

Grant Chelton, Managing Director of Duration Windows, talks exclusively to Windows Active about the company and its products

Innovation at the heart of Duration Windows

Can you provide a brief overview of Duration Windows' history and how the company has evolved since its inception?

Over nearly four decades, Duration Windows has become one of the UK's largest aluminium windows, doors and roof manufacturers. The Company was founded by Brian Chelton and Dennis Mitchell in 1985. From the creation of its first product – Secondary Glazing, a product that is still a firm favourite with customers to this very day. Duration is known for their outstanding customer service, innovative products, and impressive range. Their extensive range of products include: Bi-fold doors, patio sliders, secondary glazing, roof systems, patio sliders, windows, commercial and their incredibly popular Heritage Range.

Duration has grown significantly over the years in terms of staff numbers and the increase of their factory units and turnover, with a total of 18 units, one large Head office and an impressive product showroom. Because of these positive changes they have reduced their lead times overall resulting in a Fast Track service for customers who need their bespoke products within 48 hours.

Who are the key personnel at the company who are there to support installers customer?

We have a large team of experts who support our customers from their enquiry through to delivery. Our exceptional team consists of our sales team who advise customers on products and provide quotes, our production team who notify customers of order progress, despatch team who liaise with customers when orders will be delivered and our aftersales team for anything they wish to discuss about their product. All of these teams report to our Office Manager who ensures orders run smoothly in conjunction with our Factory Manager.



How has the aluminium window and door industry changed over the years and what are the key issues at the moment, and how has Duration Windows adapted to these changes and issues?

Over the years customer demand has changed significantly altering the window and door industry. Homes are now being designed in a different way from what they once were, with more open living spaces and a key focus on environmental and sustainability.

A common demand for customers is the need for more glass and less frame to connect their gardens to their homes. This has put pressure on the industry to reduce the size of frames to improve sightlines, creating larger door panels and achieving high performance and energy ratings.

We responded to this by reviewing our product range to identify where we could improve and enhance our lines to ensure these new requirements were being met. In 2021 the Durafold 1000 Slimline Bi-fold door was launched followed shortly by our

Premium Slider patio door in 2023. Our Durafold 1000 Slimline features a quick-glaze bead with integrated gasket, slim sightlines and a strong polyamide thermally broken aluminium profile. Whilst our Premium Slider offers high multi-point security locking, slim interlocker of 35mm wide accommodating glass panels up to 3 metres wide.

What distinguishes Duration Windows from other manufacturers in the aluminium windows and doors market?

We offer a One Stop Shop, with our wide product range it allows customers to get everything they need for their project from one place, making orders quick and easy.

As a family run business, we bring a personal touch to everything we do. This means that our customers are more than just numbers to us; they are part of our extended family. Our close-knit team, with many who have been with us from the early years, ensures that every customer receives dedicated attention and bespoke solutions tailored to their needs. The family

ethos extends to our employees, fostering a supportive and collaborative working environment that translates into superior customer service and product quality.

How does Duration Windows ensure the quality and durability of its aluminium windows and doors?

Duration achieves great quality products through their highly skilled team and top of the range machinery. Our years of experience mean we offer the best in product innovation and technical competence. We believe in our products so much that we include a 10 year guarantee across all of our ranges. Products are tested and regularly reviewed to ensure they are secure, robust and made to last.

All products are manufactured in the UK to ensure they are of the highest quality and security by being members of various industry and Governing Bodies. Duration are proud members of the BFRC (British Fenestration Rating Council) and have Kitemark accreditation with BSi and BMTrada. Furthermore, they are an approved supplier to the Ministry of Justice, assuring customers that they are dealing with a reputable company.

What are some of the most popular products among your installer clients, and why do you think they are so well-received?

• **Heritage Range** – this range has been a firm favourite with our customers for many years. As one of the original manufacturers of steel-look windows and doors, our innovative design creates the most authentic appearance on the market. They offer much improved security, thermal efficiency, and come at a fraction of the cost of steel. Suitable for use in listed buildings, heritage and conservation areas, retaining the classic look and character of a home.

• **Bi-fold Doors** – officially the first UK manufacturer to sell aluminium Bi-fold's to trade we are now one of the UK's largest manufacturers of aluminium Bi-folding doors. Bi-fold doors bring the outside in and open up space to create over a 90% clear opening. With nearly two decades of experience in producing Bi-fold doors, competitive prices and a wide range of designs available; we are first choice for Bi-fold doors.

• **Secondary Glazing** – this was the first product Duration produced 39 years ago, so we have years of experience and expertise with this system. We use our in-house secondary glazing system to create a vast range of designs to suit any window type. Secondary Glazing is perfect for use in listed buildings and conservation areas. Made from strong light-weight aluminium, it is a slim and discreet, cost effective method of insulating & sound proofing your windows whilst reducing heating bills.

Can you discuss any recent innovations or developments at Duration Windows that are particularly exciting for the industry, including new product launches?

We have recently expanded our Heritage Range to include Internal Screens following high customer demand. This versatile



system comes in up to eight door and screen combinations including single and double doors with/without sidelights, fixed screen and a sliding door option. These screens are ideal for creating room dividers or corridors within offices, meeting rooms or simply as internal doors within a home. The systems sleek and elegant lines perfectly compliment our external window and door range to ensure a seamless transition throughout a home. They are made to measure and come in a variety of glass finishes, available in over 200 RAL colour options.

We have further strengthened our Heritage range by launching our innovative 25mm thermally broken transom to the Heritage external range. It is the slimmest of its kind to create the most authentic steel-look windows and doors on the market.

How does Duration Windows support its installer partners in terms of training, marketing, and technical assistance? (Is the showroom still actively available for installers to take customers to?)

At Duration we manufacture, but we also design, innovate and share our expertise with our customers. We do this by offering Marketing packs these can be unbranded brochures, corner samples, marketing campaigns, online product design tool to create a 3D configurator for customers to easily design their product. One of our popular marketing services is the use of our Product Showroom where we invite our customers to bring their customers to view and discuss products.

We have an incredible Technical team who are always on hand to support our customers with CAD drawings, technical advice, specification guidance, technical documentation and user guides.

We also help our customers with leads whereby we refer enquiries to our experienced and loyal customers.

What are the future plans for Duration Windows, and how do you see the company evolving in the next few years within the fenestration industry?

Moving forward, 2024/2025 look promising for Duration with more changes to come. Our product showroom will be relocating to a new and larger premises to allow us to display even more of our products and to enhance the customer experience when they visit us. We look forward to showing our customers our new look! We have been attending various exhibitions throughout the year including Homebuild & Renovating Show where we have been launching our new products.

We hope to see continued growth and innovation whilst maintaining our reputation as a leader in the aluminium windows, doors and roof market. We aim to expand our product lines and reach even more customers across the UK.

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