

## HOULDEN REFLECTS ON HOW 2025 WAS FOR ITS MEMBERS AND SUPPLIERS - RETAIL JEWELLER INTERVIEW, DECEMBER 2025

**Retail Jeweller recently spoke to Denise, Kat & India, to see how 2025 was for our Members and Supplier Partners.**

**What were the biggest challenges faced by your members this year, and how did they work to overcome them?**

*Denise McLaughlin, chief operations officer:* “2025 was a year that required clarity and confidence. While market pressures remained, our buying exhibitions saw record post-Covid spending, reflecting members’ willingness to invest when the proposition aligned with long-term value.

Across the membership, decisions were guided by quality, relevance and trusted supplier partnerships, supported by the expertise and resilience that define Houlden members.”

**How did fluctuations in gold, platinum and diamond prices influence buying decisions and stock management throughout 2025 for your members?**

*India Macdonald, supply chain manager:* “Price fluctuations across metals and diamonds encouraged an increasingly conscious and measured approach to buying. Members were mindful of value, ensuring purchasing decisions were aligned with both market conditions and the expectations of their customer base.”



*Denise*



*Kat*



*India*

## **Which trends had the greatest impact on consumer purchasing behaviour this year?**

*Kat Campbell, head of marketing and communications:* “One of the standout trends in 2025 was the continued strength of yellow gold, which moved beyond its traditional summer appeal to become a year-round statement. Bold yellow gold designs, particularly through autumn and winter, reflected a growing appetite for confident, expressive pieces. Among younger consumers, especially Gen Z, our supply chain reported a shift away from traditional engagement ring conventions, favouring a more ‘cool-girl’ aesthetic – bezel-set stones, mixed gems, chunkier metals and individuality.”

## **How is the trade responding to ongoing expectations around responsible sourcing and supply-chain traceability?**

*India Macdonald, supply chain manager:* “Responsible sourcing is now an embedded expectation. Many Houlden suppliers are making it easier for retailers to access traceability information, including enhanced certification and QR-based tracking that follows a diamond’s journey. Conversations around SMO gold are gaining momentum, and we expect this trend to grow in 2026 as more of our supply base adopts it. Transparency and accountability continue to shape both purchasing decisions and industry standards.”

## **Looking ahead, how optimistic are you about business prospects for 2026?**

*Denise McLaughlin, chief operations officer:* “There is a sense of measured optimism as our members look ahead. Jewellery remains a resilient category, underpinned by emotion, craftsmanship and longevity. With clear focus and strong foundations, our network of independent jewellers is well positioned to navigate the year ahead, supported by informed decision-making and trusted relationships.”

## **In what key ways will you be supporting your members as they head into the new year?**

*Kat Campbell, head of marketing and communications:* “Houlden is built on a culture of shared trust, openness and collaboration. As we move into 2026, we will continue to create opportunities for our members to network, share knowledge and discuss challenges openly, across all aspects of their businesses. This transparency allows ideas, opportunities and successes to be shared and implemented across the wider membership, strengthening both individual businesses and the group as a whole. Alongside strategic buying and supplier partnerships, it is this sense of community and mutual support that remains central to Houlden’s value.”