

# Surgical director gets to the cutting edge of firm's products

Bernard Ginns

THE manufacturing director at Surgical Innovations went the extra mile to test the company's products when he received emergency treatment for appendicitis.

Paul Birtles, 43, was rushed to hospital after experiencing severe abdominal pains and within a few hours he was receiving emergency treatment for his condition.

Surgeons decided to remove his appendix using laparoscopic surgery – an area which Surgical Innovations specialise in – and to carry out the procedure used the company's "responsible" instruments which are manufactured in Leeds.

The device acts as a channel into the body, which



PAUL BIRTLES: Surgical's manufacturing director had to have emergency treatment for appendicitis.

allows surgeons to carry out delicate surgery and is one of the products that Mr Birtles has responsibility for.

It is specially designed to make the procedure as easy as possible for surgeons and ensure minimal scarring for the patient.

Mr Birtles said: "Surgical Innovations has been trying to get me into surgery to see our products in action for five years now and the only way they've succeeded is through a general anaesthetic!

"I have always had a huge fear of hospitals and in par-

ticular operating theatres but having now experienced the instruments from the patient side I am keen to go into theatre and see how the operation is performed.

"We always say that the next person the product may be used on could be a family member, friend or even yourself and that's certainly poignant in this case."

Surgical Innovations, which was founded in 1992, has become a pioneer in minimally invasive surgery. Mr Birtles joined in 2005 and has been instrumental in the realisation of the company's in-house manufacturing site.

This year the company has invested more than £1m in new technologies and has increased its workforce by 25 per cent.

