



A Brief History of Platinum Motor Group

2024 Marks the 49th Anniversary of the Platinum Group.

The group was founded by former Managing Director Rodney Cuff in Frome, and has steadily expanded since its inception, establishing itself as one of the leading players in the southwest.

Several years ago, he said, “We’ve been pleasantly surprised by our expansion over the years. We endeavour to provide a high quality of service to all of our customers by employing highly trained and motivated staff, which I believe is the key to our success. I’ve always said that the most important part of our business is the people we employ and I still believe that today.”

“We may have a good track record but in no way does that make us complacent. We have to continually strive to improve our standards in today’s fast changing modern world.”

The starting point was with the Westward Renault dealership at Manor Road in Frome, followed by an expansion into Bath during 1976 with the dual franchise Wellsway site offering BMW and Alfa Romeo. By 1980, the decision was taken to represent the growing BMW brand as a solus franchise from Wellsway, which included the BMW motorcycle franchise during the early 1980’s until BMW’s strategy to separate the car and motorcycle networks resulted in the company choosing to concentrate on BMW cars.

Also in 1980, the company purchased the former Bear Garage on Wells Road in Bath, just around the corner from Wellsway. It was from this site that Westward Renault moved into Bath, as a sister site to Westward Renault in Frome. In 1983, the company acquired a Vauxhall dealership called Frome Garages. This coincided with a change in Renault’s representation plans resulting in Westward Renault in Frome and Bath being merged onto the same site in Bath. The Frome Garages business was then relocated onto the Manor Road site where it has remained ever since (now trading as Platinum SsangYong & Select Cars).

In 1986, the former Roman City bus depot was acquired and was subsequently modified to become the head office and vehicle preparation centre and later, the Roman City Accident Repair Centre.

The success of Westward Renault on Wells Road resulted in the site being inadequate for the needs of the business and a new site was sought in Bath. The availability of the Volvo franchise in Bath allowed the development of a larger “mirror image” development, housing both franchises, on the Lower Bristol Road in 1987.

The new Westward and Roman Volvo premises were, and still are, state-of-the-art facilities which set the standard for the motor trade in Bath and surrounding areas. The relocated Westward and the new Roman Volvo businesses were instant successes for both customers and the company and paved the way for the acquisition of the Georgian Motors site in 1989.

The Georgian Motors site was used for vehicle storage and valeting during the recession of the late 1980's and early 1990's but it was earmarked for the new Wellsway BMW development.



In 1993, Westward's satellite dealership, Saxon Garage in Bradford-on-Avon, was acquired after the sudden death of the owner and also, in the same year, St. Martins Nissan in Box was purchased.

When trading became more favourable after the recession, work began on developing the new Wellsway BMW site. The dealership represented a considerable investment in the future of modern vehicle retailing, and was opened in February 1996. The resulting site was considered a benchmark within the BMW Dealer Network.

1996 also saw Roman Volvo become Roman Toyota. A change of representation plans within the Volvo franchise resulted in no requirement for a Bath based dealership, hence the successful switch to the Toyota franchise.



During May 1998, the company incorporated Millmead Mitsubishi, also on the Lower Bristol Road in Bath and close to the new Wellsway. The Millmead site was then refurbished and benefited from the addition of the emerging Skoda franchise.

Meanwhile in Frome, Frome Garages continued to enjoy success and when a Vauxhall sponsored analysis of the surrounding area was completed, the company emerged as the preferred candidate for the takeover of the neighbouring Vauxhall dealership GK Group which was completed in July 1998. The incorporation of GK Group then facilitated the same process again in 1999 whereby the company purchased Chippenham Vauxhall dealership Cyril. H. Thomas. The three Vauxhall dealerships were then united under the name of "Platinum."

Also, during 1999, a similar analysis by the Renault franchise resulted in the company taking over Buckland's Garage in Chippenham to complete a trio of Renault sites. Buckland's Garage was renamed as Westward.

August 1999 also saw the launch of Renrod Financial Solutions (now Platinum Financial Solutions), a dedicated finance office committed to offering expertise in the latest finance packages available, including to those with past credit problems.



The millennium year saw a new set of challenges for the group as the company consolidated its position after the expansion programme of 1998 and 1999 by embracing new ideas such as information technology and the internet whilst retaining the original values that made the company successful in the first place.

The MINI franchise had been added alongside BMW at Wellsway, which proved tremendously popular. The company had also developed a mobile cosmetic body repair service called The Hitman.



In November 2001, the company acquired the former Northfield Toyota site in Warminster, which was subsequently renamed as Roman to form a sister dealership to the site in Bath.

2004 saw a time of great change and challenge for the group with the culmination of the “Meridian Project” - a state of the art motor park development in Trowbridge to house the Vauxhall, Toyota, Renault and Nissan franchises. The development re-housed three existing businesses (Roman Toyota in Warminster, Saxon Garage in Bradford on Avon and Platinum Vauxhall in Trowbridge) and added a second Nissan dealership to the group. Platinum Vauxhall in Chippenham and Roman Toyota in Bath also received major refurbishments to bring them to the cutting edge of automotive retailing.

The year of 2004 also saw a rationalization in terms of the trading names operated by Renrod Ltd. As of October 1st those branches not already carrying the name were united under the single trading title of Platinum.



The purpose of the name change was to achieve a common trading title across the group of dealerships wherever possible and to deliver all the advantages and synergies that such an approach can provide in terms of communication, identity and economies of scale.

On the 20th December 2004, the company was proud to open the “Platinum” Motor Park in Trowbridge, housing the Vauxhall, Toyota, Renault and Nissan franchises. Known as the “Meridian Project”, the development took approximately 9 months to build and features the latest standards in automotive retailing.

January 2008 saw the group expand again, this time with the acquisition of the Causeway Saab business in Chippenham. The company executed a programme of growth and improvement of the existing business, working closely with the dealership team and the Saab franchise. Investment in terms of facilities and training was provided to enable the delivery of consistently high standards of customer care in a modern and pleasant environment.

In the late summer of 2008, the group relocated the Skoda franchise to operate alongside Renault on the Lower Bristol Road in Bath, making way for the brand separation of the MINI franchise from BMW. The new Wellsway MINI opened in November 2008, with the dealership retaining the Mitsubishi franchise in the form of Approved Repairer and supplier of parts.

The spring of 2009 saw the company merge its Platinum Renault operation in Chippenham with the Causeway Saab business, which became Platinum Saab in the process, with the dealership continuing to offer the Saab franchise with the addition of Renault Approved Repairs using genuine parts and accessories. Customers requiring new Renaults were offered the two Platinum Renault sites in nearby Trowbridge and Bath. Also, in October 2009, the company was delighted to announce the addition of the Hyundai franchise in Chippenham, sharing facilities with Saab and Renault.



In Trowbridge, the group then added to its large portfolio of trade parts business with the addition of an Express Factors franchise offering “all makes” Unipart components, which operates from the Platinum Motor Park. The group then added a second Hyundai dealership (in Frome alongside Vauxhall), and were appointed as a Dacia retailer, which is housed at Platinum Renault in Trowbridge.

In 2016, as a result of BMW/MINI restructuring their network in favour of regional clusters of ownership, the group sold the Wellsway/BMW site in Bath and its BMW Approved Bodyshop in Bath, but retained the Platinum Group.

In early 2019, the Platinum Group commenced and completed a project to expand the Platinum Motor Park in terms of bringing an extra brand to the site in the form of Hyundai. To achieve this, the Toyota brand was re-housed in an excellent conversion of the former valeting bay, which paved the way for Platinum Hyundai to open in Trowbridge. As part of this project, the group also added the emerging SsangYong brand in Frome to replace the Hyundai brand relocating to Trowbridge.

During the Summer of 2020 Platinum Vauxhall Frome Sales was replaced by Platinum Select Cars; a new sub brand for the Platinum Motor Group offering quality, handpicked used cars. The Frome site will remain an approved service centre for Vauxhall, Hyundai and SsangYong vehicles.

Autumn 2020 also saw the opening of Platinum SsangYong Chippenham as an Approved Repairer.



In June 2022, in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Platinum Motor Group completed the acquisition of the long established A.K.S. Renault/Dacia business in Yeovil following the retirement of its' owner and founder. This opportunity created a large single Renault and Dacia territory into which the company can sell and serve Renault and Dacia customers.

In October 2023, Platinum Nissan Box (nr. Bath) underwent an incredible transformation into Platinum Select PLUS, another sub brand for the Platinum Motor Group. Dedicated to offering a selection of high quality pre-owned cars and the site remained as an Approved Repairer centre for Nissan.



In February 2024, following the retirement of its owner and managing director, the Platinum Motor Group completed the acquisition of the long established Pebley Beach Hyundai and Suzuki businesses based in Swindon, where it operates both Hyundai and Suzuki, and Cirencester where it operates Suzuki only.

In terms of Hyundai, the Platinum Motor Group and Pebley Beach market areas were adjoined, so this has created a larger continuous territory for the company in which to serve customers. Regarding Suzuki, the Group welcomed a new brand partner into its portfolio of franchises.



Throughout the companies' continued expansion, plans are constantly in place to ensure that the high quality and efficient services provided to customers are maintained and improved, still backed by teams of highly skilled and committed staff. The employment of specialists in the fields of information technology, finance, used car purchasing, personnel and aftersales ensures this process of continuous improvement is sustained, based upon staff expertise. Under the holding company of Renrod Holdings Ltd, Renrod Ltd trading as branches of "Platinum" are investing in the future.