

FEATURE



HOME PRIDE

LUSSO

Luxury home and bathroom firm has its "roots firmly planted in Teesside"

Proud - Lusso MD Mike Manders at the firm's Teesside offices

PICTURES: TOM BANKS

With the launch of the "Invest Stockton-on-Tees" campaign, which highlights why the borough is a great place for business, Lusso Stone managing director Mike Manders explains why it's an ideal "fit" for his business...

First established in 2014, Lusso is one of the UK's fastest growing luxury home brands that designs, produces and retails its own collections of high-end bathroom fixtures and fittings, as well as an expanding range of homeware.

And after significantly increasing its scale and revenue over the last three years, Lusso has invested in a new, state-of-the-art, 10,000 sq ft headquarters in Teessdale to accommodate its growing workforce.

"We looked at several areas for suitable offices but finally found our home in Stockton," said Mike. "We liked what was going on here in regard to investment in the town with the riverside development and the commitment to town centres.

"It's a great environment in which to set up a new business, or for an existing one to relocate to. There are lots of contributing factors for us including local talent, transport links and a wealth of other successful businesses surrounding us that want others to flourish.

"Networking with and using other business' services in the area has been a key element for our growth."

With direct rail links to London, Teesside International Airport on the doorstep and access to the UK's largest freeport, Stockton is well connected not only to the rest of the UK but to the rest of the world.

There's over 500 hectares of available land and premises, so whether firms are looking for ready-to-move office space or facilities or need the right space to bring a vision to life, Stockton has it.

"Our new flagship headquarters is on Teessdale Business Park on Stockton riverside," said Mike. "It's the perfect building for us to develop our team and grow the business further.

"It's still early days in the building, but to be able to work in a beautiful and professional environment goes hand in hand with our brand. Our clients and employees are certainly impressed with our new building and surroundings. The Lusso HQ now boasts a bright open-plan collaborative working space, a Peloton and free weight gym, social areas, American pool tables and its very own Lusso Bar for team building events, or simply a place to have a beer at the end of a busy week!

"It's got great transport links,

accessibility for staff and clients, and there's already some big companies in the immediate area, including our eCommerce partners Visualsoft, which makes monthly meetings very convenient!"

It's not just the available space that makes Stockton an obvious choice - the borough comes with a skilled workforce of more than 121,000 too.

Mike explained: "There's a great pool of talent and we love the fact that we can recruit within the Tees Valley. The people we employ have primarily come through the excellent universities and colleges in the area and many have already worked in eCommerce, which is perfect for us.

"The workforce is talented, passionate and committed to growing our brand as much as myself and the CEO are."

Lusso is growing fast and is building on its 32-strong team.

Mike said: "We're recruiting right now, looking for talented people to join the Lusso family. We have all types of departments hiring including sales, customer service, marketing, creative, PR, technology, supply chain and operations."

Stockton is a great place to live too. With six thriving towns and an exciting, year-round events programme alongside charming parks and high-quality leisure facilities, there's always something to do or somewhere to explore.

"Our team loves living and working here" Mike said. "It's very diverse and there's always lots of things to do and enjoy. At Lusso, we like to promote a healthy lifestyle, so having the river and Tees Barrage right next to us helps our staff to walk out and explore at lunchtimes. Many even use the network of cycle links to commute to and from work."

The council has a dedicated team to support new and existing businesses that



Luxury - The stunning Charleston freestanding stone resin bath from Teessdale-based Lusso.

want to set up or relocate to the borough. It also provides continuous support to businesses operating here.

Mike said: "We were well supported by the council during Covid-19 and while undertaking our development of the new headquarters," Mike explained. "It's a council that cares and wants to help promote SMEs in the region.

"Its biggest strength is its vision. There are good quality developments and investments ongoing in the area like the Hilton Hotel which is right on our doorstep, the recent investment and refurbishment of the Stockton Globe and the master plan for the riverside, which will be fantastic when it's complete.

"These enhancements all bow well to attract talent and further businesses just like ours, and I'm excited to see what the future brings."

Lusso has featured in The Sunday Times Virgin Atlantic Fast Track 100 for the last three years as one of the fastest growing UK companies and recently hit £100m in accumulated sales revenue.

"We want to hit £100m in annual sales within the next three years and we're confident that we're in the right place to reach that target," continued Mike. "We have plans to roll our offer out to other categories such as hardware, furniture and flooring.

"We are a business that has its roots firmly planted in Teesside. We employ local talent and are proud of where we come from."

For information about career opportunities at Lusso, email careers@lussostone.com.

For more information about why Stockton is a great place for business, visit investstocktonontees.co.uk or follow on social media by searching Invest Stockton-on-Tees.

**Invest
Stockton
on-Tees.**

**WHY CHOOSE
STOCKTON-ON-TEES?**

A GREAT PLACE FOR BUSINESS

- Over 500 hectares of available land and premises
- Direct rail links to London
- Access to the UK's largest freeport
- You'll be in good company - over 5,500 businesses have already found us



GREAT PEOPLE

- The powerhouse of the Tees Valley economy
- A great pool of labour and talent
- A working population of 121,500



A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

- 6 thriving towns
- Great housing and schools
- Beautiful countryside and parks
- A year-round, world-class events programme



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PICTURE: TOM BANKS

Proud - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council leader, Councillor Bob Cook

**IT'S ALL
GOING
ON IN**

Why the borough's ideal for business and leisure

**STOCKTON-
ON-TEES**



// Whether you're a business looking for ready-made premises or for somewhere to establish a new base, you should look no further than Stockton-on-Tees."

That was the opinion of the leader of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Councillor Bob Cook, when asked why Stockton is the perfect location for firms to do business in.

He said: "The borough is already home to more than 5,000 businesses, who collectively contribute to around a third of the entire Tees Valley's economic output.

"We're ready to both welcome new businesses and help our existing ones grow. Stockton-on-Tees is a great place to do business, with great people and great places to live."

And it's not just the council that thinks Stockton-on-Tees is the place to be - it's what companies based in the borough think too.

Chief executive of Wilton Engineering, Bill Scott OBE, founded Wilton Engineering with his business partner, Steve Glenn, 28 years ago and has grown the business into a successful member of the offshore energy sector supply chain.

"We set up our first facility in Middlesbrough in 1994, moved to Hartlepool in 2000 and then moved to Port Clarence in Stockton-on-Tees in 2006," Bill said. "That was a great move as it meant we had direct access to the river, which makes the transporting of goods really easy. We've recently bought Haverton Hill Shipyard too, extending our base to 112 acres."

Bill added: "It has been a real career highlight to be able to witness some of the world's largest and most complicated projects loaded onto the River Tees, showcasing

everything that is good about our area."

There's excellent connectivity for business, whether it be by road, rail, air or sea. It's also easy to access the UK's largest freeport and the multimillion-pound terminal redevelopment at Teesside International Airport has revised business travel and international trading.

Combine this with more than 500 hectares of available land and competitively priced premises, businesses looking to establish a new base would struggle to find a more convenient location.

And it's not just the available space and connectivity that makes Stockton-on-Tees the obvious choice - it comes with a skilled workforce of more than 121,000.

Mike Manders is managing director at Lusso Stone, one of the UK's fastest growing luxury home brands with a new, state-of-the-art, 10,000 sq ft headquarters at Teesdale Business Park.

He explains: "There's a great pool of talent

in the area and we love the fact that we can recruit within the Tees Valley. The people we employ have primarily come through the excellent universities and colleges in the area and many have already worked in eCommerce, which is perfect for us.

"The workforce is talented, passionate and committed to growing our brand as much as myself and the CEO are."

It's not all work and no play either. Councillor Cook said: "This is a great place to live, with great housing and schools. Our six towns are undergoing exciting transformations provide shopping, theatre, museums, entertainment and leisure attractions in amongst our countryside and parks. And, of course, running through all of this is the beautiful River Tees.

"We're also proud to say that there's always something going on in the borough, with a packed programme of events and festivals throughout the year - you won't be stuck for something to do."

To find out more about what Stockton-on-Tees can do for your business, visit investstocktonontees.co.uk



FEATURE

B A Joinery's operations director Peter Marwood at the Billingham HQ.

PICTURES: STUART BOULTON

JOIN US!

B A Joinery boss calls on more businesses to invest in Stockton-on-Tees

The Invest Stockton-on-Tees campaign, highlighting why the borough is a great place for business, is putting the spotlight on some of the successful and thriving businesses that are here already.

Here, we hear from Peter Marwood, operations director at B A Joinery.

Billingham-based B A Joinery is a bespoke joinery manufacturer specialising in commercial office projects, working with some of the UK's leading fit-out specialists.

They offer an end-to-end service for businesses including the design, manufacture and installation of beautiful interior design.

"Since we first established ourselves on Teesside Industrial Estate in 2008, the company has grown immensely," says Peter. "We moved to Leeholme Road in Billingham in 2021, and with expansion we now have a 40,000-sq ft factory."

"Extending our building was a real highlight for us as it enabled us to provide more capacity for machinery, build our workforce by employing local people and expand the business while sticking to our roots. We're proud to

have grown organically in the borough.

"We have offices in Derby and Leeds, but our headquarters have stayed right here where we began."

Stockton-on-Tees is proud to have excellent transport links via land, sea and air, with

planned improvements to make travel and logistics easier than ever. You can take advantage of direct rail routes to London, Teesside International Airport and access the UK's largest freeport, connecting you not only to the rest of



B A Joinery in Billingham.

the UK but the rest of the world too.

Peter tells us: "It's the perfect location for us, with links via the A19 and A1 allowing us to transport goods nationally and access various project sites."

The borough boasts a skilled

"It's a great place to grow your business and you won't be short of support."

workforce of more than 121,000 working aged people. "The people here are hardworking, honest and reliable, all working in unison to ensure we meet our company goals and stick to our values," Peter explains. "Our managing director, Steve McDonald, and myself both live in the borough and are proud to have developed and grown B A Joinery into what it is today within our hometown."

"We currently employ 48 people including estimators, draughtsmen, project managers, bench joiners, polishers and everything in between. We love our workforce and we're always on the hunt for new talent. Right now, we're looking for bench joiners to join our ever-expanding team."

Stockton-on-Tees isn't just great for business, it's a great place to live too, with six thriving towns and an exciting, year-round event programme. You can visit some of its charming parks and state-of-the-art leisure facilities or shop at independent retailers or UK giants in the town's high streets. You'll never be short of something to do or

somebody to explore.

And if you're thinking this all comes with a cost, you'd be surprised to hear that house prices in Stockton are some of the lowest in the North-East, ranging from executive homes and Victorian town houses to riverside living and new builds. New housing sites are currently in development to the west of Stockton and at Wynyard.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has a dedicated business support team working with new and existing businesses in the borough. Whether you're looking to set up or relocate to Stockton or want to find out what is available to you, the team is only a phone call or an email away.

Speaking about the support that B A Joinery has received from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, Peter adds: "We've been supported through a range of different areas including training, grants, funding schemes and more."

"The council has visited our premises on a number of occasions and informed us of what support is available to us, responding to our needs."

"If you're thinking of relocating here, I'd say go for it! It's a great place to grow your business and you won't be short of support. Several of our suppliers are local businesses in the area who have become very established over the years and we're thriving together."

"The borough's biggest strength is the community. The local people, the businesses and the council are always pulling together to continually bring new innovation to the area to provide opportunities and give back to the people that live and work here."

For more information on B A Joinery and to see incredible examples of some of their work including projects for HMRC, the Royal College of Physicians, BBC, Channel 4 and many more, visit bajoinery.co.uk.

If you're looking for ready-to-move offices or facilities, or you need the right space to bring your vision to life, there's more than 500 hectares of available land in Stockton-on-Tees. Whatever you need, you can find it within the borough.



Elegant - B A Joinery's work at the Royal College of Physicians in Liverpool.

FEATURE

Visit investstocktonontees.co.uk to see what's on offer and have a look around some of the high-quality strategic locations in various business parks across the borough, or follow the council on social media by searching **Invest Stockton-on-Tees**.

Bill Scott OBE says Stockton-on-Tees has everything businesses need to thrive



THE PERFECT PLACE



Wilton Engineering boss Bill explains why businesses should invest in Stockton-on-Tees

“Stockton-on-Tees is a great place to live and work.”

Chief executive of Wilton Engineering, Bill Scott OBE, has been talking about why investing in Stockton-on-Tees is the best choice for business.

Last year, the Invest Stockton-on-Tees campaign was launched to highlight everything the borough has to offer and encourage more businesses particularly in the energy and environment, life sciences and biotechnology and manufacturing and engineering sectors to join Wilton and the 5,000 other businesses that already call Stockton home.

Bill founded Wilton Engineering with his business partner, Steve Glenn, 28 years ago and has grown the business into a successful member of the offshore energy sector

supply chain, initially in the oil and gas sector and more recently, offshore wind.

“Stockton has an industrial heritage incorporating manufacturing going back to the 15th century, including railways, shipbuilding, mining and many other things,” says Bill.

“We set up our first facility in Middlesbrough in 1994, moved to Hartlepool in 2000 and then moved to Port Clarence in Stockton in 2006.

“That was a great move, as it meant we had direct access to the river, which makes the transporting of goods easy, and we’ve recently bought Haverton Hill Shipyard too, extending our base to 112 acres.”

The company possesses a strong and diverse portfolio of successfully completed projects, including 21 transition pieces –

large yellow structures that connect the underwater foundation to the offshore wind turbine – through its client SteelWind, for Ørsted’s Hornsea Project One offshore wind farm.

“It’s been a real career highlight to be able to witness some of the world’s largest and most complicated projects being loaded onto the River Tees, showcasing everything that’s good about our area,” adds Bill.

And it’s not just the connectivity to the river, access to the UK’s largest freeport and readily available land with access to major commuter routes that makes Stockton stand out. Bill says there’s also a vast pool of labour and talent to tap into, and you couldn’t get a more committed workforce.

“The area is brimming with talent and fighting spirit. I am proud to be part of an amazing community full of great people and with world-class industry, which has given me the opportunity to build a successful business, but also to play my part in helping others.

“We currently have around 250 employees and the roles are wide and varied, covering engineering design, health and safety, quality, planning, quantity surveying, accounts, manufacturing, assembly, construction, project management, inspection, logistics, shot blasting and painting.

“The workforce is highly skilled, with qualities in all aspects of the project work. The unique stand out quality, however, is that they all work together as a team from start to finish to create and deliver these masterclass projects.”

And he says the support on offer from the local authority makes all the difference, too.

“What’s also second to none is the advice we get from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council. We have experienced first-class customer service from the senior management team, along with planning, environmental and associated services.

“I’m a great believer that culture and outputs are driven from the top, and my experience of working with the council has been simply outstanding. Their approach to helping businesses and working with the local communities has to be applauded.”

Home to 200,000 people, Stockton has charming market towns, stunning parks and first-class leisure attractions. And they are just a few of the things Bill says make it the perfect place to both live and work.

“I live in a part of Stockton that is seeing hundreds of houses being built for the next generation, which is great,” he says.

“The schools are good, offering a mixture of comprehensive and



private schools. The borough really will welcome you with open arms and support you wherever possible and the people, by nature, are hard-working and friendly.

“There’s plenty to see and do, too. The River Tees isn’t just great for businesses looking to transport goods easily. It offers lots of activities to enjoy, such as rowing, dragon boat racing, paddle boarding and water skiing, and it’s home to world-class white-water canoe and kayaking.”

Bill’s also a fan of the borough’s busy, year-round events programme, which offers people living and working there a chance to enjoy a whole host of internationally acclaimed events, from Stockton International Riverside Festival to Stockton Sparkles Christmas Festival and Stockton Cycling Festival and many more in between.

“The Stockton International Riverside Festival is a fantastic

event,” says Bill. “It sees international performers coming from around the world to take part in this truly amazing spectacle.

“There’s a variety of live performance venues for music, comedy and theatre, too. Stockton Globe is an amazing live entertainment venue, which houses around 3,000 people and the acts are often class acts which are on UK or global tours,” he added.

“So if you’re a business looking for somewhere to establish a new base, I can assure you, you can’t go wrong with Stockton. It’s got the full package – a great place to do business, a great place to live and great people. What more could you want?”

From finding the perfect location for your business to providing planning advice, supporting you to recruit the right workforce and identifying funding opportunities, Invest Stockton-on-Tees can help.

To find out more about what Stockton has to offer visit investstocktonontees.co.uk or follow Invest Stockton-on-Tees on Twitter or LinkedIn.

FEATURE