



FASTENING THE FUTURE: MASFIX'S COMMITMENT TO THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

For over 40 years, Masfix has been a trusted supplier of fasteners, fixings, and industrial consumables across multiple sectors. Today, the company is accelerating its growth in the automotive industry with the opening of a new 5,000 sq. ft facility at Aycliffe Business Park in County Durham - a strategic move designed to strengthen its support for manufacturers and suppliers in one of the region's most critical sectors.

As a proud member of the North East Automotive Alliance (NEAA), Masfix is positioning itself as a key partner in the automotive supply chain, offering tailored solutions that meet the demands of modern manufacturing.

We sat down with Richard Ward, Sales Director at Masfix, to discuss the company's heritage, its latest expansion, and its vision for the future.

Masfix has been serving UK industries since 1982. How has the company evolved from its early days to the present?

Masfix began in 1982 as a small family-run fastener business. Over the years we've steadily expanded our product range, our team, and our capabilities. What started as a specialist fastener supplier is now a broad industrial partner supporting engineering, manufacturing, automotive and construction customers with over 30,000 stocked products.

We've invested in modern facilities, a strong logistics network, digital systems, and service innovations like vendor-managed inventory. The opening of our newest site at Aycliffe Business Park reflects that evolution — from a single-site operation to a multi-location supply partner supporting some of the region's most advanced industries.

What core values have remained constant throughout Masfix's 40+ year journey?

Even as we've grown, the foundations haven't changed. We're still a family business built on reliability, service, and genuine long-term relationships with our customers.

We've always believed in doing things properly — supplying quality products, keeping our promises, and being the kind of partner people can rely on. Innovation has also been a constant. Whether that's introducing new product lines or developing smarter ways to help customers manage their inventory, we're always looking ahead without losing sight of those original values.



Masfix offers over 30,000 products, from fasteners to PPE. Which product categories are seeing the most demand right now?

Our core fasteners and fixings continue to see strong, consistent demand - they're the backbone of many of our customers' operations. Beyond that, tools, engineered consumables, and PPE/workwear have grown significantly, especially within manufacturing and automotive environments where reliability and compliance are critical.

We're also seeing increased activity around engineered parts and custom specification items as customers push for greater efficiency and quality on their production lines.

What role does your vendor-managed inventory (VMI) system play in supporting manufacturing clients?

Our VMI offering is one of the biggest value-adds for manufacturing and automotive customers. By placing vending machines, kanban systems, or RFID-managed stock directly on the customer's site, we take full responsibility for monitoring usage and replenishing stock.

This dramatically reduces downtime, cuts waste, and keeps production flowing without the administrative burden of raising constant purchase orders. It's a smart, data-driven approach that improves efficiency on every level - something our automotive clients especially value.

Masfix has recently opened a new facility at Aycliffe Business Park. What drove this decision, and how does it align with your long-term growth strategy?

Demand from the South Durham and Tees Valley manufacturing clusters has grown rapidly, and it became clear that having a dedicated local facility would allow us to support those customers much more effectively.

Aycliffe Business Park is at the heart of a thriving manufacturing ecosystem, so establishing a base there was a natural step. It aligns perfectly with our long-term strategy of strengthening our regional presence, improving delivery times, and investing in infrastructure that supports sustainable growth across the North East.

What specific capabilities or services will the new site bring to your automotive customers?

The Aycliffe facility significantly increases our local stockholding and enables even faster delivery to automotive customers who operate on tight production schedules.

We've built the site around responsiveness - daily restocking from our main hub, a wide range of fasteners, tools, PPE and engineered parts on hand, and a local account team who understand the sector.

Combined with our VMI and vending solutions, automotive manufacturers can rely on a highly efficient, low-friction supply model that keeps lines running and downtime to a minimum.

The Aycliffe branch has created several new full-time positions. How important is local recruitment to Masfix's strategy?

Local recruitment is absolutely central to how we operate. If we're investing in a new community, we want to invest in its people as well.

Hiring locally gives us teams who understand the area, the customers, and the culture of North East manufacturing. It also strengthens the relationships we build with the businesses we



OUR HISTORY

1982
M&S Distributors was established by George Mordue and Ronnie Slater, based at Bells Close, Lemington

1991
Outgrown Bells Close, moved to larger premises at Riverside Works, Newburn

2001
Work began on our first purpose built warehouse
George and Ronnie retired. Sons Ian Mordue and Mark Slater continue to run the business

2015
Rebrand to MASFIX

2020
Richard Ward is promoted to Sales Director
ISO 9001 accreditation
Second warehouse expansion doubles our storage capacity to over 45,000 sq ft

2022
e-shop goes live www.masfix.co.uk
40 years in business

2023
Newburn warehouse team celebrating record sales
ISO 14001 accreditation

2025
Opening of 2nd Branch at Newton Aycliffe
ISO 45001 accreditation

serve — they know they're dealing with people who are part of the same regional ecosystem.

With increasing pressure on supply chains and sustainability, how is Masfix adapting its product offering and operations to meet these evolving demands?

We've taken a proactive approach. Operationally, we're holding more stock locally and building resilience into our supply network. Our VMI systems help customers reduce waste and operate more efficiently i.e. our kanban solution is environmentally friendly by using recycled boxes and they have no packaging material for customers to dispose of, which plays into both sustainability and cost reduction.

On the product side, we're broadening our sustainable offering, including environmentally responsible PPE solutions. We're committed to helping customers streamline their consumption while meeting their environmental targets.

As an NEAA member, what benefits have you experienced from membership, and how do you leverage the network to strengthen your supply chain partnerships?

Being part of the NEAA puts us right in the centre of the region's automotive community. The network gives us direct access to manufacturers, tier suppliers, and other partners who share challenges and opportunities.

It helps us stay close to sector trends, align our offering to what automotive customers really need, and collaborate to improve

supply chain resilience across the region. The relationships we've built through the NEAA have played a meaningful role in our expansion and service development.

What's next for Masfix in the North East?

We're focused on deepening our presence in the region - expanding the Aycliffe operation, growing our team, and investing in new technology and service models that help customers operate more efficiently.

You can expect to see further development of our VMI solutions, continued growth of our product ranges, and more strategic investment in local infrastructure. The North East has been our home for over 40 years, and we're committed to supporting its manufacturing and industrial future for decades to come.

For further details on Masfix, visit: www.masfix.co.uk

