

 Directory

< Services

Camira

As global textile manufacturer Camira approaches its 200th anniversary of providing to the transport industry, we spoke with Peter Daly, Head of European Transport Sales, to learn about the company's rich heritage, and the exciting plans it has for the future...

So, where did Camira's transport textile roots begin? How did you grow to become the global organisation you are today?

Peter Daly: Our heritage stretches all the way back to 1822, when a cloth manufacturer named John Holdsworth founded a worsted spinning mill named Holdsworth in Halifax – a town in the North of England celebrated for its woollen textile heritage. Over the years, the company greatly expanded and built a renowned reputation for providing speciality cloths for transport companies, and supplying them to organisations across the world.

In the 1900s, Holdsworth solidified its expertise in the transport industry, becoming a founding member of the Moquette Manufacturers' Association and

symbolising the firm's commitment to the iconic textile construction which remains a beloved staple in the Camira portfolio to this day. The company also began to concentrate on the export market, developing its presence across the globe and, by the 1990s, sales in North America formed approximately a fifth of the company's turnover, in addition to significant growth being achieved in continental Europe and Australasia.

This growth was complemented by significant investments in machinery and state-of-the-art equipment, making the Holdsworth factory one of the most modern and largest weaving units of its type in the world!

After six generations in the family, the Holdsworth business was sold in 2005 for real estate

development of its historic mill complex. Two years later, in 2007, Camira purchased the Holdsworth brand name and assets – including the moquette looms on which our transport textile heritage is founded – and brought the historic firm into the Camira Group, ensuring its expertise and capabilities continues to play a valuable part in the transport industry.

Could you tell us about some of Camira's highlights from the last two hundred years? There must be a lot to choose from in such an extensive period!

PD: Of course! There are so many key moments – from the construction of Holdsworth's famous offices by Sir Charles Barry in the 1860s through to working with Transport for London on the

creation of their iconic textiles in the 1900s (a partnership that remains as strong as ever today), and even the launch of Hybrid, our pioneering wire-woven capability, in 2019. Indeed, this year had a highlight of its own, as, this summer, we released Aura – our beloved moquette – in an incredible 200 colourways to celebrate our upcoming bicentennial anniversary!

The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has obviously had a major impact on public transport, do you see bus interiors changing as a result?

PD: Many people envisage that interiors will move towards ‘wipe clean’ seating – with hard plastic, vinyl and polyurethanes becoming the preferred choice, but we believe that there is a very bright future for natural materials to work alongside

a variety of other complementary surfaces; and that’s certainly something we’re seeing in our own customer base.

There’s a large amount of research which indicates that the use of natural materials within interiors is incredibly beneficial for our wellbeing – particularly in light of the recent focus on indoor air quality and the emission of VOCs (volatile organic compounds) which can be harmful to human health – and this is something that operators are really considering when designing their vehicles. With wool being nature’s ultra-intelligent fibre type, it is a naturally low emitter of VOCs, and actually improves indoor air quality. These in-built health properties, combined with its sustainable nature and the textural and visual appeal of a wool fabric, make it a truly timeless

choice for bus interiors – as popular today as it was when we started back in 1822.

Finally, do you have any exciting plans in the pipeline that you can share with us?

PD: Whilst we can’t give specifics just yet, our Design and Innovation teams are busy working on a number of exciting projects that we’re very much looking forward to sharing – so we are proud to say that the forward-thinking ethos, passionate commitment, and continuous development that defined the Holdsworth name for centuries remains alive and well in the Camira brand.

And, of course, our 200th anniversary officially takes place next year, so preparations are very much underway for the big celebration.



The Aura collection: 200 colours for 200 years

As we approach 200 years of providing textiles to the transport industry, we have paid homage to the past whilst embracing the future of mobility with the launch of our iconic moquette Aura in 200 colourways in 9 distinctive designs.

With shorter lead times and minimum order quantities of just 50 metres, the Aura collection truly defines flexibility and versatility.

camira

