

# Progress through 9 decades

In 1929 a young man by the name of Joseph Toomey, in true entrepreneurial spirit, opened a new business, Laindon Accumulators, in Laindon, Essex, selling motor cycles. Thus was born the Company which is so well known in Essex, as "Toomeys". From this fledgling enterprise grew the Laindon Holdings Group of Companies.

Below, in chronological order, is detailed our development.

- **1932 - 38**

- [1939 - 68](#)

- [1969 - 82](#)

- [1984 - 92](#)

- [1993 - 98](#)

- [1999 - 01](#)

- [2002 - 05](#)

- [2006](#)

- [2009 - 10](#)

## 1932



The benefits of modern technology were becoming available to the man in the street at an affordable price; the "wireless", following the brilliant achievements of Marconi, had become an important part of everyday life, for both information and pleasure.

Motorised transport, which for so long had been a privilege only the affluent of the day could afford, was being made available to the masses, by the production line techniques pioneered by Henry Ford in America. A typical and well-loved example from this era was the Austin 7.

Joseph Toomey saw a new business opportunity - the battery, or as it was then better known the accumulator, was necessary if these two inventions were to be utilised. The name chosen by Mr Toomey Senior for his new business, The National Accumulator Service Station, clearly identified to potential customers the services available, a tradition which has continued to the present day, as the family tree of the Group indicates.

## 1936

This year saw our entry into the world of finance; it also saw a change in the structure of the businesses operated by our Founder; this operation was to be run by a Company, not by a sole trader. In May, Laindon Credit Services Ltd was incorporated, the oldest member of the Laindon Holdings Group of Companies.

## 1937

Further expansion and diversification took place; Laidon Sand and Ballast Ltd commenced trading - the choice of name spares the need to explain its activities.

Mr Toomey was no longer a sole trader with a shop; the activities of his businesses now included motor cycle sales and repairs, battery supply and servicing, a filling station, the trading and transport of construction materials and the provision of consumer finance. Albert Gale, our former well-respected Company Secretary, formed his association with the Group in this year. From this relationship evolved Laidon Holdings Ltd, our parent Company, which was incorporated on 11th October 1937.

The events of this important year in our history demonstrate two important group principles; be prepared to diversify in response to market forces and reinforce management structures with the appropriate expertise before embarking on new ventures.

## 1938

Our motor trade operation was now truly established, a fact which prompted the incorporation in January of that year of J Toomey Motors Ltd, a name which the Group has been proud to have at the forefront of the market place in Essex for over seventy years.

## 1939-1947

The wartime years, and the period of austerity which followed, had of necessity restricted the Group's activities. However, the British are a resilient race and the world of commerce and industry had waved good-bye to the bad times and was now looking forward to the good times.

## 1942

J Toomey Motors Ltd proudly announced its appointment as a Vauxhall dealer. The very first vehicle supplied by this newly-appointed dealer was a Vauxhall Fourteen HP, registration no. MHK 100, an occasion vividly recalled by our present Chairman, Michael J Toomey.

## 1947-1961

The Laidon Holdings Group of Companies continued to flourish; the austerity of the post war years finally ended with the cessation of rationing in the early fifties, manufacturing and construction industries expanded rapidly, and this expansion coupled with the devastation and deprivation caused by the 1939-1945 conflict created the need which resulted in the "New Towns" initiative. Basildon was one such project and the LH Group responded to the opportunities that were created. During this period J Toomey Motors Ltd also acquired the Bedford commercial vehicle franchise.

# 1962

George Martin (Transport) Ltd was incorporated, a Company set up by Michael J Toomey, our founder's son.

# 1964

George Martin (Transport) Ltd was renamed George Martin (Laindon) Ltd, as a result of changes in its activities - it had entered the construction industry.

# 1962

A new era dawned; Michael J Toomey, having established himself as a successful businessman in his own right, acquired a majority share holding in the LH Group of Companies. Ambitious and charismatic, he set about the task of building on the foundations which had been so firmly established over thirty years previously by his father.



High Road Circa 1968

# 1969

As part of a review of Group operations, Laindon Sand and Ballast Ltd was renamed J Toomey Motors (Wickford) Ltd (both companies had car sales and filling stations) and a new Company - J Toomey Motors (Stanford-le-Hope) Ltd was incorporated.



J Toomey Motors Wickford Circa 1969

## 1973

New markets and new opportunities were investigated, and the LH Group moved into contract hire and vehicle rental. J Toomey Motors (Stanford-le-Hope) Ltd was renamed Toomey Hire & Leasing Ltd. Using the trading style "Toomey Rentals" the Company is a leading Essex-based, self-drive hire operator. With a 3 figure fleet of rental vehicles and thousands more supplied to contract hire customers, T H & L is well known in the market place.

## 1975

Business format franchising was seen by the Group to offer potential for further expansion and this year saw J Toomey Motors (Wickford) Ltd renamed as Intacab Ltd. The management team were tasked with the development and establishment of a franchise concept. Cygnet Cars Ltd was also incorporated in 1975, as a pilot unit for this embryonic franchise.

## 1977

Another important year in our history; for forty years the LH Group's activities had been confined to the United Kingdom and it was decided by the Board of Directors that the time was right for us to utilise our expertise and resources in the export field. Consequently Unit Export (Great Britain) Ltd was incorporated.



The First Intacab Franchise  
High Road, Laindon

## 1979

The pilot for our franchise Cygnet Cars was renamed Basildon Cab & Freight Ltd. A second pilot unit was established fifteen miles from Basildon, operated by a new Group Company, named Chelmsford Cab & Freight Ltd in order to identify closely with its sister Company

## 1981

George Martin (Laindon) Ltd was renamed George Martin Ltd. The Group's activities in the field of insurance having grown considerably, Toomey Insurance Brokers Ltd was established as a Company in its own right.

## 1982

The first independent Intacab franchise was opened.



## 1984

Chelmsford Cab & Freight Ltd was renamed Leaselink Ltd - this second Intacab unit having become franchised and the Company's activities having therefore changed.

## 1986

A year of great change; from the High Road, Laindon premises which had been the home of all LH Group Companies for so long, all ten Companies moved into a striking, modern, purpose-built home, state-of-the-art filling station with car wash and three purpose-built jet washes in the new Southfields Development in Basildon. George Martin Ltd had been charged with the task of constructing our new prestigious Group Headquarters. The move to this 60,000 square foot development was carried out smoothly and professionally with little or no effect on any of the Group activities. The planning and physical activities associated with this major undertaking were all carried out by Group employees.



Unit Export (Great Britain) Ltd was renamed Unit Export Ltd.

## 1987

Since its original inception in 1977 Unit Export has worked in over 60 countries supplying a wide range of products to aid funded projects. Working closely with The World Bank in Washington and the European Commission in Brussels, Unit Export are able to satisfy the stringent requirements of the client and ensure safe and efficient deliveries to third World countries. This is achieved by studying local conditions including regular travel to the beneficiary countries, working with the local partners to ensure clear liaison with the customer in country and an ability to source products on a world-wide basis ensuring that products are supplied at highly competitive prices.

## 1988

J Toomey Motors Ltd were appointed AWD commercial vehicle distributors and immediately established themselves as a major force in the commercial vehicle market in London and the eastern home counties.

## 1989



The Group's Board was strengthened by the appointment of new Directors and a sophisticated computer system was introduced throughout the Group.

## 1992

In January of this year Toomeyfit opened offering a 7am to 11pm drive through tyre, exhaust and M.O.T facility. Toomeyfit enabled the group to move into the lucrative fast fit industry.

## 1993

On 2nd August 1993 Toomey Nissan opened its doors as the officially appointed Nissan dealership for the Basildon area and is currently flourishing within the group complex.

## 1995

Toomey Nissan moved from their temporary Show Dome to a one million pound purpose built dealership. Once again this was a George Martin development.

## 1997

George Martin started work on a new dealership for the group with a high profile "Guess Who " campaign in January of this year. Toomey Renno Limited was formed in September and on the 5th of September the doors were opened on their 1.5 million turnkey project.

So as not to be left behind in the constant changing world of technology, this year saw the installation of a new state of the art computer system throughout the Group.

## 1998

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February of this year saw the Bodyshop move to its new 15,000sq ft location with the purchase of Kingston House only 500 yards from Service House. The Group now boasts a new customer friendly Accident Repair Centre.

This year saw Toomeyfit lead the way in the Fast Fit Industry by opening 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

George Martin started construction on a 12,000 sq ft office complex in May of this year, as well as continuing its housing construction programme at South Woodham Ferrers.

As the millennium approaches the Group joins the Internet Superhighway with the launch of its web site <http://www.toomey.uk.com//> and E-mail addresses

On [www.Company Name@toomey.uk.com](mailto:www.Company Name@toomey.uk.com).

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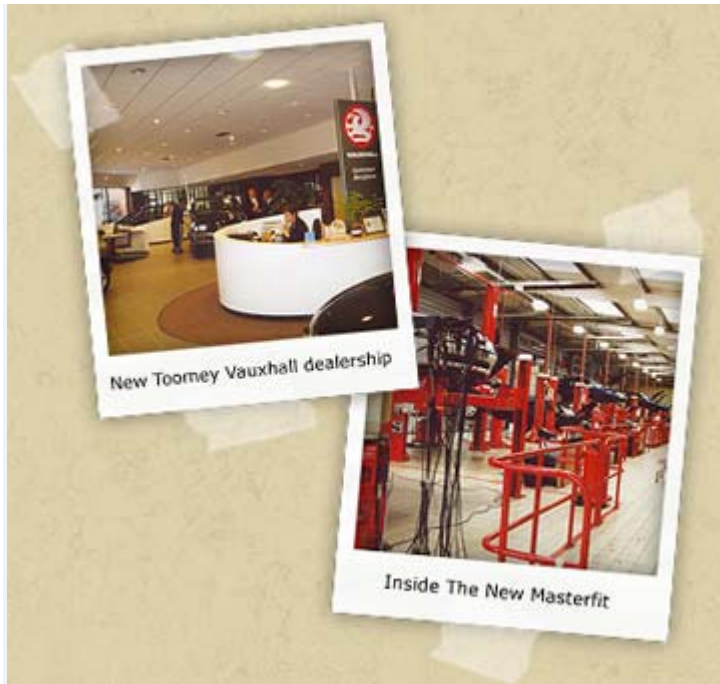
On [www.CompanyName@toomey.uk.com](mailto:www.CompanyName@toomey.uk.com).

# 1999



In June of this year Toomey Hire & Leasing acquires the assets, name and premises of the Chester based Skyway Leasing Ltd.

By providing the same high level of customer dedication, commitment and service that clearly identifies Toomey Leasing, Toomey Skyway Leasing will fulfil the group's long-held ambition to establish a presence in the lucrative northern counties vehicle contract hire market.



Work started on the £1.2 million refurbishment of the Toomey Vauxhall dealership and a brand new Masterfit Centre, the project being undertaken by George Martin Limited. The newly refurbished dealership was officially opened at the launch night in April 2000.

## 2000

The year began with Nissan Motors (GB) Ltd awarding the Group the Nissan franchise for Westcliff-on-Sea and surrounding areas. In June 2000 Toomey Nissan (Southend) Ltd commenced trading. On the 2nd October 2000 the Group acquired Warwick Wright Brentwood and the new Company Toomey Pershow (Brentwood) Ltd was born, adding the Peugeot franchise to the Group's portfolio.



## 2001



Toomey Eurolease Ltd

The 1st June was the day that New Crown Vehicle Leasing, based in Nottingham, joined the family to promote and extend within the East Midlands the already successful Contract Hire and Leasing facilities of the Group. New Crown Leasing with its long-held family reputation for customer care and satisfaction was seen as ideally complimentary to the Group's existing contract hire and leasing portfolio. In line with Group policy and in order to retain the family feeling Eurolease Car Contracts Ltd, a family vehicle leasing business in Derby, was acquired in November this year and re-named Toomey Eurolease Ltd, bringing a substantial fleet of leased vehicles into the portfolio and together with Nottingham and Chester is increasing the UK coverage within the Group.

In January 2002 Fleetsave Vehicle Management Services Ltd, a vehicle leasing company based in Birmingham, was acquired from Bristol Street Motors and renamed Toomey Fleetsave Ltd. This acquisition again increases our geographical coverage of the UK and maintains our policy of "small is beautiful" and allows our customers to feel individually cared for.

In September 2002 George Martin Limited, our building company, completed the turnkey project of Toomey Peugeot Basildon, a £2.1 million, 1,400 square metres building oozing new technology and current building techniques. Toomey Pershow Ltd opened its doors to the public during this month, enhancing both the Group and Peugeot product.



In November 2002 the vehicle rentals division of Toomey Hire & Leasing Co Ltd was given its own identity, Toomey Vehicle Rentals Ltd, and thus separating its operation from THL.

As a result of General Motors purchasing Daewoo from receivership, we were invited by General Motors to take on the Daewoo franchise.

## 2003



In January 2003, some four weeks after we were approached, our Toomeyfit premises were converted into our Toomey Daewoo dealership with the three-bay hobby wash being converted into a state-of-the-art showroom; allowing us to get up and running to replace the Lakeside void caused by the demise of Daewoo.



Toomey Skyway Ltd moved to prestigious new premises in April 2004 and the company is now based at Marlston House, Bell Meadow Business Park, Pulford, Chester.

In August 2004 J Toomey Motors were appointed as a Saab Dealer further enhancing the vehicle portfolio and moving into the prestige motor car range. On 1st March 2005 the acquisition of Opticar Ltd, a leasing company, was completed. Toomey Opticar Ltd are based at Capability Green, Luton. In October 2005 the Group opened a Vauxhall dealership in Southend, Toomey (Southend) Ltd, enabling the Group to represent Vauxhall and Chevrolet along the Thames corridor.

On 1 July 2006 General Motors decided to incorporate the Daewoo brand with Chevrolet and Toomey Daewoo Ltd became Toomey Chevrolay Ltd.

In 2006 the re-badged Daewoo/Chevrolet (Toomey Chevrolay Ltd) was relocated to the Vauxhall showroom at Basildon.

Retirement Apartments - The Laindon Holdings Group lead the way with their first development of a new concept in retirement living. In early 2006 George Martin Ltd completed the building of 27 apartments for the Laindon Holdings Group. These retirement apartments are on a life-long lease where the occupiers' only expense is their food and telephone.





In April 2006 the Laidon Holdings Group purchased two Peugeot Dealerships in the Southend area from Currie Motors and Toomey Pershow (Southend) Ltd was formed.

In May 2006 the Laidon Holdings Group purchased a Renault Dealership in the Southend area from Lookers and Toomey Renno (Southend) Ltd was formed.

In August 2006 Toomey Mitsubishi Ltd opened its doors at Basildon, adding another manufacturer to the Group's portfolio.

The Laidon Holdings Group's Rochford Business Park Project commenced. A state of the art motor village complex is being constructed by George Martin Ltd, completed autumn 2008.

Over seventy five years may have passed and Service House may be in West Mayne and no longer in Laidon High Road. However, the Laidon Holdings Group of Companies is still a family and the customer is still the sole reason for our existence.



This summer saw Toomey Opticar move from Byron House to a new development of modern offices at Capability Green, Luton.

As you can see from the following photographs taken in 2008, the Laidon Holdings Group are constantly updating our image to keep up with the times and to give our customers the best service available.



Toomey Vauxhall



Toomey Nissan



Toomey Renault



Kingston House Body Shop



Toomey Peugeot



Toomey Mitsubishi



In April 2008 Laindon Holdings acquire Kent Elms Citroen in Orsett, from then on to be known as Toomey Sitron Ltd. This purchase soon spread and saw Toomey Sitron Ltd sharing premises with Mitsubishi at Basildon and Orsett.

George Martin complete their Gimli Watch development in South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford. This development comprised of 13 superbly finished, luxury 4 bedroom family homes.

The new Toomey Automotive Retail Park starts to take form.



In October 2008 The Toomey Automotive Retail Park opens the doors for business of its new BP Petrol Forecourt. Its 1683m<sup>2</sup> Canopy makes it the largest Petrol Filling Station in Europe. It also incorporates a Bakery/Hot food Take-away in the Forecourt Shop.

In December 08 Toomey Vauxhall (Southend) Ltd, Toomey Renault (Southend) Ltd and Toomey Peugeot (Southend) Ltd move out of their old locations and into their new, purpose built units on The Toomey Automotive Retail Park.

December 2008 also sees the closure of Toomey Peugeot (Brentwood) Ltd.

In August 2010 we began the first full refurbishment of the Petrol Filling Station at Basildon since being built in 1986. This included the replacement of all the pumps, relaying of the forecourt paving, a shop refit, new signage and improved lighting. George Martin completed the project on time and we reopened the new facility for a full service some 8 weeks later.





In a service industry environment, Companies can only survive and thrive if they apply the highest standards of customer care. The Laindon Holdings Group of Companies is only too well aware that without its customers it ceases to exist.