

High-growth strategy

When Wazarat Ali took over the ownership of a small bed-manufacturing business in Ravensthorpe, West Yorkshire in 2001, he had little knowledge of the industry – but a strong belief even then that he would build Highgrove into a successful brand ...

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Fast-forward 21 years, and Highgrove is now one of the UK's fastest-growing bed brands, reporting year-end sales in 2022 of more than £28m – up from £23m the previous year.

Mr Ali's ambition to compete at all levels with the well-established traditional brands has presented significant challenges along the way, but his long-term commitment to the business, and investment in every aspect of it, has clearly paid dividends.

Today, the Highgrove operation is based in Liversedge, and is one of the biggest and most modern in Europe, producing up to 5000 beds each week.

Mr Ali purchased the 22-acre site in 2017, and, following approximately £12m of further investment, the facility now boasts some 600,000ft² of manufacturing and warehousing, which also includes a 100,000ft² distribution centre and a foam conversion plant. The latest site investment is a new headboard manufacturing unit, which will also soon have the capability of producing bed frames, primarily for the UK market.

Mr Ali puts the success of his business down to several key factors – the most important being the partnership approach Highgrove has to its customers.

“Without their continued support over the years, it certainly would have taken us much longer to get where we are today,” he says. “From our part, we give them the widest choice of product available in the marketplace, high quality and great value, and on top of this we provide our seven-day Fastersleep express delivery service for 98% of orders placed.”

Mr Ali also praises his employees: “Their efforts throughout the business, at all levels, have been instrumental to Highgrove's success.”

The company's product portfolio now comprises three brands: HG at the entry level; the flagship Highgrove brand, targeting the mid-market; and Sanctum, which provides traditional hand-crafted luxury to the premium price sector.



Mr Ali's son, Saleem, is now very much involved in taking the business forward, and is confident that Highgrove will achieve £50m sales within the next five years, as the company targets new markets both at home and abroad.

“We now have the foundations to take the business to its next tier of development,” he says, “and we are particularly pleased and proud to have attained both the Sedex and ISO 9001 standards in recent years, which further highlights our ongoing commitment to the highest-quality environmental and ethical standards.”

Several years ago, Highgrove made the strategic decision to put its weight behind independent bricks-and-mortar retail, at a time when many established brands were looking to sell directly to consumers online. Since then, the business has invested more than £750,000 in high-impact in-store displays, which have been made available free of charge to Highgrove's Appointed Stockists.

“Clearly, our brands can be found on the internet via our customers' websites,” explains Saleem, “but our high street collections are still exclusively available to independent retailers, and not available for online sales.”

So, what does the future hold for Highgrove? Saleem is confident, despite the uncertain economic forecast. “The business has invested well in people, plant and machinery, and is well placed to take advantage of any new opportunities that arise,” he says. “Our aim is to establish Highgrove Beds as a well-known consumer brand that is a fitting legacy to my father's original aims when he founded the business.”

This year's Bed Show, taking place at Telford International Centre from 26-27th this month, will see Highgrove present every model in its range – including the recently introduced Coppersleep and ChiroGel models, which feature a new-and-improved AdvantEdge spring system.

Highgrove will also expand its adjustable bed offer, while adding several new cover innovations. HG will boast a wide range of high-value roll-up mattresses, and the Sanctum stand will feature the full collection of handcrafted models. Visit Highgrove on stands F120 and G70.

www.highgrovebeds.co.uk



Wazarat and Saleem Ali