

Senior's architectural vision setting the agenda

Senior Architectural Systems' ability to match the latest technology with nurtured relationships and environmental responsibility has brought it to where it is today



Left The automated vertical powder-coating line lifting the aluminium profile lengths through pre-treatment, powder-coating and baking processes.

There's something cathedral-like about Senior Architectural Systems' Doncaster plant, despite the fact that here it's assembling the components of buildings, rather than a building itself. But with 7m long aluminium profiles being slowly and consecutively lifted to hang vertically before twisting round the production line to the spray area and oven, you're seeing architecture of sorts being created before your very eyes.

Founded 25 years ago as a privately owned, family company, Senior Architectural Systems has since grown into one of the largest fenestration companies in the UK,

with an annual turnover in excess of £25m, and serving more than 200 UK cladding fabricators across the commercial, education, healthcare and housing sectors. The firm has spent years developing strong industry relationships to ensure it has an implicit understanding of both client needs and those of the sector in general.

With a workforce of 170 people across four UK plants; two in England and one each in Wales and Scotland, that nurtured relationship means the firm has made key sector acquisitions to ensure that it best meets the needs of its client base.

That makes it the first company in the UK to provide a full fenestration service to its customers of aluminium system profiles, bespoke powder-coating and glazed units, all deliverable anywhere in the UK mainland. Senior prides itself on its willingness to take on projects of any size, specification and budget. Offering a full service package, it is able to remove uncertainty in the supply chain, and generate a five day turnaround of products delivered to the customer via its fleet of eco-vehicles, as well as offering a no-quibble guarantee with its powder-coating services.



Above The powder-coating line is fully automated and used for large batches, going in gradually darkening colour runs through the spectrum, with a 40-minute cleaning process between each colour change.

Senior has always taken its environmental responsibilities seriously, manufacturing its profile systems from recycled aluminium and, with its 'Hybrid' range, timber from PEFC-certified European forests. For every tree it uses, four are planted to minimise environmental impact. Through careful specification of its products, Senior claims to be able to offer up to 40 of the 119 BREEAM credits available for new buildings, helping the industry to build better for the future. Sustainable sourcing and manufacturing is at its core and it is

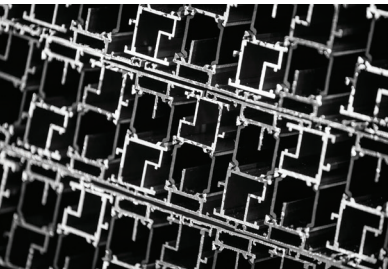


Left Horizontal hangers being made ready for the manual powder-coating line, which runs smaller batches and one-off replacements for larger batches.



Below left Quality control processes include electronic monitoring to check coating thickness as well as visual checks for runs and inconsistencies.

Below Aluminium profiles stored in the factory's warehouse.



accredited to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 18001.

Senior managing director Lennart Jonsson has made it his mission to drive innovation to make sure that the firm remains at the cutting-edge of the industry, spending more than £1m in inward R&D investment last year alone, focussed on developing the products, processes and services to ensure it remains the leader in its sector. Investment is continuing apace with Senior expecting to launch new products later this year, which will incorporate revolutionary technology.

Unlike some companies driven only by the bottom line, Senior has spent years being service-driven, building up long-term relationships with its clients. It takes both trust and tradition seriously, but knows that to survive in a competitive and environmentally challenging world, it has to innovate. From its Doncaster HQ, Senior's friendly and customer-driven approach is its strength, offering bespoke and flexible solutions to its customers in a timely manner. It remains, in the great British entrepreneurial manner, a local firm with big ambitions for the future. ●



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