

Eastern Daily Press Norfolk



Out of office

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Mark Alden

Director of Morton Windows and Conservatories at Norwich, Dereham and Wymondham.

What's been your career path?

I left school early as I had a job opportunity, so I had to pay to take my exams. I trained as a mechanic at Norwich City College and went on to own Thorpe End Service Station. We started Morton Windows in 1990 from our garage at Morton-on-the-Hill (hence the name) and the business has evolved to where we are today. Uniquely our team now includes a number of my classmates from my school days.

In the office, biggest challenges?

1 Maintaining our innovative reputation is a big part of my role. Sourcing and implementing new products and methods of construction which ensure that Morton remains an industry leader.

2 To ensure we have the right person in the right positions. People have such diverse qualities that it is important that these are recognised and encouraged to benefit the business.

3 I have learned that "what gets monitored gets done", so that is my pet phrase and my pet hate is paperwork. I try to keep a paperless office as far as possible; piles of paper make me uncomfortable. I ensure we all work to lists and prioritise with clean desks – a clean desk means you're functioning efficiently and keeping up with the workload.

Out of office, three favourite pastimes?

Can I have four? Shooting is my number one leisure activity, be it clay pigeon shooting in the summer months or game shooting in the season. I find the challenges stimulating and rewarding, it's is my release from work pressures, Technology today, allows me the freedom to enjoy my sport while keeping my finger on the pulse at work.

I like to support my wife Sarah when she competes her horse Douglas at British Dressage competitions around the country, and I am very proud of my twin boys Thomas and James, now 22, so I take great pleasure in following their career paths.

We have two German shorthaired pointers, Marmite and Isaac. I intend to work Isaac as a gun dog. He comes to work with me every day and is part of the office.

Any clubs – professional organisations or leisure?

The Clay Pigeon Shooting Association, Norfolk Masons and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation.

First record – and what are you listening to today?

David Bowie; I think I thought he was different. Now I am listening to London Grammar. I have quite a diverse music taste from Michael Jackson to Garth Brooks.

First car – and what do you drive now?

Cars have always been a passion in my life, as my friends will know, and I seem to have passed this on to my boys - it's an interest that we can enjoy together. My first car was a Ford Cortina MK4 in gold and I now drive a Discovery Four Commercial. If you ask me next week I will probably have changed my car again!

What's your exercise of choice?

Walking . . . our two dogs need a lot of exercise. I enjoy walking them and it's a great time to clear my head and enjoy the Norfolk countryside.

Where is your dream holiday?

When I was a mechanic some 30 years ago I had a calendar of Mauritius on my workshop wall, depicting beautiful beaches, palm trees and blue skies. That would be my dream holiday - it's on my "bucket list". We have family in west USA and have spent Christmas in a log cabin in Yellowstone National Park. We even went out and chopped down our own Christmas tree, just like in the movies.

Favourite place in Norfolk?

The family has a tiny bungalow in the dunes at Sea Palling and I spent my childhood exploring the dunes, digging holes and just adventuring. I still love the sounds and smell of the sea. Our favourite restaurant is The Mulberry Tree in Attleborough, where we love to go on special occasions.

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