

A modern outdoor patio area featuring a bright yellow retractable awning extending from a white building. Underneath the awning, there is a dining table with four chairs and a lounge area with a sofa and coffee table. The patio is set on a wooden deck with a low wooden border, surrounded by greenery and a clear blue sky.

SAMSON AWNINGS

# 12 STEPS TO YOUR PERFECT AWNING

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# YOUR PERFECT AWNING



Investing in a new retractable awning for your home and garden is often part of a greater overall investment in enjoying more of your outdoor space for living, entertaining and simply relaxing.



We are all now very aware of the benefits of spending far more time outdoors including, your health and wellbeing, and although we are constantly told now the climate is warming up across the whole world, we still live in the UK and must deal with our very changeable and often unpredictable weather systems. If we are not being totally baked on those hot sunny days that appear out of nowhere, we are battling with rainfall during months when it should really be sunny!

Taking control and keeping your options open by using systems which protect you from our weather means investing in a high quality retractable awning system which is designed and built to deal with the UK weather.

Thousands of awnings are sold each year and what is best for you and your expectations, whether it is a smaller size awning to cover a two person table, or a much larger system for entertaining many people will depend on you knowing what to look out for in an awning specification.



# INVEST IN HIGH QUALITY

*'The quality remains long after the price has been forgotten'*

If you are wanting to invest in a retractable awning for your home or business, then you need to be sure you are experiencing the very best in design technology, materials and the latest motor drives and control technology.

An awning needs to be strong and durable for use in the UK climate, especially the larger they are.

They need to withstand strong sunshine and heat as well as cold, wet and freezing temperatures, and all the issues this brings to outdoor products around your home.

It is fast becoming common place now to control your electric blinds and awnings through well-established home automation apps on your smartphone, tablet and PC.

The right apps also enable you to include lights, cameras and many other safety and security products.

A high quality awning will provide many years of use, where a cheap, off-the-shelf awning will not withstand much more than a light wind, and if used a lot in anything more than just calm sunny weather, will soon deteriorate, fail, and need replacing.



# CHOICE OF AWNINGS

The choice is yours -  
Make the right one!

Most high quality retractable awnings sold in the UK are manufactured in Germany or Holland, Northern European countries with weather patterns very much like our own in the UK.

The many years of development from these manufacturers have produced awnings which are built to withstand not only intense sunshine, but also the rainier and windier conditions we unfortunately have to endure here in our country. They are suitable for both domestic and commercial use.

“Ensure you make the correct, informed choice, first time.”

If you want to invest in an awning which is not only bespoke in size, colour and specification then you surely also want something which can be used as often as possible to provide the perfect outdoor living experience?

If possible see and try for yourself using one of the many high-quality awnings available in the UK. Go to a showroom and see for yourself the massive differences between a £300 awning and a £3,000 awning of the same size.

# MODELS AND SIZES

There is an Awning for Every Application and Requirement

Your perfect choice of awning depends on you, your property, and your requirements.

There are over 40 different high quality retractable awning models of varying shapes and sizes, suitable for different buildings, fixing points, applications or specific sizes.

Larger awnings, up to 14 metres wide and a maximum projection of 4 metres, with almost any size in-between, provide cover for very large outdoor areas and will retract away when not in use, with the fabric cover protected by the aluminium housing.

Awnings specifically for fixing underneath balconies

Awnings for flat vertical walls

Awnings for standing alone from a building when fixing is impossible

Awnings providing drop down front shading

Awnings with LED lighting built in, and so on...

If it is physically possible to provide shading using a self-supporting retractable fabric awning, then there is likely to be a model and size and fixing solution to suit available.



# FEATURES OF QUALITY

## Every Component Makes a Difference

What makes a good high-quality awning?

It is like a lot of mechanical products which involve many moving parts, different materials and large sections - the sum of the parts used in manufacturing needs to be greater than the individual components by using only the highest quality parts in the first place, which all work harmoniously together.

The brackets fixing to the wall, the arm sections, the arm joining sections, the internal springing or motor drives, the fabric cover, and so on. They should always have the highest possible quality fabric covers for maximum resistance to weather, but also to offer the very brightest, stunning patterns and colours.

Generally, in the UK there is a choice of over 500 fabrics, modern, traditional, contemporary and unique, when looking at the higher quality brand awnings available. The motor drives used offer hard wired control, radio control and wi-fi control as options to integrate with most home automation systems.

The aluminium cassettes, the forged aluminium knuckle joints in the arms and the various multi chain or Kevlar belt systems used offer a smooth, quiet operation and many years of trouble free operation.

A good choice of finished colours for the framework and cassette are another sign of quality, with some awnings available with a textured and even metallic finish paintwork, offering a tougher finish for a longer lasting and more resistant surface on the exterior.







# PRICING

## The Prices Should Not be a Mystery

Surely when prices for almost anything are available on the internet with just a quick search, should this not be the case with a bespoke higher quality awning?

Although with a bespoke awning there are often many options which may need some explanation by an expert, you should be able to get a rough guide price on any awning, regardless of size.

When looking for a specialist supplier always be cautious of any company that cannot give you at least an idea of the price as what they are usually trying to do is get a sales person into your home to work their charm, convince you their

products are the best in the world and get your commitment on a purchase before leaving.

Their price is pitched to you after a very long build up on the unique features and benefits which may well be the same as others available, so remain aware of this.

Generally, a higher quality awning price will start from around £2,000 - £3,000 upwards and no less. Plenty of awnings are available below £1,000 but they will be in set sizes, with low quality components and fabrics, and limited colours.

# SUN PROTECTION

## Our Summers are Getting Hotter...

Most retractable awnings are for some form of sun and heat protection, with the hottest midday sunshine in the summer or the lower sun in the Autumn months.

The high-quality fabrics used in certain awnings will provide excellent UV protection with graded protection depending on the choice of fabric, usually darker of course offering more protection.

With our summers getting hotter each year, sun and UV protection is vital for you, your family, and your friends, whilst relaxing or enjoying the health benefits of being outdoors at the same time.

With adjustable pitch in the awning itself, when installing and adjustable projection you can ensure the best protection throughout the daytime as the sun moves across the sky.



Many newer models of awning now have the option of a fully automatic drop-down front valance to provide full protection from the lower sun, particularly if your garden faces West or South West.

These valances will drop down to a maximum of 2100mm from the front profile of the awning, and all can be done at the simple push of a button from a handset, wall control or smartphone app.

You can also have other retractable products such as the side mounted pull out blind to help provide protection from low sun and wind.

# RAIN PROTECTION

## Most Awnings Cannot be Used in the Rain

Using a retractable fabric awning for rain protection does require a little more care and attention in the specification and positioning.

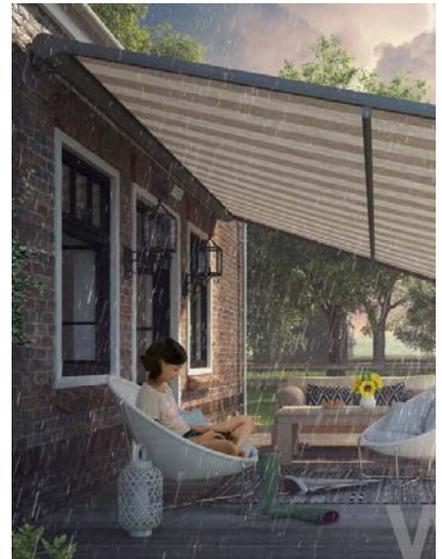
The awning cover must be at least 15 degrees in the pitch to allow rainwater to drain off fast enough and never cause a problem with water 'pooling', which ultimately would damage the cover and the awning mechanism.

Various models are available which are stronger in their overall construction, providing a tauter fabric cover to withstand higher wind speeds and the rainfall too.

We are frequently asked if waterproof fabrics are available and yes, they are, however as the rain is not supposed to sit on the fabric then the standard polyester and acrylic fabrics are generally fine for domestic use, and they are all water resistant as standard.

Most domestic awnings will be used infrequently in the rain and probably only in the summer and autumn months as well.

For our commercial customers we know the sizes are generally a lot bigger and the use is far more frequent, and we have solutions for these applications.



# FABRICS

## The Fabric Cover makes the Statement and Mood, Choose Carefully.

There are over 500 different fabrics across three different ranges in either polyester or acrylic, offering different light transmission and colours suitable for total blackout, through to bright white to simply diffuse the sunlight.

Plain, striped, designer, 3D designs and many others offer you the ultimate selection.

A fabric choice should depend on whether you like the sunlight or not and what kind of ambience you wish to create underneath the awning cover.

For South and West facing gardens, you need something with mid to darker ends of the spectrum shades, and for North and East facing a lighter shade, all based of course on controlling the sunlight and UV.

If you love the bright lights and sunshine, then go for the lighter colours every time.

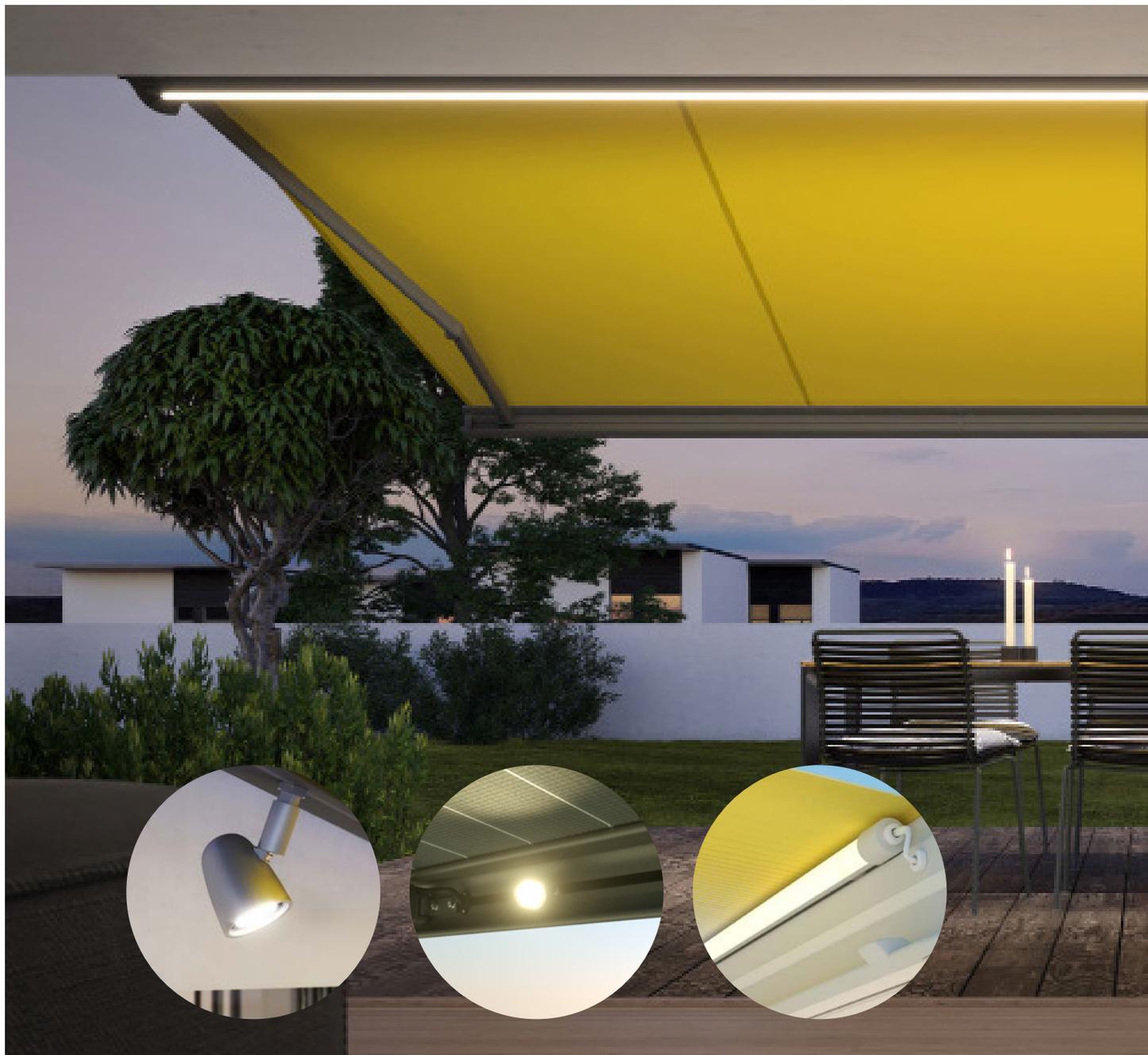
The fabrics used on awnings should be manufactured to the very highest standards, with Markilux for example having one of the largest weaving mills in Europe, manufacturing genuine high-quality fabrics with modern processes and technology, including eco-friendly processes.

Rest assured any of the fabrics on higher quality awnings will be of the highest standards and resistance to weathering, simply needing some sensible and easy cleaning if they do get dirty from bird droppings, tree residue or other airborne contaminants.

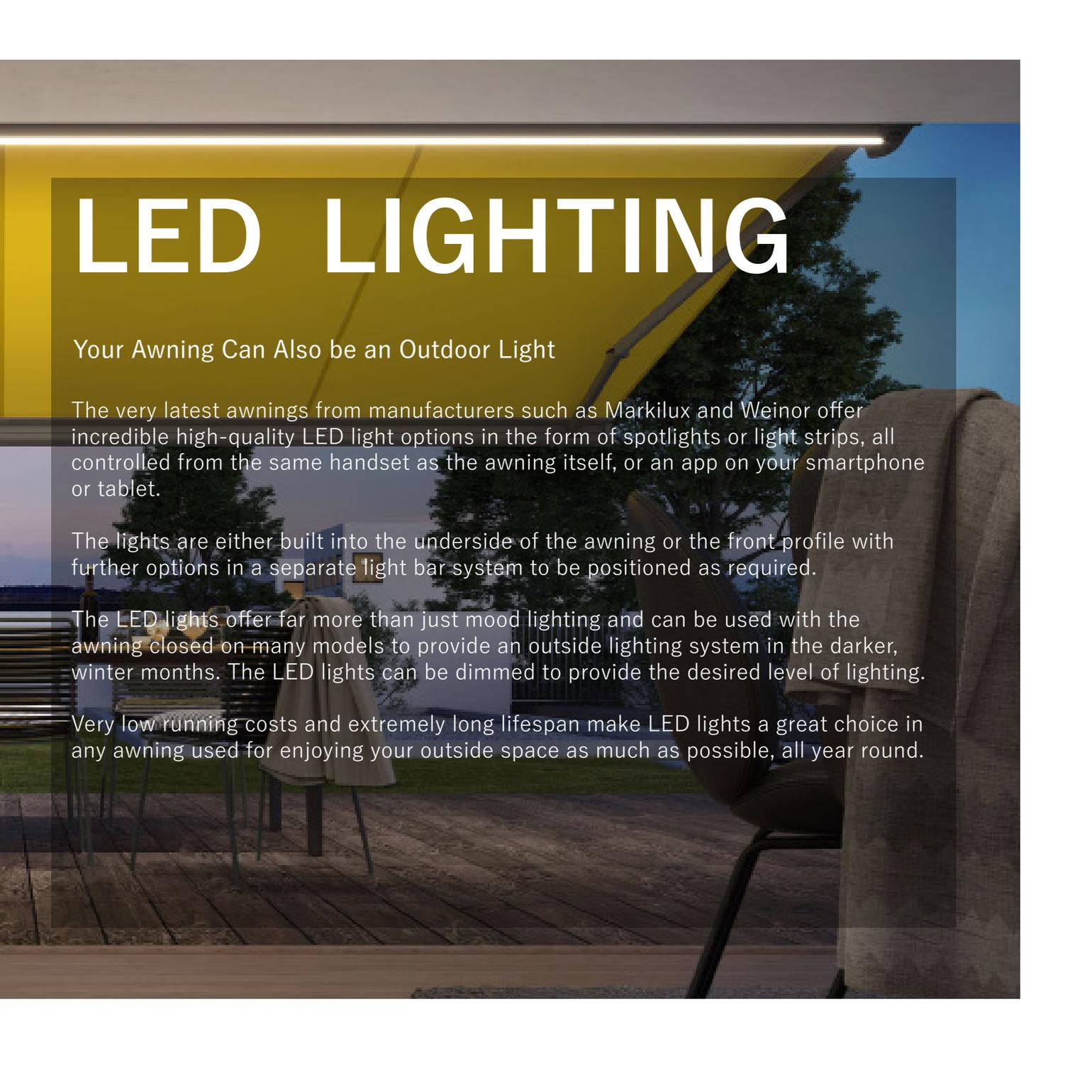
All the fabrics are water resistant and you can choose 100% waterproof fabrics as well, but with more limited colour choices for where high usage in rain will be required, the simple fact is you should have your awning installed to ensure rainwater is directed off the cover as fast as possible so waterproof materials should not be required in most cases.

Fire retardant materials are also available in limited choices for some commercial applications, where this is now a sensitive subject, being technically part of the outside cladding on a building or apartment block, this can be an important option.





# LED LIGHTING



## Your Awning Can Also be an Outdoor Light

The very latest awnings from manufacturers such as Markilux and Weinor offer incredible high-quality LED light options in the form of spotlights or light strips, all controlled from the same handset as the awning itself, or an app on your smartphone or tablet.

The lights are either built into the underside of the awning or the front profile with further options in a separate light bar system to be positioned as required.

The LED lights offer far more than just mood lighting and can be used with the awning closed on many models to provide an outside lighting system in the darker, winter months. The LED lights can be dimmed to provide the desired level of lighting.

Very low running costs and extremely long lifespan make LED lights a great choice in any awning used for enjoying your outside space as much as possible, all year round.

# FIXING BRACKETS

## Standard or Purpose Made Brackets for every type of Building.

Most awnings are fixed to the vertical face of a building, but it is also possible to fix from above in the case of a balcony, and very rarely from underneath when fixing on top of a roof, for example.

Standard brackets will be fixed in the predetermined positions for the model of awning chosen, all depending on the type of construction full cassette, open awning and so on...

When the brackets clash with a position which has no fixing ability, over a window for example then various brackets can be fabricated to extend the position of the fixing points and ensure the weight of the awning is taken on suitable structural materials.

A very common issue is trying to fix an awning to a single storey building where there is not sufficient height to have the awning with a pitch on the cover in case of rainfall.

The awning position can be raised using 'spreader brackets' or 'bungalow brackets' as they are sometimes called, which uses multiple fixings lower down into the wall of the building.

This offers a fixing plate higher up to give the awning cassette and mechanism a suitable height for a sensible extension without compromising a pitch on the cover or intercepting the space beneath the awning.

Brackets are available to cover almost any obstacle or height issue on a building as well as offering standalone framework systems where it simply is not possible to fix to the building where shading is required.

Brackets are manufactured from mild steel, stainless steel or aluminium as required with a colour to match the awning or to complement the buildings colour scheme.

The brackets are probably the most important part of the overall awning installation, especially when more and more super lightweight building materials are being used which may tick the eco-friendly, insulation for a property boxes, but don't have sufficient strength to even hang a picture on inside the house.



# OPERATION

## Total Control and Safety

How do you imagine opening and closing your new awning?

Up to certain sizes there are no issues in using a manual winding system, but when the awning gets larger it is strongly recommended to use an electric drive system. Some awnings are only electric and of course if you want the LED lighting built-in, then it would not make sense to have manual operation and then electric lights in the awning itself.

A manual awning will require management in wind and rain and common sense use at all times. An electric powered awning should always have a motion sensor or wind speed sensor to retract the awning when the wind causes too much movement in the awning. It will automatically retract to prevent any damage occurring.

Any LED lights, electric drop-down valances and associated items can all be controlled through one multi-channel transmitter for ease of use.

Most customers will be quite happy with the hand held or wall mounted radio transmitter system to open and close the awning and other items, but more commonly now you can specify far more diverse control with systems like the Somfy Home Automation concept.

The basic set up would allow you to control your awning from a smartphone or tablet from anywhere in the world, and would put you on the first steps towards additional products for your home all controlled from a central application. This isn't expensive and offers convenience, security and total control for your home or business.

Existing lights, electric blinds, electric garage doors, gates and other items can all be incorporated into the one place and you can then add indoor and outdoor cameras, alarms, sensors, and so on, and begin a whole different level of control for your home.

Ask for further details on the Somfy systems or visit [www.somfy.co.uk](http://www.somfy.co.uk)



# SAFETY

Safety is paramount with awnings, and the bigger the awning the more important the safety.

Most electric awnings should come with either a wind sensor or a built-in motion sensor and this provides complete peace of mind; when the weather suddenly changes, the awning will always retract when the wind speed causes too much movement in the awning cover preventing damage to the fabric cover, the mechanics and potential structural damage with excessive forces on the building attachments.

An awning should never be used in heavy rainfall or if there is any chance of thunderstorms or strong winds.

If there is a need for protection in windier and rainy conditions, then you should be looking at a retractable 'pergola' system or a retractable roof system with a tougher fabric sliding in side channels.

# SHOWROOM



## Address

6-8 Meadow Close, Ise Valley Industrial  
Estate, Wellingborough, NN8 4BH

## Online

[www.samsonawnings.co.uk](http://www.samsonawnings.co.uk)

[enquiries@samsonawnings.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@samsonawnings.co.uk)

Sales and Customer Service

01933 44 88 44

