

Our Market

27 million homes in the UK
17m owned, 10m rented

All kinds of
All sorts
All types

Home is the centre of our lives, and the kitchen is the heart of the home

The kitchen is much more than a functional triangle of food preparation

Increasingly, we live in the kitchen

New technology means more choice and better finishes at entry-level prices

A constantly sophisticating and complexing market

If today's kitchens are to meet expectations and standards, they must be installed by professionals

OUR MARKET

There are approximately 27 million homes in the UK, of which around 17 million are owned and 10 million are rented.

Howdens designs, manufactures, sources and supplies kitchens for a wide range of end-uses, including for private rentals and social housing as well as for all kinds of owner-occupied homes. In 2017, Howdens sold over 4 million kitchen cabinets, along with 900,000 kitchen appliances, 650,000 sinks and taps, over 2 million internal doors and over 2.5 million square metres of flooring.

Every home has a kitchen and this is the centre of the home. As our way of life and expectations change, so does the kitchen, which is becoming more complex and has greater functionality. As a result, the types of kitchens demanded by today's lifestyle mean that DIY is not a reasonable option for most people. The level of skill required to fit today's kitchens, due to the types of cabinets, finishes, appliances and interior work within the cabinet, is beyond many of us, and we simply don't have the time to do the work involved.

We believe that it is no longer possible to have a kitchen that both looks good and works properly without the help of skilled fitters. This is why we only sell to builders. The Howdens model is designed specifically to meet their needs. We discuss it in detail on the following pages.

Expectations about what the kitchen can do, and what we can do in it, have changed significantly in the last few years. The pace of change has accelerated with the development of the internet and social media. But while we all have access to information about new ideas and innovative designs, we have less time in which to make decisions about increasingly complex kitchens.

Recent technological advances have transformed the functionality and appearance of kitchens. The market demands, and we can offer, more functionality, more choice and more sophisticated-looking finishes at entry-level prices. It also means we have the ability to plan and sell kitchens that suit the requirements of a wide range of end-users, each of whom has a different, individual home.

The growth in complexity of the kitchen means that builders want sound advice to meet increased customer expectations. This is why we ensure that our depot staff are trained to the highest standards. As kitchens become more complex, we are increasing our investment in people with specific skills, such as designers, salespeople and managers, as well as on developing the next generation of skills through apprenticeships.

We continue to investigate the opportunities for Howdens in Europe. At the end of 2017, we had 24 depots outside the UK: twenty in France, two in Belgium, one in the Netherlands and one in Germany. We continue to learn from our operations in mainland Europe and we intend to thoroughly understand these markets before any decision is made to expand in them.

...assuring best local price, no-call-back quality and confidential trade terms...