

## Somerville Fit-Out Expands Production with Masterwood

With over 50 years of steady growth and a reputation for delivering exceptional joinery and interior fit-out projects across the UK and Europe, Belfast-based Somerville Fit-Out is a name synonymous with craftsmanship, quality, and innovation. When the company moved into its brand-new 90,000 sq ft facility this year, the goal was clear: to accelerate production capability while maintaining the precision and artistry that define its work.

To achieve this, Somerville once again turned to Masterwood GB, investing in three key new machines – the TF600 KST high-speed drilling machine, the MS320 beam saw, and the ME509 edge bander – all installed seamlessly alongside their existing Masterwood CNCs.



### A new home, a new level of capability

For decades, Somerville operated from a 17,000 sq ft facility, the place where its reputation for excellence was forged. But as demand continued to rise, the company found itself constrained by space and capacity.

“For over five years straight, we’ve been running well above our production capacity, at times upwards of 180 – 200%, consistently overproducing and still having to turn away demand. The opportunity was there; we just needed the space to grow,” explains Neil Long, Production Manager at Somerville. “Rather than doubling our workforce, we chose to scale smartly, utilise industry technologies, and strengthen our workforce organically while maintaining control of quality – and that’s where Masterwood came in.”

The move to a larger factory gave Somerville a blank canvas to reimagine its production process, and Masterwood’s advanced machinery provided the perfect solution.

#### Choosing Masterwood

Somerville’s long-standing relationship with Masterwood GB goes back more than 20 years. Their two original Winner 3.2 CNCs, both over two decades old, are still running reliably. In 2020, they added a Project 485L five-axis CNC, further strengthening their production capabilities.

“The reliability of Masterwood’s machines has been the driving factor for our continued loyalty,” says Neil. “We’ve experienced very few issues over the years compared to other machines. Support from Masterwood GB has been flawless –always responsive, always reliable.” When it came to choosing new equipment for their expanded facility, Masterwood’s reputation and service record made the decision straightforward – though Somerville still did its due diligence. “There were other machine manufacturers in our periphery, but in the end, Masterwood’s combination of reliability, service, and value was unbeatable. It made perfect sense to stick with them. As the old adage goes, if it isn’t broken, don’t fix it.”

#### Installation and training

Moving from one factory to another while upgrading machinery at the same time required precision planning. To ease the transition, Somerville and Masterwood worked closely together on a staggered installation process.

“We installed the edge bander first, then the drilling machine, then the beam saw,” says Neil. “This allowed us to learn each machine and integrate it properly into production streams before the next one arrived. Masterwood managed the process brilliantly – very accommodating and well-organised.”

#### The benefits: precision, efficiency, and scalability

With the new machines in place, Somerville has significantly increased throughput while reducing manual handling and labour time.

“With the rear-loading beam saw, for example, we’ve gone from a requirement of up to three people to handle sheet loading and cutting to just one operator managing the whole process,” Neil explains. “Currently it’s not even a full-time process, which means we’re able to up-scale capacity as time goes on.”

The TF600 KST high-speed drilling machine has also been transformative, replacing what would have been additional CNC investment with a faster, simpler solution.

“The drilling machine is up to eight times faster than a traditional 5 axes CNC and much easier to program,” Neil adds. “We were initially looking at adding another five-axis CNC, but Masterwood was able to demonstrate how this machine could achieve what we needed at a higher speed and lower cost.”

Combined with the ME509 edge bander and MS320 beam saw, Somerville’s new setup enables them to size panels, edge them, and machine them all within one integrated production area, maximising both efficiency and accuracy.

“The accuracy of these machines is incredible. In our line of work, even a millimetre out can have serious consequences. These machines eliminate that risk entirely.”

### **A trusted partnership**

“Masterwood GB have provided us with a fantastic service for 20 years,” says Neil, “and that doesn’t seem to be changing with this latest investment. It’s always been the case that we can call on Chris Senior at any time and get a swift resolution to any query or issue. Recently, we’ve been dealing more with Young Kris, who’s every bit as accommodating, knowledgeable and helpful as his old man.

“As a bonus, Masterwood GB now have local labour pool here in Northern Ireland who can come out and service the machines and attend any breakdowns we encounter. Masterwood understands that downtime in our industry is costly, and they ultimately do everything they can to keep your production flowing.”

### **Looking ahead**

This investment is part of a wider strategy for sustainable growth, one that balances technology with people.

“We’ve got a clear 24-month plan for scaling our business. These machines allow us to grow methodically, without compromising on quality or overextending our resources. Masterwood’s technology gives us the confidence to take on more work and know that we can deliver it efficiently.”

Neil Long concludes, “Loyalty and integrity are at the heart of how we operate, and we always want to treat our supply chain in the same manner. Stephen Somerville always envisioned walking into a workshop filled with effective and efficient Masterwood machinery. We’ve certainly achieved that now!

“Ultimately, as long the relationship with Masterwood GB stays as open and honest as it is now, there will be no need to go elsewhere.”

For more information or a demonstration of Masterwood’s machinery and software, contact Masterwood on 01293 402700 or email [office@masterwoodgb.co.uk](mailto:office@masterwoodgb.co.uk)

For more information about Somerville Fit-Out, visit [www.somervilles.co.uk](http://www.somervilles.co.uk)

