

A factory built for the future

Glass Times editor, Luke Wood, visits the new Press Glass factory in Port Talbot, South Wales, a hugely impressive, purpose-built facility that combines a wealth of state-of-the-art machinery, sustainable operations and an intimate knowledge of glass production.

Standing inside the brand-new Press Glass factory in Port Talbot, South Wales, it's hard not to be struck by the sheer scale, precision, and ambition of the operation.

Spanning 250,000ft², and equipped with three tempering furnaces, six Lisec IGU lines, seven cutting tables, and three KSR arising machines – not to mention two GS-MR Robotics, PRO load robotic glass loading systems, streamlining workflow and boosting productivity – it is an impressive testament to modern manufacturing.

But it is also one that is underpinned by a highly knowledgeable senior management team, led by managing director, Khaled Elleboudy.

Khaled's intimate and extensive background in glass production has been instrumental in the development of the new £65 million facility and the fine tuning of its processes.

Officially commencing production in November 2024, the new factory replaces three existing regional plants that originally operated under the Glass Systems banner. After being acquired by Press Glass in 2015, the company was rebranded as Press Glass UK in April 2024 and has since undergone a major transformation – culminating in the creation of this new Port Talbot facility.

"We had the freedom to build the factory exactly how we wanted," said Khaled. "That's important because glass production in the UK is quite different from Europe. We toughen significantly more glass, UK sealed units are typically smaller, and we're also unique in our requirement for Georgian bar and leaded glass.



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"Automation is absolutely key," he continues. "From one end of the factory to the other, manual handling is kept to an absolute minimum and that means a greater consistency of high-quality product, but also less wastage and improved efficiencies.

The facility is currently producing 32,000 IGUs a week, with capacity to ramp up to 55,000 – a powerful boost to Press Glass UK's output, quality, and service levels.

Equally impressive as the machinery on the factory floor, is the seamless integration of technology throughout the business, including a cloud-based production system

that provides real-time data from the factory floor. "I can check it on my phone remotely, and it also means that Press Glass in Europe has a live overview of our output," says Khaled.

Paper has also largely been eliminated in the factory as well as in the offices, with financial planning and reporting carried out through a proprietary, web-based system, which is linked to the wider Press Glass Group in Poland.

"We've also introduced AI tools for order processing and even to summarise in-house meetings," he explains. It's a smart approach to management which mirrors the high levels of automation on the shop floor, ensuring repeatable quality at high volumes while reducing energy and resource waste.

Sustainability at the core

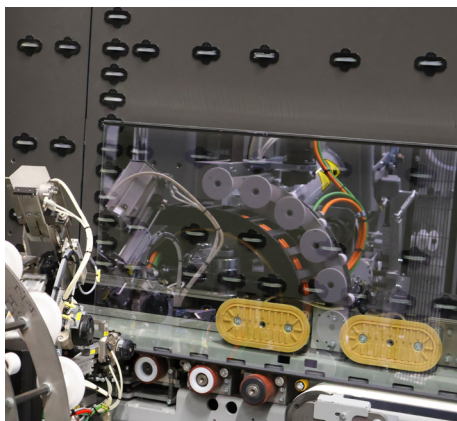
Another key element of the Port Talbot facility is sustainability. The plant is designed to operate with minimal energy consumption, meeting and exceeding stringent UK and global environmental standards.

A rooftop solar PV system powers operations directly, reducing reliance





Press Glass UK has a substantial solar PV system



One of two robotic glass loading systems

on the grid and cutting emissions. The facility also incorporates advanced waste-reduction systems and energy-efficient processes throughout the building, reinforcing Press Glass's long-term vision to become a leader in sustainable glass production.

Investment in people

The technology and machinery at Press Glass is hugely impressive, but Khaled is quick to point out another essential asset: people. Over six months, staff from the three previous plants were carefully transitioned to Port Talbot. An impressive 99% of the workforce was retained. Khaled's senior leadership team – many of whom also have considerable experience in production roles – share his hands-on mindset and passion for innovation. This continuity and experience have helped maintain service quality through the move and laid a strong foundation for future growth.

Scaling up

And growth is very much on the

agenda. Press Glass currently commands an estimated 16% of the UK IGU market, supplying 40% of its output to new build and 60% to home improvement sectors.

But Khaled has his sights set much higher. "We've already purchased a new 70,000ft² site in Peterborough," he reveals. "It's being fully fitted out and represents a £12–13 million investment. Once operational, it will increase capacity from this site by another 30%."

During our meeting, Khaled also muses over the potential for a fifth factory in the North East – one that could further strengthen national reach.

Autonomy with support

One of the more intriguing aspects of Press Glass UK's set-up is its relationship with the wider Press Glass Group. "We have full support from the Group in Europe," Khaled explained, "which underpins the investments we're making. But we also have the autonomy to develop our own processes. If we identify an opportunity for improvement or

innovation, we can act on it."

It's this dual strength – of expert insight into the UK market and global backing – that has allowed Press Glass UK to respond so effectively to market demands, technological shifts, and customer needs.

As the glass and fenestration industry continues to evolve, the Port Talbot facility stands as a bold declaration of intent from Press Glass UK. With customer demand shifting toward larger units and oversized glazing for sliding and bi-fold doors, the business is ideally positioned to capitalise.

And in addition to Press Glass UK's strategic expansion, the new factory also embodies Khaled's outstanding journey in glass – from cutting sheets on a factory floor to overseeing the most advanced IGU facility in the UK.

"I've always loved the technology," Khaled said. "But it's not just about building something impressive – it's about building something that works, that delivers, that leads the industry in quality, service, and sustainability. That's what matters."

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The Press Glass UK team poses with the first stillage of product to be produced at the site. Production commenced in November 2024

