its business.**

The new 28 metre telescopic truck mount - the PT 280 - has been developed jointly by Klubb group's French and Italian engineering teams and is mounted on a 3.5 tonne Mercedes Sprinter chassis. It features a five section boom and pedestal mounted basket, providing a maximum working height of 28 metres with a maximum platform capacity of 250kg/two operators, while the maximum outreach is 17.5 metres over the rear with 80kg in the platform, or 13.4 metres over the side.

The unit has a remote controller with a locking platform bracket, and features a 4.3 inch colour screen that provides real time information, fully proportional controls and simultaneous multi-function operation. The lift will make its public debut at Apex in June, while production is scheduled to start in October with deliveries expected by year end.

## NEW VAN MOUNT

The new 17 metre KL17P van mount has a new lightweight three section telescopic boom, with internal hoses and cables, topped by an articulating jib giving a maximum outreach of 10.5 metres with 80kg in the platform or 6.6 metres with its maximum platform capacity of 250kg/two

people, with a standard 1kV basket/bucket. Overall weight is 3,100kg with a full tank of fuel. Standard features include a 4.3 inch upper control display, anti-collision system and automatic stabiliser set-up and levelling. Slew is 420 degrees.

Among the options is a 'Green Pack' that is essentially a battery power pack for the superstructure that allows the platform to be operated with the engine off and is recharged/topped up between stops. Production of the new van mount has already started at Klubb's plant in Ferrières-en-Brie, France, with the first domestic and international shipments due to start shortly.

## COMPANY RESTRUCTURING

In February, the Klubb group filed a judicial rehabilitation request to allow a formal financial



*The new Klubb KL17P*

restructuring process which typically lasts from 12 to 18 months. The restructuring is limited to the following four entities in France - Klubb Group and its subsidiaries Klubb France, Klubb sarl and Klubb Engineering. The other businesses in the wider group are not affected or part of the proceedings.

The company said: "This process is intended to facilitate discussions to implement a restructuring of the group's liabilities and sustainably strengthen its financial structure. It follows several years of inflation, shifting demand patterns, and significant tensions across industrial supply chains, although our order book is strong, and business is currently very positive. The reorganisation measures have though, proved necessary to support our ongoing growth."

"The group's operations are continuing as normal, and we intend to continue to honour all of its clients' orders. Management is approaching this phase with confidence and determination. Our objectives are clear: preserving jobs, strengthening the group's competitiveness through an ongoing performance improvement plan, and creating the conditions for sustainable long-term development."

Klubb employs 650 directly and through its subsidiaries across four plants in France, one in Italy and one in the UK, and works with a network of 48 distributors.



**Booth 1390**  
Outdoor area

# THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT THE FUTURE IS TO CREATE IT



SOCAGEWORLD.COM



