

John Horsfall advances inflight sleep with natural fibers and cooling tech

This is a special feature from the [April 2026 WTCE Hamburg issue](#) of *PAX International* on [page 93](#).



Oliver Platts, Commercial Director, John Horsfall

As airlines continue to refine the onboard passenger experience, comfort items such as bedding are becoming an increasingly important area of innovation. Once viewed primarily as functional necessities, blankets, pillows and sleepwear are now being reimaged through new materials, textile technologies and design approaches that support both passenger well-being and operational efficiency.

One area gaining renewed attention is wool. U.K. textile specialist [John Horsfall](#) is helping reintroduce wool-based bedding solutions that leverage the fiber's natural performance properties.

"As airlines place greater emphasis on passenger well-being and sleep quality, natural fibers such as wool offer a compelling solution," says Oliver Platts, Commercial Director at John Horsfall. "Wool is 1

naturally temperature regulating, breathable and antimicrobial, which makes it particularly well suited to the unique conditions of an aircraft cabin.”



Alongside natural fibers, advanced textile technologies aim to enhance sleep quality at altitude

As a natural, renewable and biodegradable fiber, wool also aligns with airlines’ growing focus on more sustainable onboard products. The material also reflects the heritage of the U.K. textile sector, where wool has long played a central role in fabric innovation.

Alongside natural fibers, advanced textile technologies are also aiming to enhance sleep quality at altitude. Phase change materials (PCMs) are being incorporated into bedding and pillows to absorb, store and release heat as body temperature fluctuates during sleep. Cooling textiles and collagen-infused fabrics are also emerging, designed to improve skin comfort during long-haul journeys, says Platts.

Innovation is extending to onboard sleepwear as well, Platts shares. Airline sleepsuits made from natural materials prioritize breathability, softness and sustainability, offering a premium alternative to traditional synthetic options.

Textile construction techniques are evolving, too, he notes. Knitted blankets combined with innovative pattern techniques can improve softness, durability and thermal performance while reducing weight—an important operational consideration for airlines.

At this year's show, John Horsfall is showcasing these and other textile innovations at booth 1F58.