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Housebuilder & Developer

March 2016

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**Industry and government
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David Mote,
Housebuilder
& Developer
news editor

Editor's comment

Last month I mentioned an 'elephant in the room' with the government supporting the creation of thousands of starter homes but apparently forgetting that we also need appropriate housing for the ageing population that will see the over-55 age group increase by 20 per cent in the next 20 years. However, anyone who has been in housing for as long as I have knows that there is actually a herd of elephants in the room. One of these large grey crinkly critters, which the government did appear to do something about, was the essential survival of smaller homebuilders.

Back in January, launching the Direct Commissioning scheme, David Cameron said: "Currently the top eight house builders provide 50 per cent of new homes. The direct commissioning approach will support smaller builders and new entrants who are ready to build but lack the resources and access to land".

We are still waiting to see how this scheme is actually supporting small homebuilders. Spacehus, as you will read, has already experienced issues with the HCA. I guess some might say it is still early days but I would welcome stories from other homebuilders that are trying to break into the world of Direct Commissioning or are finding it tough to finance and plan their projects.

HOUSING STATISTICS

Industry and government figures see an increase in starts, completions and planning permissions

Home Builders Federation (HBF) and Glenigan figures have shown that new home planning permissions in England have reached their highest level since 2008.

These figures are supported by government statistics that also show that both starts and completions of private sector homes were up in 2015, by 8 per cent and 20 per cent respectively.

The HBF/Glenigan Housing Pipeline report finds that planning permission was granted for 59,875 homes in England during the third quarter of 2015, up 12 per cent. The report shows that 242,819 permissions were granted in the months to October, the highest moving annual total since early 2008.

The government statistics reveal that in total 143,560 new build homes were started in 2015, up 6 per cent on last year. Of these 119,210 were private sector (up 8 per cent), 22,680 housing association (down 1 per cent) and 1,670 local authority (down 36 per cent). Quarterly figures show that there were 31,100 private sector starts in the final three months of the year, 24 per cent up on last year.

Talking about the new statistics HBF executive chairman, Stewart Baseley said: "The housebuilding industry has delivered an unprecedented increase in build rates over the past two years.

"The industry's ability to increase output still further will largely be dictated by the rate at which planning permissions are granted. Whilst the overall increase in outline permissions is welcome, most of these still have to navigate the complexities of the planning system before they can be built. It is imperative we speed up the time it takes for applications to be processed to the point that builders can actually build if we are to deliver further increases in housing supply.

"Introducing competition into the planning process and finding a way to incentivise local authorities to deal with applications more quickly would be a welcome step in the right direction.

Communities secretary Greg Clark also explained: "The figures show how our reforms to the planning system are delivering the permissions needed and schemes like Help to Buy have given builders the confidence to invest and build, with starts and completions now at their highest since 2008".

FAST TRACK PLANNING



Brandon Lewis

Councils to compete to process planning applications

Councils will compete to process planning applications and be able to offer fast track application services under new government proposals.

In a consultation to encourage competition and offer fast track application services the government is proposing a 'shake up' to the planning process.

Under the proposals, designed to incentivise councils to improve and speed up their planning services, applicants will be given the choice of submitting their plans either to the local council, a competing council or a government-approved organisation which would process applications up until 'the decision point'.

The proposals would also allow councils to offer fast track application services 'like those

available for getting a passport'. This speedy service would be available through competition pilots or possibly devolution deals.

Ministers want the pilots to tackle the lack of incentive for councils to improve and speed up their planning service leading to 'drawn-out' applications and local frustration for both housebuilders and individual applicants.

The proposals are expected to boost housebuilding and speed up the planning application process.

To ensure decisions are taken locally and maintain the democratic link between local people and decision makers local authorities would still decide on planning applications.

Planning Minister Brandon Lewis said: "Many councils are already working hard to improve the services they offer their residents, and across the country people's satisfaction levels remain high.

"Now we want to go further by setting out these ambitious proposals to link any future increases in application fees to councils' performance, and testing more competition

including through offering dedicated fast track application services."

Responding to the announcement, Deputy Chairman at the Home Builders Federation, Peter Andrew said: "It still takes new home applications too long to negotiate the complexities of the planning system and as a result there are thousands of new homes 'stuck' awaiting final approval. Whilst build rates have risen significantly over the past two years, if we are to deliver further increases it is imperative we find a way of speeding up the process of approving sites for development.

"Introducing competition and fast tracking applications has the potential to make the system more competitive and efficient for both councils and developers and get building underway on more sites, more quickly. Speeding up and reducing the cost of the applications process will in particular assist SME developers, more of whom we desperately need to get building if we are to continue to increase output overall."

INCREASED BUILD NUMBERS

Help to Buy: equity loan increases new home build numbers

New government research has found that 43 per cent of new homes built under the 'Help to Buy: equity loan scheme' since its launch in 2013, would have not been built without the introduction of the scheme.

A recently published report found that 82 per cent of buyers using the 'Help to Buy: equity loan' would not have been able to purchase their property without the scheme helping them meet their home ownership aspirations.

More than 130,000 people have now been able to become homeowners since the scheme's launch.

The report found no evidence that the scheme had driven up house prices but did find that housebuilders now have an increased confidence in the housing market, more lenders have entered the market and people are now more able to move into larger homes.

This is on top of news that a quarter of a million first-time buyers have opened a Help to Buy: ISA since its launch on 1 December 2015. This figure is equivalent to one person opening an account every 30 seconds, or over 3,000 a day.

Housing Minister, Brandon Lewis explained:

"Anyone who works hard and aspires to own their own home should have the opportunity to do so and this report shows how the government's Help to Buy scheme continues to turn those dreams into a reality.

"We've got the country building again and seen the number of new homes increase by 25 per cent in the last year alone with thousands of people across the country helped by the scheme."



BRANDON LEWIS

Brandon Lewis: We are turning around the housing market

Figures have shown the success of government initiatives to give hard-working families across the country the chance to realise their ambition of home ownership.

New figures show that more than a decade-long decline, starting in 2003, in the number of people owning their home has been turned around with more than 14 million owner occupiers in the country last year.

The English Housing Survey also shows that:

- Among social housing tenants who want to achieve their dream of home ownership, more than half of local authority tenants and a third of housing association tenants expect to buy their current home
- An increase in better homes with the number of properties failing to meet the government's Decent Homes Standard continuing to fall and down by 3.1 million in 2006

Figures released earlier this week show that lending for first-time buyers is at its highest since 2007, while first-time buyers mortgages are up 11 per cent year-on-year.

Housing Minister Brandon Lewis said: "In 2010 there was a housing market where buyers couldn't buy, builders couldn't build and lenders couldn't lend.

"Our efforts are turning that around with more than 270,000 families helped into home-ownership through government-backed schemes

since 2010, while the number of new homes is up 25 per cent over the last year.

"And we've set out the boldest ambition for housing in a generation, doubling the budget so we can help a million more people into home-ownership, while delivering a bigger, and better private rental sector."

The figures show that out of the 22.5 million households in England in 2014 to 2015, the number of people owning their own home in the past year has remained static – the first time this has happened since 2003.

It also provides evidence that the government's decision to reinvigorate and extend its flagship Right to Buy scheme has boosted the aspiration of social housing tenants with those expecting to buy their current home rising from 35 per cent in 2010-11 to 42 per cent in 2014-15.

More than 46,000 people have taken up the chance to buy their home through the reinvigorated scheme since 2012 with councils delivering replacement properties on a one to one basis ahead of schedule.

The government recently reached an historic voluntary deal with the National Housing Federation to extend the Right to Buy to 1.3 million housing association tenants. For every home sold at least one additional home will be built.

And they also recently announced the intention that two additional affordable homes will be

delivered to replace each high value vacant local authority home sold in London.

With housebuilding at the heart of their long-term economic plan, the government has committed more than £20 billion over the next five years to help meet its ambition to deliver one million new homes.

This includes £8 billion to deliver 400,000 affordable homes, including 200,000 Starter Homes offered with at least a 20 per cent discount to young first-time buyers and 100,000 affordable homes for rent.

As part of its Housing and Planning Bill, the government has also outlined an ambitious package of proposals to ensure that England's nine million private tenants receive the quality housing and protections they deserve.

Measures include:

- A database of rogue landlords and property agents convicted of certain offences
- Banning orders for the most serious and prolific offenders
- Introduction of civil penalties of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution
- Extension of Rent Repayment Orders to cover illegal eviction, breach of a banning order or failure to comply with a statutory notice
- Stringent fit and proper person test for landlords of licensable properties such as houses in multiple occupation

LONDON PUBLIC LAND REGISTER

City Hall produces first register of public land in London

The first ever comprehensive register of public land in London, revealing 40,000 sites across the capital with the capacity to deliver a minimum of 130,000 homes, has been published by the London Land Commission.

The Commission, chaired by the Mayor of London Boris Johnson and Housing and Planning Minister Brandon Lewis, appointed Savills in July last year to compile the preliminary stages of a so-called 'Domesday Book' of all brownfield land owned by public bodies in London.

The register is now available in the form of an interactive map on City Hall's website, detailing the locations of land owned by the Mayor of London, government departments, London boroughs, Transport for London and the NHS. There are sites across every London borough, ranging from tiny parcels of land capable of

building a small number of homes to larger sites, which could accommodate hundreds of new homes for Londoners. City Hall has already identified there could be a minimum of 130,000 homes built for Londoners on public sites potentially surplus land, a volume of homes which will continue to grow. The register also includes details of the existing use of each site, including whether they are office, residential, transport or industrial.

It is the first time such a wide-ranging set of data has been compiled for the capital and will now be analysed by City Hall to further unlock and accelerate the release of surplus land for much-needed housing.

The Commission is working with the land owners on the register to determine availability and to encourage the marketing of public land to obtain the best possible housing development for

Londoners, rather than selling with no obligations. It will also identify areas to group together potential plots of surplus land to yield a more significant number of homes and to create better regeneration sites across London.

It builds upon work already started by the Mayor in disposing of his own land holdings for development. He has completed a manifesto pledge in releasing all developable land in his ownership and City Hall will look at opportunities to purchase land and regenerate further sites across the capital.

Boris Johnson MP, said: "There is an urgent need in London for more homes for our ever growing population and for far too long, land owned by public bodies has lain dormant or sold off with no benefit to the capital. That simply must not be allowed to happen."

LYONS' HOUSING COMMISSION REVIEW

Lyons' Housing Review sets out five key actions

The latest Lyons' Housing Review independent report has set out five key actions to deliver the sustained increase in house building needed to tackle the nation's housing challenges.

The Lyons Housing Commission, which is an independent group of 12 housing experts chaired by Sir Michael Lyons, was first convened in 2013 to advise on how a future government might bring about a sustainable increase in house building in England, and published its findings in 2014.

In December 2015, responding to the government's ambitious target of creating one million new homes by 2020, the members of the Commission decided to reconvene on a wholly independent basis to consider whether current policy initiatives were enough to reach that target and, if not, what other measures could be considered.

A key conclusion of the report is that, while it is right that more can and should be done to help more people own their own home, there will remain people for whom home ownership is not

an option or the preferred choice. There is a drastic need for more subsidised affordable homes alongside additional homes for private rent. More needs to be done to get more organisations both public and private to build, commission and invest in housing.

The report goes on to welcome the priority government has given to housing and its commitment to delivering a million homes over the course of the current Parliament. It assesses whether current policy initiatives will be sufficient to achieve that target and makes recommendations for the development of a more comprehensive strategy to effectively tackle the housing crisis.

Public concern about housing is at the highest for 40 years. The original Lyon's Review made it clear that a 'step change' in housebuilding is 'critical to the health of the national economy and the quality of life and life chances of current and future generations'.

Chair of the Commission, Sir Michael Lyons said: "The government's bold commitment to build 1 million homes by 2020 is to be welcomed but it won't be achieved by focusing solely on homes for sale. It's like leading an orchestra made up only of the strings section.

"You cannot lead a housing crusade unless you are willing to draw in the contribution of all your allies: the volume builders really committed to growth; the small builders who have stopped building homes; the investors who want to build high quality homes to rent; the local authorities struggling to meet housing need and with the political will to do more and the housing associations now spending their time worrying about lost rent income rather than planning to build more."

The Commission's five key recommendations to government are:

- Broaden the housing strategy beyond the focus on home ownership to increase supply of both market and affordable homes for rent to secure sustainable growth in housing supply and lasting capacity in the housebuilding supply chain
- Take a more ambitious approach to direct commissioning to deliver high quality and increase output and capacity through capturing land value to fund infrastructure, attracting a more diverse range of partners into housebuilding and building a mix of homes for sale and rent.
- Work more closely with the industry in developing the model for starter homes to ensure an overall increase in homes and that the public subsidy of these homes exists in perpetuity to benefit future generations of house buyers and does not result in a reduction of affordable homes to rent
- Clearly acknowledge the importance of the contribution that local authorities and housing associations have to make to tackling the housing supply crisis; ensure local authorities have the flexibilities and support needed to promote, finance and commission new homes; and give housing associations the certainty they need to plan long term
- Ensure that government policies place greater emphasis on championing the highest quality of design and environmental standards for new homes and the places in which they are built.

PROPERTY CROWDFUNDING

Report finds 1.8 million more 25-34 year-olds are locked out of the housing market

A new report from the independent think tank, Social Market Foundation, has found that almost two million more young people have been locked out of the housing market since 2001. It also suggests that property crowdfunding offers a way to help more people onto the housing ladder, whilst providing much needed investment in housebuilding.

The new study, 'Locked Out: How property crowdfunding could help the next generation of homeowners' finds that if homeownership rates among 25 to 34 year olds in 2016 were the same as in 2001, an additional 1.8 million young people in this age bracket would be homeowners in England. These young people are 'locked out' of the housing market due to high house prices, stricter lending criteria and the difficulty of

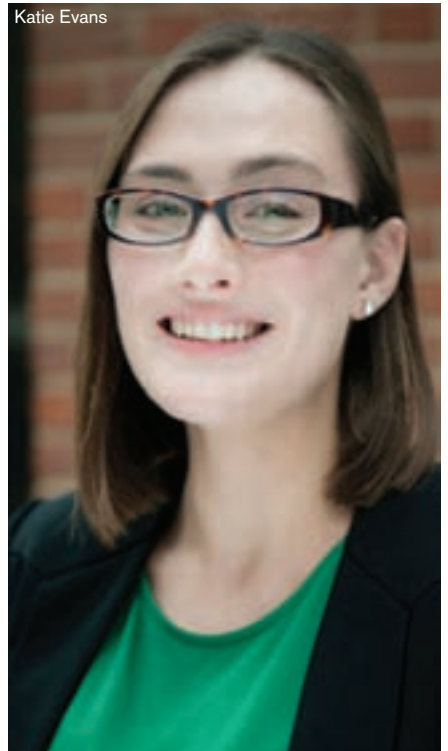
saving for a deposit in a low-interest, growing property price environment.

Unsurprisingly insufficient housing supply is identified as the key underlying factor. The UK will face a shortfall of almost 1.3 million homes by 2026, based on current unmet demand and inadequate supply growth, which will further drive up property prices.

Property crowdfunding is identified as a possible way to help address these problems. This form of funding allows would-be investors to a share of a property through online platforms. Although in its early stages in this country, the dramatic growth of alternative finance in the UK and the huge expansion of real estate crowdfunding in the USA, which has hit \$1 billion, suggest potential for significant growth in the

Continued on page 9...

Katie Evans





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years ahead.

The report suggests that property crowdfunding could address the affordability crisis by:

- Making saving for a deposit easier for aspiring homeowners in an environment where house prices continue to increase
- Widening participation in property ownership by lowering the barriers to entry and allowing a greater number of people to share in property price growth
- Boosting the supply of new homes by providing equity funding to small and medium-sized housebuilders.

The report makes a number of policy

recommendations to enable the property crowdfunding market to develop and help tackle the housing crisis through the government:

- Removing the anomaly whereby property crowdfunding is excluded from the new Innovative Finance ISA
- Allowing savers to use property crowdfunding when saving in a 'Help to Buy ISA', so would-be first-time buyers can build a deposit in a product that tracks house prices
- Introducing a new 'Help To Build' savings product to incentivise investments in new housing supply
- Considering the role property crowdfunding

could have within broader shared ownership policy.

The author of the report, SMF economist Katie Evans explained: "Getting onto the housing ladder is becoming harder and harder for young people. Our failure to build enough homes means this problem threatens to stretch into the future.

"Property crowdfunding could be the means to tackle both demand and supply, by helping more young people to become homeowners, whilst directing additional investment to small and medium-sized house builders."

COMMENT



Which horse should they back in the 2016 housing stakes?

Patrick Mooney of
Mooney Thompson Consulting comments

HA boards and chief executives have been dealt a difficult set of issues to ponder and make decisions on, both by circumstances and the government's new housing policies.

Should they go hell for leather in maximising the amount of new housing they can build, despite falling grant rates and the higher risks of relying on sales income, or do they adopt a more cautious approach. Will the annual rent cuts imposed by the chancellor be limited to just 1 per cent (even though this cut is proving too much for many councils' embryonic housebuilding plans) or might they cut even deeper in the future?

Such uncertainties are unhelpful at the best of times, but when they coincide with other unknowns, (e.g. the cost of subsidising voluntary RTB sales to HA tenants) just before the start of a new financial year – you can bet there are many worried executives out there, asking themselves if they have got the correct answers to all those nasty 'what if?' questions.

Unfit homes

The 1 per cent rent cut due to be implemented from April (and for the following three years to 2020) has already seen major rewrites of HRA business plans, risk maps, sensitivity analyses and the like. Councils' plans to build new houses have been torpedoed, but could the cuts also impact on plans to improve their existing housing stock as well?

The recently published English Housing Survey showed us that not all social housing properties are yet fit for purpose. Although it's not as bad as the 30 per cent unfit level in the private rented sector, some 14 per cent of social

housing properties are deemed to not meet the decent homes standard – that's just over half a million properties. And for most of these the taxpayer is picking up the rent bill by paying housing benefit to the tenants. Somehow that does not seem right. Should HB only be paid on properties that meet the decency standard?

Most housing professionals will readily agree that while the DHS is a big improvement on what existed before, it is not a standard that they aspire to in their private lives. Perhaps councils and HAs should be thinking about how they are going to finish off delivering the DHS to all their properties and then about how they raise standards even higher.

Cuts v Surpluses

Meanwhile councils are waiting for the details of how much they will be required to contribute to the Treasury pot, from which HAs will be compensated for the discounts given to support voluntary RTB sales pursued by their tenants. This is likely to put further strain on relations between councils and HAs. Relations are already difficult as a result of the mandatory policy changes on councils only being made voluntary for HAs to follow.

As councils grapple with cuts to their funding, they will cast envious eyes on the £3 billion of surpluses racked up by the largest 332 HAs last year. You would hope this is a big enough figure to satisfy HCA regulation chair Julian Ashby and his colleagues. He recently admitted the regulator is really only interested in the governance and financial viability of HAs. That will come as no surprise, but is it sensible to be quite so explicit at a time of significant housing need.

Alistair McIntosh, the plain speaking chief

executive of HQN keeps warning HAs about the need to improve their value for money and delivering further efficiencies in their operations. This year has been no exception and I expect he will be doing so again next year, but I sometimes wonder if anyone is listening to him. Well clearly they should do!

He very recently pointed out a huge disparity in the average management costs reported by HAs in the HCA Global Accounts. Alistair highlighted the range went from £920 a year from the biggest landlords (those with over 40,000 properties) up to £1,132. Now that's a whopping 23 per cent increase which is difficult to explain, particularly as the higher figure came from the group owning between 20,000 to 40,000 homes each.

Management costs

As the management cost figures are collected and reported in the same way, we should be comparing 'apples with apples' here and not 'oranges with bananas', so these figures do not include service charges for the additional services or facilities provided to vulnerable tenants with extra needs. His coup-de-grace is in highlighting that management costs have risen 8.6 per cent over the past two years, which coincides with a period of historically low interest rates and low inflation.

So what on earth can justify this rate of increase. I suspect some of it comes from employing additional staff to help low income families to keep their tenancies, despite the pressures on them from cuts in welfare benefits.

But it is still intriguing to see that it is mid-size landlords, those with between 5,000 and 10,000 homes who come out next best in the efficiency table, with an average annual cost of £935. We

Continued overleaf...

can then add into the mix that this group also contains many members of the Placeshapers Group, those landlords who operate in small(ish) areas, close to their residents and who usually enjoy the highest rates of customer satisfaction.

Who is it therefore that we want building and managing the new rented homes? Is it those who can offer the lowest costs, or those who are close to them, but with the added benefit of the highest satisfaction rates?

Mergers

Now it's possible that Alistair McIntosh is making a case in favour of mergers to create bigger landlords, who can deliver efficiencies of scale. If the planned merger between Affinity Sutton and Circle goes ahead later this year, it will establish a mega landlord with 127,000 homes, an annual turnover in excess of £750 million and a development programme of over 5,000 new homes a year. All of those are very big numbers and the new HA would easily overtake the current holder of the biggest title, Sanctuary, which has 100,000 homes.

Both HAs say the delivery of efficiency savings and the opportunity to plough these back into building more homes, are the key drivers behind the merger. But it is clear that not everything is rose in the garden as news has emerged of possible industrial action at Circle, as staff discontent grows over proposed changes in their employment terms and conditions.

And it would seem that even the HCA's regulation head honcho Julian Ashby may not be a complete fan of mergers. He recently wrote "No one is 'too big to fail'; but there will be an increasing number that are too big to be swallowed

whole by someone else." It appears the HCA are working on break-up proposals in the event of a big HA failing. Satisfying the creditors, tenants and the taxpayer will be a tough task, particularly as their interests may conflict.

It is interesting that we do not know what the tenants of Affinity Sutton and Circle think about the merger, but we can be fairly certain they will not have a casting vote on whether it proceeds or not. There will not be a European in-out style referendum on whether it goes ahead.

This is all the more puzzling because during the period of building society mergers, their customers with mortgages or savings accounts, did have votes and in many cases they were also given financial inducements to vote in favour of them. But I can't see any of the £3 billion of combined surpluses finding their way back into the bank accounts of tenants.

Rough sleeping

On the theme of Europe, we have recently seen the latest net migration figures showing us that an extra 323,000 people moved to Britain in the past year. While this is slightly down from its peak 12 months earlier, it still greatly exceeds the number of new homes built in the same period. This does beg the question of where are all these new residents living?

I don't think the answer is on the street, but the number of rough sleepers in England has risen sharply in the past year, according to figures released by the Department for Communities and Local Government. These show 3,569 people were sleeping rough on any one night in autumn 2015 compared to 2,744 in autumn 2014.

It also means the number of rough sleepers is

nearly double what it was in 2010 when the Conservatives first came to power. Westminster had the highest number of rough sleepers followed by Bristol and then Brighton in third place.

Melanie Rees, head of policy at the Chartered Institute of Housing, said: "Rough sleeping numbers have jumped by 30 per cent – the consequences of our failure to build enough homes has hit the most vulnerable hardest."

Shortfalls

Ms Rees welcomed the growth in new house building that recorded a 21 per cent increase in the year to December 2015. "But we still have a long way to go. We failed to build the number of homes we need for decades, and while 142,890 homes were built in 2015 – a long way short of the 250,000 experts estimate we need to keep up with our growing population and start tackling the shortfall that has built up over the years.

"The government is taking steps to boost housebuilding, but most of its investment is focused on homeownership. An increase in numbers is not enough – we need to make sure we are providing new homes for people on all incomes, including those who can't afford to buy."

And as part of the government's response to the Prime Minister's negotiations with the EU, we have learnt that people applying for social housing will need to have a longer connection with a local area, with the qualifying time doubling from two to four years. Administering this change will be the responsibility of local councils, in the same way they will have to keep tabs on people's wages and salaries to see if they will fall foul of the Pay to Stay income levels.

HEALTHY NEW TOWNS

NHS names 10 'healthy new town' sites

The head of NHS England has announced plans to deliver 10 'healthy new towns' across the country.

Presenting the thinking behind the 'healthy new home' programme NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens said: "The much-needed push to kick start affordable housing across England creates a golden opportunity for the NHS to help promote health and keep people independent. As these new neighbourhoods and towns are built, we'll kick ourselves if in 10 years time we look back having missed the opportunity to 'design out' the obesogenic environment, and 'design in' health and wellbeing.

"We want children to have places where they want to play with friends and can safely walk or cycle to school – rather than just exercising their fingers on video games. We want to see neighbourhoods and adaptable home designs that make it easier for older people to continue to live independently wherever possible. And we want

new ways of providing new types of digitally-enabled local health services that share physical infrastructure and staff with schools and community groups."

In his speech to the Kings Fund in London he identified the sites set to generate more than 76,000 new homes, built to 'design in' health and wellbeing. The NHS said it would help shape the sites 'so as to test creative solutions for the health and care challenges of the 21st century, including obesity, dementia and community cohesion'.

NHS England's Healthy New Town programme, supported by Public Health England, (PHE) will bring together well-known clinicians, designers and technology experts to create modern health and care services within the built environment. Features to be tested at some of the sites include fast food-free zones near schools, safe and attractive green spaces and access to new GP services using digital technology. The schemes will be designed to reflect the needs of local communities.

The ten chosen sites are:

- Whitehill and Bordon in Hampshire
- Cranbrook in Devon
- Darlington
- Barking Riverside in London
- Whyndyke Farm in Fylde, Lancashire
- Halton Lea in Runcorn
- Bicester in Oxon
- Northstowe in Cambridgeshire
- The Ebbsfleet Garden City in Kent
- Barton Park in Oxford

STARTER HOMES

Starter homes will be unaffordable for the majority of families in England

Discounted starter homes could be out of reach for the majority of families in need of an affordable home in many parts of the country, new analysis released by the Local Government Association reveals today.

First-time buyers will be able to buy 200,000 new starter homes over the next five years at a minimum discount of 20 per cent to the market value. Discounted prices will be capped at £450,000 in London and £250,000 elsewhere.

The LGA said the national starter homes scheme could help some people onto the housing ladder but that crucial details are yet to be confirmed. It is concerned it will help the fewest numbers of people in areas where the housing affordability crisis is most acute and will be out of reach for many people in need of an affordable home in the majority of local areas.

Although housebuilders will be able to build and sell starter homes below the price caps, councils are concerned that this could be difficult for developers to achieve without compromising on quality, particularly in areas with higher prices.

Town hall leaders are calling for the flexibility

to decide on the number, type and quality of starter homes so that they meet the needs of local communities. Councils also need powers to provide affordable rented homes that are crucial for enabling people to save money towards a deposit, and the means to secure investment in vital infrastructure that new home buyers will expect and rely on.

New analysis by Savills for the LGA reveals:

- Discounted Starter homes prices will be out of reach for all people in need of affordable housing in 220 council areas (67 per cent) and are out of reach for more than 90 per cent of people in need of affordable housing in a further 80 (25 per cent) council areas. People in need of affordable housing are defined as those who would have to spend 30 per cent of their household income to rent or buy a home.
- For the average earner with a minimal deposit (5 per cent) looking to buy an average priced house, a 20 per cent discount would make it possible to borrow enough to

buy a starter home in just 45 per cent of all council areas in England. This includes all average priced homes in the North East of England, 95 per cent of the North West and 90 per cent of the East Midlands.

- Being able to save a 20 per cent deposit would make an average priced home with a 20 per cent discount affordable to buy in a further 29 per cent of local areas. This includes a third of council areas in Yorkshire and Humber and the West Midlands.
- The average earner living in 85 per cent of London boroughs, 49 per cent of council areas in the South East and 40 per cent in the South West would need a deposit greater than 20 per cent to be able to buy an average priced home with a 20 per cent discount

The LGA is urging Lords to back amendments allowing councils to continue to ensure a mix of affordable homes based on local needs and to ensure that councils have the means to invest in the vital infrastructure home buyers and communities will rely on.

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COMMENT

Are we being served?

Former building products chief, Jayne Law, MBE, who now runs a residential property development business, explains her view on how utilities and building products companies serve that market

I had been at Dow Building Solutions for 27 years, having started out as a Sales Representative and then risen through the ranks to Commercial Director, when I decided to take early retirement and venture into the world of residential property development in my home county of Berkshire.

Having specialised in marketing and selling insulation materials for most of my working life, customer service came naturally to me and I prided myself on getting the best deal for my customers, while ensuring efficiencies and profitability for my employer.

However, when I set up my own property development business in 2014, I suddenly found myself sitting on the other side of the fence when it came to purchasing building materials and services and, in some cases, it has been a bit of an eye opener!

From what I have seen so far, I would say that the residential building market is served by 'The Good', 'The Bad' and 'the downright Ugly' with problems that emanate from a mixture of uncompetitive and inflexible working practices.

'The Ugly'. Having spoken to many people in the water, electricity, gas and telephone sectors over the past couple of years, I know that the

world of utilities is full of good people battling within somewhat convoluted systems and processes. The problem is that there is no choice and no reason for companies to compete.

A prime example is when I needed two overhead telephone lines that passed over my property to be moved. To start off, I had to pay a few hundred pounds before I could even register my request. I then had to pay a non-negotiable fee to get the work done and wait months for it to be completed. I am sorry to report that in one way or another, it is a similar story for residential property developers when dealing with the other utilities.

'The Bad'. For my second project, I wanted to plan all the product prices in advance and track expenditure to ensure that my budget was maintained throughout. To this end, I prepared a list of materials and the quantities required with a rough timeline. I then set about talking to various builders' merchants to get a price list together.

I made some calls but got deflated very quickly when trying to price the work. One company told me to call them a few days before I wanted any products and they would give me a price and delivery date then.

I wondered if, perhaps, I had not made myself

clear. After all, I was giving them a full schedule of materials that I wanted to buy, with a very reasonable total value, and I was looking to tie into one builders' merchant.

So I tried again and got the very same reaction, from all but one merchant – Jewson who were very customer focussed from the start.

'The Good'. Jewson sent a polite representative to see me. He asked questions about the business and then took details of the materials needed. Within a few days, I received a full price schedule. I cross-checked the prices and I discovered that it was competitive. We have not looked back since then.

In the last couple of years, I have found some super manufacturing and supply companies which offer good service, from roof trusses, windows and doors to kitchens, ready mix concrete and concrete products.

My definition of a 'good company' is one that has personable and attentive staff, and where relationships can be built. Most importantly, good companies respond when they say they will: I cannot cope with chasing a company so that I can place business with them!

COMMENT

Clive Fenton



House of Lords Select Committee report

Clive Fenton, Chief Executive of McCarthy & Stone has recently responded to the publication of The House of Lords Select Committee National Policy for the Built Environment report that stated that the government's housing policy is 'unlikely to meet demand for either the quantity or quality of houses needed in the UK'

We note the findings of the House of Lords Select Committee's report and support the Committee's call for the government to examine ways in which the provision of retirement housing can be incentivised and increased.

With a rapidly ageing population that will see the over-65 age group increase by over 50 per cent in the next 20 years, the UK suffers from an acute undersupply of suitable retirement properties with only a small fraction of demand

currently being met.

Despite this, the overriding focus of national policy aimed at stimulating the housing market has been on the first-time buyer. While being commendable, this has ignored the urgent need to build accommodation that suits the needs of a maturing Britain and the critical role that retirement housing plays in addressing the UK's housing shortage. Without the release of properties at the top of the housing chain, those looking for family homes will continue to suffer from a

lack of supply, which in turn acts as a barrier to the rest of the market.

To unlock the supply of such housing and encourage further downsizing, we welcome the proposals by the Select Committee, such as the exemption of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments. We additionally urge the government to consider the important role that retirement housing plays as part of a holistic national strategy and planning framework. Inaction is simply not an option.

BPF COMMENTS ON LORDS COMMITTEE

BPF: Lords report right to warn against short-term view on housing

The British Property Federation (BPF) has praised a House of Lords report which warns that good placemaking and sustainability must not be pushed aside in the rush to create new homes.

The House of Lords Built Environment Select Committee Report outlines concerns that the short-term approach to building new homes is being carried out at the expense of long-term considerations, and criticises the removal of initiatives such as zero carbon homes.

The BPF has similarly criticised the government for the lack of clarity surrounding carbon regulation, following the scrapping of policies such as allowable solutions and the removal of the zero carbon target. It has urged government to provide a clear policy trajectory for the build environment, in order to meet the

European Union's obligations for nearly-zero energy buildings from 2020.

The BPF has welcomed the report's recognition of the fact that there needs to be a diverse supply base in order to deliver a sufficient amount of new homes, but was disappointed to see that it has not better recognised the contribution of build to rent. In its evidence to the committee, the BPF highlighted the role that build to rent can play in creating high quality places that people want to work and live, offering density, affordability and high quality homes, that come with long-term investment.

Melanie Leech, chief executive of the British Property Federation, commented: "The report is right to highlight the need to future-proof the creation of new homes and communities, and to warn against taking a short-term approach to

delivery. Although there is a pressing need to deliver new homes, this must not be done at the expense of quality and great placemaking. Policies such as the removal of the zero carbon target by the government have been concerning, and it is of vital importance that we consider future generations when creating new places.

"It was perhaps an oversight that the report did not put more emphasis on build to rent, and the role it can play in supporting changing demographics and contributing to communities, but there was a lot to cover and the current inquiry by the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee is focusing far more on the Private Rented Sector."

TCPA COMMENTS ON LORDS COMMITTEE

Lords committee calls for government to refocus the planning system on high quality homes, not just housing numbers

Commenting on the Lords Committee call to government Chief Executive of the TCPA Kate Henderson said: "The Committee is right to focus on the quality of places that we create, rather than just housing numbers. I hope that the government heeds the advice from the House of Lords as it consults on further detail in the Housing and Planning Bill.

"We agree with the Committee that our homes and communities have the opportunity to enhance our quality of life, health and wellbeing. People don't want to live in unsustainable shoe-box homes without access to decent local services and that is why the Committee is right to call for a return to place-making standards such as Lifetime and zero carbon homes.

"As the recent effects of climate change have been seen with flooding across the country, it is vital that we adapt the way we build to create more resilient places. We support the Committee's recommendation that there needs to be a wider recognition of green infrastructure with regards to economic, health and social benefits."

In the TCPA's written and oral evidence to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee the Association highlighted that access to land in the right location and at the right price is the foundation of successful new places. The TCPA is advocating the use of modernised New Towns

legislation which is founded on the use of development corporations. Development corporations have the power through compulsory purchase to deliver comprehensive land assembly.

Kate Henderson added: "We are delighted that the Committee have agreed with our evidence, recommending that development corporations could help with delivery of new communities. They are also calling on government to expand its review of the compulsory purchase procedure set out in the Housing and Planning Bill to ensure an appropriate balance between improving neighbourhoods, securing necessary development and ensuring the landowner receives fair compensation."

This report comes as the government publishes its technical consultation for the Housing and Planning Bill, which is currently at the committee stage in the House of Lords. Many of the proposed measures in the consultation run counter to the recommendations in the Committee's report around ensuring the planning system is focused on good place-making.

Research published last year by the TCPA showed that latest household projections suggest that we need over 220,000 additional homes in England each year until 2031 if the projected growth in households is to be accommodated.





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Industry movers

The latest movements and appointments within the housebuilding industry

INGENIOUS

Ingenious Real Estate is delighted to announce the appointment of Peritus Corporate Finance as a new commercial partner for its real estate lending business. As part of the arrangement, Dean Brown will join Peritus as Head of Origination and will work closely with Ingenious on a range of initiatives. Peritus brings an experienced team of 14 people covering a range of real estate advisory and origination services. In 2015, Peritus completed transactions worth over £450 million and expects to significantly increase activities in 2016. Ingenious Real Estate invests in and arranges finance for real estate projects across a range of strategies through direct acquisitions, joint ventures, co-investment and managed funds.

KEBBELL HOMES



Kebbell Homes' developments has appointed a former employee to its head office in Watford. Louise Warren, who was previously employed as a trainee surveyor with Kebbell Homes 11 years ago, has recently returned as a surveyor, following eight years working for a property services company. The 35-year old is pleased to be working with the luxury housebuilder once again at its head office. Within her new role, Louise is responsible for subcontractor procurement, accounting and invoices, valuations and sub-contract orders.

GLASS AND GLAZING FEDERATION

The Glass and Glazing Federation welcomed its new President, Andrew Glover, Managing Director of West Yorkshire Windows at the President's Reception in front of 100 guests made up of GGF Members and GGF Group employees. Giles Willson, Managing Director presented an overview of the GGF infrastructure and some history of its Presidency before the GGF Immediate Past President, Brian Baker, welcomed Andrew on stage as the new President. Brian Baker of Glassolutions commented: "I wish Andrew all the very best in his new role. I have no doubt his industry knowledge and passion for the GGF will drive the Federation through the challenges facing companies in our industry."

LARKFLEET HOMES



Larkfleet Homes has extended its sales team with the appointment of Samantha Watkins as sales manager. Her new role will encompass appraising new and potential developments to help ensure successful marketing campaigns and future sales. Sam has gained valuable experience with roles at housebuilders Taylor Wimpey and Persimmon Homes. Outside of work Sam is a keen singer and guitar player.

REMMERS

Remmers UK Ltd is delighted to announce that Tom Dossett has been elected as Vice Chairman of the Resin Flooring Association (FeRFA). Having joined Remmers UK Ltd in 2010 as the Midlands Technical Sales Manager and with 20 years experience in the construction industry, Tom has successfully managed a wide and varied range of projects for all market sectors from Automotive and Aerospace through to Education and Retail. Tom has been an active member of the FeRFA Council for the last four years and is looking forward to his new exciting and challenging role.

INLAND HOMES



Inland Homes plc has appointed Gary Skinner as a Managing Director of Inland Ltd, its main operating subsidiary, to directly oversee the company's construction activities and project delivery. Gary Skinner said: "Inland Homes is at a very exciting stage in its development as a company and has a history of undertaking often complex and very unique housing development projects."

MORRIS PROPERTY

Morris Property has appointed Steve Flavell as senior contracts manager to help build on its success. Steve will oversee its construction wing, provide a link between senior management and construction sites and develop and improve current systems as part of the company's growth strategy. He explained: "I am passionate about my work and wanted a new challenge. Morris Property is a go-ahead company with a reputation for quality developments; it was an opportunity I could not turn down." The company's current construction projects include the Oak Tree Centre at Milton Keynes for church and community use and the prestigious Beaufort Ridge housing development at The Mount, Shrewsbury.

BARRATT



Barratt Developments has appointed a new managing director to run its Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes divisions. With more than 16 years' experience, Tim Hill will be responsible for all aspects of the operation. Tim is no stranger to the division having been promoted from finance director, a role he held for 11 years. Barratt David Wilson boasts 16 developments. The division employs 200 people together with a substantial workforce of subcontractors. Tim lists golf and rugby as his interests.

BOUYGUES CONSTRUCTION

Bouygues Construction will propose the appointment of Fabienne Viala as Chairman of Bouygues UK and its British subsidiaries to the Board of Directors of Bouygues UK. With effect from summer 2016, Fabienne Viala will manage all of Bouygues Construction's building activities in the United Kingdom (namely Bouygues UK, Leadbitter, Denne, Thomas Vale and Bouygues Development). Fabienne Viala will also operate as UK Country Director, in which capacity her role will be to strengthen cooperation between Bouygues Construction's businesses: Bouygues UK, Bouygues Travaux Publics and Bouygues Energies & Services. Fabienne Viala will become a member of the Bouygues Construction Management Committee.

EVENTS

FIT Show

12 - 14 April, Telford
www.fitshow.co.uk

National Homebuilding & Renovating Show

14 - 17 April, Birmingham
www.homebuildingshow.co.uk

North England Build Expo

Manchester Central
 27 - 28 April
www.northenglandbuildexpo.com

Grand Designs Live

30 April - 8 May, London
www.granddesignslive.com

RESI Awards

11 May, London
www.resiawards.com

Eco Technology Show

9 - 10 June, Brighton
www.ecotechnologyshow.co.uk

CIH Housing Conference & Exhibition

28 - 30 June, Manchester
www.cihhousing.com

UK Construction Week

18 - 20 October, Birmingham
www.ukconstructionweek.com

The Build Show

18 - 20 October, Birmingham
www.ukconstructionweek.com/build-show

Grand Designs Live

19 - 23 October, Birmingham
www.granddesignslive.com/nec

London Build Expo

26 - 27 October, London
www.londonbuildexpo.com

Homes

16 - 17 November, London
www.homesevent.co.uk

National Homebuilding & Renovating Show

14 - 17 April

The National Homebuilding & Renovating Show is gearing up its forthcoming event with over 450 exhibitors, 16 free seminars and over 50 masterclasses. The show, taking place at the NEC, Birmingham, from 14-17 April 2016, and sponsored for the first time by Velux, will also be launching a mobile app and guided trails, enabling visitors to maximise their visit.

Over 15 resident property specialists and TV personalities will be on hand to discuss all building and renovating queries, and leading companies will be presenting their latest ranges of services and products from a variety of industries including architecture; design; financial topics; kitchens; bathrooms; doors and windows; lighting; heating; ventilation; planning permission and much more. The show will be packed with

advice and guidance and case studies will be present to talk about their experiences with consumers who are facing similar challenges throughout all stages of their projects.

Also debuting at the Midland event will be the free National Homebuilding & Renovating Show mobile app which will personalise visitors' experience, helping them to plan and guide their day through exclusive content.

North England Build 2016

27 - 28 April

The government is set to heavily invest in multiple schemes across the North of England, aimed at establishing a 'Northern Powerhouse', one that can compete in challenging world economy.

As the UK makes a strong recovery from the financial crisis, the private sector has been increasing investment across the region and construction approvals have been up year-on-year.

A world class transport system is to be developed that links up the individual cities and

towns in the North allowing them to function as a single economy. Alongside infrastructure investment, substantial investment is to be made in the regeneration of city centres. Continued economic recovery in the private sector and a number of development projects in the public sector are expected to drive a substantial surge in construction projects across the North.

From infrastructure projects to urban regeneration, from transport investment to office development, the number of new construction

projects in the North of England is vast. North England Build 2016 is the only event of its kind to cover construction opportunities and projects across all of the North.

Taking place at Manchester Central, the leading exhibition centre in the region, North England Build 2016 is the ideal opportunity for your company to get involved in North England's booming construction sector.

For more information, visit the event's dedicated website.

RESI Awards

11 May

The RESI Awards organised by Property Week aim to celebrate the residential property market and its successes of the past year. Bringing together the key players in the market, the RESI Awards has played host to the

likes of the Christian and Nick Candy, Tony Pidgley, Bruce Ritchie, Stephen Stone among others in the four years that it has been running. Already described as the key celebratory and networking event for the sector, the RESI Awards is

a fantastic extension of the RESI Conference, with both providing the vital ingredients to help this sector continue on its path to excellence. The RESI Awards return for the fifth year on 11 May 2016 at the Grosvenor House, London.

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DIRECT DELIVERY

Spacehus expresses concern about government 'Direct Delivery' policy

Spacehus, part of the Space Group, has expressed concern about the government's 'Direct Delivery' policy for building affordable homes. They believe that the commissioning model, announced by the Prime Minister in January, will do little to encourage and include smaller home builders in the creation of the country's much needed affordable homes.

Launching the scheme in January, David Cameron said that: "Currently the top eight housebuilders provide 50 per cent of new homes. The direct commissioning approach will support

smaller builders and new entrants who are ready to build but lack the resources and access to land".

However, discussions between Spacehus and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have suggested that access to the land is still a 'closed shop'.

Speaking about his concerns CEO of Spacehus, Rob Charlton said: "I was genuinely buoyed by the news in January that the government was going to open the market up to providers like us who offer a genuinely affordable, quick to deliver, solution to the UK housing crisis. But having

approached the HCA regarding the Graylingwell site in West Sussex, I find out that the land will only be made available to their 'pre-approved panel' of developers. Having looked into the panels for each region I note they are largely made up of the same old names in housebuilding or their subsidiaries and off shoots. Is the government really encouraging SME housebuilding and innovation? It doesn't look like it!

"The reason given for the direct delivery policy was the fact the top eight housebuilders are not delivering enough of the right product, fast enough. They are sitting on historic land banks and only want to deliver market housing to boost their profits. Here are we, along with many other providers of affordable housing solutions, poised to deliver and the door gets slammed in our face. If the UK is going to solve the affordable housing crisis, I challenge the Prime Minister to intervene and stand by his word".

EU THRESHOLD

New opportunities for smaller homebuilders?

Recent announcements by the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), including 80 public land sites, coming in at over 600 acres being put up for sale to accelerate housebuilding have provided plenty of cause for optimism amongst smaller homebuilders.

However, with the EU Threshold in place, a number of smaller homebuilders are struggling to compete in the tendering process due to restrictive financial controls. The House Builders Association (HBA) is now working with the HCA to break this down by providing a catalogue of smaller sites with a simpler tendering process for smaller homebuilders, as well as facilitating access to finance.

Speaking on the behalf of the HBA, Policy Advisor Rico Wojtulewicz explained: "Access to finance has improved but many developers have difficulty drawing it down due to a lack of planning permission. The government has recognised this fact and as well as communicating with the HBA to find a solution the HCA is making a strong effort to identify small sites and support SMEs. This will surely help but the HBA remains staunch in its opinion that fixing planning and giving small sites and infill the same focus as large sites would not only improve the housing crisis but begin closing the gap between 'affordable' and realistically affordable."

SUPERFAST BROADBAND

Government initiative to deliver superfast broadband connectivity to new build properties

The government has worked with Openreach, BT's local access network business, and the Home Builders Federation (HBF) on an agreement which aims to deliver superfast broadband connectivity to new build properties in the UK.

The new deal will see fibre-based broadband offered to all new developments either for free or as part of a co-funded initiative. It is estimated that more than half of all new build properties can be connected to fibre broadband free of charge to developers.

As part of the agreement, Openreach is introducing an online planning tool for homebuilders. This will tell them whether properties in a given development can be connected to fibre for free, or if a contribution is needed from the developer to jointly fund the deployment of the local fibre network.

The housing industry will now have access to a 'rate card' from Openreach which details the fixed cost contributions required by homebuilders in those cases where joint funding is required. Openreach will make a significant contribution itself before seeking any funds from developers. The HBF will promote and support uptake of the co-funding offer amongst their members, and emphasise the need to plan for



connectivity early in the development.

This new offer sets a high bar for all suppliers and developers in the market, and the government will be working with industry closely to monitor success over the next year.

Speaking about the new initiative Digital Economy Minister, Ed Vaizey said: "The government's ambition to build 1 million new homes over the course of this Parliament will house families and future generations to come. Broadband connectivity is just one thing that home buyers now expect when buying a new build, so this industry-led push to make superfast, or indeed ultrafast, broadband speeds available by default in new homes represents a very important step in meeting the UK's digital needs."

DIVERSITY IS KEY

Housing industry leaders tackle issues

According to a recent report, which brings together insights into the future of Britain's housing market, diversity in the housing market is the only way to solve the country's housing issues.

The 'Homes of the Future' report, published by bi-fold doors and windows manufacturer, Origin, with roundtable input from Barratt Developments, Grosvenor, URBED, the Home Builders Federation and Solidspace, along with Dr Patrick Dixon and Prof. Christine Whitehead from the London School of Economics also identifies a need to update the country's 'outdated' home valuation process, and to develop a greater focus on sustainable mortgages.

A fresh approach to the rules on building on Green Belt land, the shift towards open plan living, and a need to invest in modern methods of construction while encouraging fresh blood into the construction industry, has also been covered

within the report.

Managing Director at Origin, Andrew Halsall, said: "More diversity in housing was a pivotal conclusion from the roundtable, which aimed to identify the key changes that need to be made if the UK housing industry is to meet the demands of homeowners, while ensuring British manufacturers and housebuilders thrive in the future.

"Building homes that people want to live in can only be achieved by offering variety in the housing market. A home is more than just bricks and mortar, and as a country, we have a great emotional attachment to our homes. We want them to be as individual as we are, while also being a functional space for our families to live in."

The report determines how encouraging heterogeneity will benefit both the industry and house buyers in the future. By supporting smaller housebuilders and encouraging a diverse market,

only then will the government meet the demand of first-time buyers as it aims to build 200,000 new homes by 2020.

A fresh approach to land shortage issues and encouraging skilled labourers within the construction industry must also be top of the government agenda if Britain is to meet the housing requirements of a growing population.

Andrew concluded: "The aim of the roundtable was to get the leading minds in the industry together to talk about the direction that the UK housing industry is heading, and to identify any issues that will hold back progress. It's not as simple as finding a 'one size fits all' solution. The report crystallises the key findings, with insightful views on changes that need to be made today, if we're to be successful in building homes that people want to live in tomorrow."

BRICK PRODUCTION

Brick Production at its highest level since 2007

Brick production in 2015 reached its highest level since 2007 according to the latest statistics from the Department of Innovation and Skills. Almost 2 billion bricks were manufactured in the UK last year, over 7 per cent more than in 2014. At the same time, in the third quarter of the year imports of bricks continued to fall and were 50 per cent lower than

in the same quarter in 2014.

Commenting on these figures Chairman of the Brick Development Association, Michael Ankers said: "This significant increase in brick production follows the re-opening of a number of plants and improved productivity at many others. Imports are falling significantly and stocks are at a more appropriate

level for the current activity in the UK construction industry.

"The challenges the brick industry faced in 2014 when there was a dramatic increase in housebuilding are now behind us and the industry is confident it can meet the growing demand for its products in housing and other construction projects."

HELPING DIFFERENTIATE HOMEBUILDERS

BRE Home Quality Mark open for registrations

Following an extensive consultation with leading players in the house building industry the BRE national quality mark for new housing, the Home Quality Mark (HQM), is now open for registrations.

Designed to transform the way consumers choose the homes they buy and rent whilst allowing house builders to differentiate themselves within the marketplace, the full standard for meeting the mark is now available online.

This first HQM beta version has evolved from a technical consultation carried out earlier this year with additional input from a wide variety of stakeholders at over 50 national events including; private and social housing developers, representative organisations, professional bodies,

financial sector, legal sector, designers, consultants and also consumers. While it is a fully functioning scheme, industry is being encouraged to provide feedback on their in-use experiences, which will be used to inform the next version.

Using a simple star rating system the HQM will provide more reassurance to potential homeowners about the performance and quality of both the living space and the community. It will also help local communities understand which proposed developments are a force for good and provide the financial sector with greater reassurance over investments.

HQM assessment registrations are now open in England (Wales, Scotland and Northern

Ireland will follow) and can be registered through a licensed HQM assessor. HQM registrations are Free for the first six months. Licensed HQM assessors can be found on www.greenbooklive.com

Head of Housing at Corporate Banking HSBC, Hugh Taylor explained that: "We welcome the launch of the Home Quality Mark as independent, third party verification of the quality of new homes provides both property purchasers and funders with support in their decision making. BRE have a wealth of experience in looking at build design and use and we wish them well in establishing the Home Quality Mark as a national standard."



HOME REGISTRATIONS

Registrations see slow start to year

The latest figures from the NHBC indicate that UK new home registrations had a slow start to the year, with 10,309 new homes registered in January 2016. This is a fall of 9 per cent compared to January of last year. During the month, 7,885 new private sector homes were registered against 8,784 a year previously, with public sector registrations decreasing to 2,424 from 2,562 in January 2015.

During the rolling quarter of November 2015

to January 2016, total registrations fell 9 per cent to 32,468 against the same period a year ago.

The NHBC said that its new home completion figures reflected the strong growth of last year, rising 10 per cent to 33,182 from November to January compared to the same period 12 months ago.

NHBC CEO Mike Quinton commented: "We saw continued growth in new home registrations throughout 2015. Whilst the January figures indicate a slower start to 2016, industry confidence remains high, with last year's growth reflected in the increase in new home completions in the past three months.

"There's no doubt that housebuilders are extremely active and are optimistic about future growth. With many ambitious build programs underway, it is clear the industry is committed to

delivering the high quality new homes the country needs."



COMMENT

Andrew Blackwell



Are new settlements the shortcut to solving housing needs?

New settlements are seen as politically attractive options to solve our housing crisis and 'one large pill' may appear easier to swallow than spreading the NIMBY pain. But what are the pros and cons of each approach? Andrew Blackwell, Planning Partner at Bidwells, examines the issue

The need to construct 240,000 new homes a year until 2031 was announced by George Osborne in the Autumn 2015 Statement. The delivery of new homes carries a significant political imperative to overcome a housing crisis but also as a means to stimulate the wider economy.

The Housing and Planning Bill is making strides to become one of the most radical introductions to town planning for many years. As a Treasury-led piece of legislation, it looks to stimulate further housing by loosening planning controls, particularly in respect of brownfield land, including sites within Green Belt, and making use of Development Consent Orders to deliver homes as part of commercial and infrastructure projects.

To further add pressure on Councils to deliver new homes, Local Plans must be completed in 2017, which may carry Planning in Principle allocations, bypassing outline planning permission requirements.

In this environment Councils with limited brownfield land to exploit may see political convenience in large new settlements as a quick 'one large pill' solution. This 'one swallow solution' avoids more difficult locations closer to sensitive political wards and, if positioned close to existing infrastructure, could provide a reasonable case

for sustainable communities.

Large new settlements are also preferable to urban extensions, so can only go so far. But can local authorities be confident in the promised speed of build rates from new settlements?

Experience has shown that there is a great deal to consider when it comes to new home delivery. Multiple landownership can make for complex problems, including the Section 106 obligations. Single ownership is therefore a key advantage if state intervention no longer applies, as it did in the times of the post-war New Towns Movement.

For the developer deciding to invest from the beginning of a scheme, there is the issue of cash flow. Early infrastructure for new settlements will probably need to be completed ahead of the delivery of all the units. Everything for the new community will also need to be created from costly scratch including retail units, schools, health provision and public transport services.

Assuming the land values can bear infrastructure and other costs, there is then the issue of the economic cycle. If the economic climate dips, building work will slow while, through bonding arrangements or parent company guarantees, the infrastructure may be obliged to continue. This scenario will leave new residents without the accompanying 'village attributes' they envisaged.

The 'all in one scenario' therefore comes with commercial and build out risks which local planning authorities need to be aware of.

I hope that as planning authorities rush to complete their Local Plan visions by 2017, they carefully factor in a staged approach to any emerging new settlement.

The first step has to be a costed infrastructure plan, with concepts that anticipate the potential for self-contained phases to withstand the economic cycles recent history has shown. Ideally any first phase needs some close relationship to existing towns to allow integration with key facilities and the capacity to expand.

We live in very different times from the days when New Towns were state funded and the current lack of public finance has resulted in limited staff numbers and resources within local planning authorities to process planning applications.

Reliance on mainly private funding for new housing growth and community infrastructure suggests that local planning authorities and their political masters need to understand the way new home developers will be focused. They must understand developer's need for return on capital and that traditional self-contained, one-off site developments on the fringes of existing conurbations are a far more attractive alternative to larger new settlement concepts.

DEVELOPMENT SHOWCASE

Government backs build to rent homes at Swiss Cottage

A £100 million plan to regenerate Swiss Cottage town centre has been given the go-ahead by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Essential Living, a developer and operator of homes for rent, will deliver and manage the mixed-use scheme under a single brand. As well as an array of communal facilities and amenity spaces, the plans will include 54 new affordable homes and purpose-built space for community use.

Camden councillors refused the proposals for 184 flats in September 2014, despite a recommendation by the council's planning officers that the scheme should be approved.

The scheme, designed by GRID architects, also received backing from the Design Council and the Mayor of London.

Last week, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) supported the recommendation of an independent planning inspector that the council's refusal should be overturned, noting the significant social benefits the development would bring.

Theatre Square, designed by GRID architects, will see an old 1980's office building demolished to make way for a 24-storey residential tower containing 130 apartments specifically designed for renting.

The tower will be joined with a part five-storey, part seven-storey lower podium block hosting 54 affordable homes, as well as flexible retail space to animate street level and a new community centre.

The government has previously stated the importance of delivering purpose-built, professionally managed private rented homes funded by institutional investment.

There is some £90 billion worth of potential investment according to the Better Renting Campaign, which represents the emerging sector, and they say that there needs to be wider appreciation of how the model works for it to be fully unlocked.

Another of the Essential Living's schemes received outline planning permission earlier this month from Ealing Council. The Perfume Factory in Acton, the largest build to rent project in London, will see over 500 flats for rent built.

Scott Hammond, managing director at Essential Living, said: "This has been a lengthy process but we are very pleased the Secretary of State has backed the independent planning inspector's recommendation that this important proposal for the regeneration of Swiss



Cottage should proceed. This is entirely consistent with the original positive recommendation of Camden Council planning officers and the support received from both the Greater London Authority and Design Council.

"As we always believed it would, the extensive scrutiny of the scheme during the public inquiry has revealed the significant social benefits of the scheme in terms of new homes for rent and community space, enhancements to the street level frontages and the recognised attractive quality of the design. This is the right decision for the revitalisation of Swiss Cottage and we will now commence the work to deliver our proposals which we will be calling Theatre Square."

Craig Casci, director at GRID Architects said: "We are pleased that the design has been recognised for its positive benefits including a dedicated and purpose designed local commu-

nity use, active retail and all tenures of housing. In particular to provide rented housing with built in open air and roof top amenities makes a big step forward for London housing. Our focus now turns to delivery of this very important building on a very important site."

Michael Lowndes, executive director at Turley Associates, the planning consultancy that worked on this scheme, said: "This is the kind of scheme that drives forward progress in London, delivering strategic and local priorities. It is an allocated busy town centre site in highly accessible area, exactly where optimum density and tall building developments should be located. We are delighted for Essential Living that the Secretary of State has approved plans for this site. The decision acknowledges the significance of the range and substance of the benefits that it will bring to Swiss Cottage and Camden."



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CASE STUDY

The King Edward VII Estate – Creating modern homes in a historic building based in the South Downs National Park



In 2010 City & County acquired King Edward VII Estate in West Sussex. With planning permission granted in 2011 it became the most significant development to have ever gained consent within the South Downs National Park. Few people have the opportunity to live within the South Downs National Park. Fewer still can also lay claim to living within nationally significant historic buildings. The King Edward VII Estate, which is an exemplar of Arts & Crafts design, is a perfect example of such an opportunity.

Since City & Country first discovered this remarkable site and its stunning buildings, the overarching objective was to create a new destination amidst the surrounding countryside. This now established destination, which celebrates the buildings' illustrious past, while providing a long-term future for its iconic architecture has now successfully entered a new chapter in its illustrious history.

At the heart of the development's vision was a

desire to provide an asset for the area and create a rural community that benefits from a range of outstanding lifestyle facilities right on its doorstep.

To achieve this City & Country led all restoration work on the Estate, which, once complete, will offer a compendium of homes set in 164 acres of beautifully maintained gardens and heathland, just an hour by train from London. Homeowners will also benefit from the best of modern living juxtaposed with a sense of character that only historic buildings can provide.

Working closely with English Heritage (now Historic England) and the South Downs National Park Authority, it was established that the key to delivering the project was agreeing the extent and phasing of the conversion and restoration works, supported by the minimum necessary new development in the surrounding estate, to fund these conversion and restoration works.

However, it was essential that work to the historic buildings was carried out before the new

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View from site

build, guaranteeing that the heritage gains were completed before the new homes. Therefore, a legal agreement was established to ensure that this happened and following a number of meetings a build programme was agreed, consent was granted and work began.

The history

Built in 1901, the King Edward VII Estate has a fascinating history. Designed to serve as a specialist tuberculosis hospital, it was officially opened by His Majesty King Edward VII on 6 June 1906, and was heralded as 'one of the three finest buildings of the time'.

At the time the sanatorium was designed, it was celebrated as a significant advancement in the treatment of the sick, where the importance of rest, relaxation, fresh air and light were incorporated into the buildings and surroundings. These were seen as equally important to the treatment of patients as the medical intervention.

The buildings benefited from elegant gardens designed by highly acclaimed 19th century horticultural author and landscape garden designer, Gertrude Jekyll. She worked closely with Percy Adams to allow the integration of the architecture and gardens that can still be seen today. An early 20th century example of a therapeutic garden, the grounds are of considerable historic interest in their own right.

After the eradication of tuberculosis the sanatorium was transformed into a modern hospital admitting NHS and private patients with all types of illnesses, but specialised in cancer care, cardiology and facial reconstruction.

Until the 1950's necessary extensions were designed in a sensitive manner. However, from the 1960's practicalities of a hospital became the



overriding influence. These unfortunate later additions paid little regard to the historic architecture and landscape and focusing on functionality. Despite this, much of the historic fabric and quality remained, and the upgrading to Grade II listing in 2004, of the main building and chapel, underlined the importance of this unique collection of historic buildings.

The restoration challenge

Since acquiring the site in 2010 City & Country has been committed to the quality conversion and restoration of the heritage buildings to ensure they were sensitively brought back to life.

An outstanding example of Edwardian architecture and design, the Estate's buildings offer a wealth of architectural features that celebrate layout, design and decoration. These in turn present a vast range of exceptional restoration challenges.

When originally built, the Sanatorium's striking elevations were among the most complicated and expensive examples of a building envelope. They masterfully employed a mixture of stone, brick, tile, metal and timber dressings and were an impressive demonstration of just how many variations on the Arts & Crafts theme can be achieved in each elevation.

The Estate's stunning chapel was also of particular historical significance featuring beautiful stained glass windows as well as an extensive use of stonework, lead work and specialist cornicing inside the large vaulted spaces.

In addition to these two outstanding buildings, there were a number of equally important historic buildings that required expert restoration, knowledge and expertise. The Engine House, Lodge and Motor House, all designed by Charles Holden at the same time as the Sanatorium also required extensive work to be saved.

Comprehensive restoration to an original ground floor link corridor was also required. The

corridor, a vital part of the original Sanatorium design concept, provided the only access for staff, patients and visitors from the north building to the south building.

Originally, the link walkway was designed to make best use of the views of the beautiful courtyard gardens either side by installing large windows and doors, in order to bring the outside in. These elevations flooded the walkway with light at all times of day. The doors in both the east and west elevations provided access to the inner courtyard, giving visitors, as well as staff, all year round benefit of the gardens.

All of these benefits had been lost due to modern extensions to the sides and above, making the link between the north and south buildings uninspiring with artificial lighting conditions.

Technical skill

King Edward VII stood empty for many years and as such the building fabric and in particular the roof, had suffered badly from lack of maintenance. Much of the hospital equipment still remained. Bats also occupied the buildings, requiring City & Country to work very closely with Natural England and local ecologists to ensure that a Bat Licence was in place before any work started. The method statement associated with this licence has been strictly adhered to with regular inspections and awareness talks for the entire workforce throughout the project.

As part of the restoration work, City & Country commissioned the services of an archaeological consultant with a brief of continuous monitoring and reporting.

City & Country also employed a team of highly skilled experts to carry out the restoration and renovation work, including acclaimed architects Squire and Partners, with architects Fielden + Mawson responsible for the apartment conversions.

A central part of the project was the demolition

Continued overleaf...





of substantial buildings attached to the main Sanatorium. These structures more than doubled the footprint of the original hospital and had seriously affected many of the original features of the building. Once removed the full challenge of the restoration was revealed.

Earmarked by English Heritage as the most important element on the site the Grade II Listed Chapel had to be fully restored before any other works on the site were undertaken. The 'V Shaped' Chapel built with two wings, one for the ladies and one for the men, was originally open-air, reflecting the original treatment for tuberculosis. Once antibiotics were developed the Chapel was made weather tight with the addition of stain glass windows. However, the entire building needed reroofing, while stonework and brickwork were carefully cleaned to reveal the contrast in colours and building techniques. Internally all the lead work to the windows also had to be cleaned and restored.

The chapel features a double height vaulted ceiling, which had a large section missing where water ingress from the damaged roof caused the ceiling to collapse. Expert plasterers had to repair this section so that it blended seamlessly into its surroundings and did not leave any clues of its 'unloved' past. The Chapel is now a beautiful feature at the heart of the development and it is planned to eventually serve as a café or shop.

The first phase of works to the Sanatorium commenced with demolitions in early 2013. These were largely completed by the end of the year. However during the demolition period the severe rainfall of the winter of 2013/14 presented a further challenge of ensuring the exposed building was protected.

Efforts were then concentrated on the restoration of the external facades before moving to the internal areas to carry out structural alterations that will help to create the 42 apartments planned in phase one. During this period, The Chapel and The Lodge restorations were also completed.

The first part of the restoration process was to remove the modern additions to the north side of the building, allowing light to flood into the former dining room. In place of these extensions, the facade of the building was re-built in accordance

with historic photographs. Detailed research was undertaken to identify the six different brick bonds used within the elevation, ensuring they matched exactly as was originally intended. The facade is now complete down to the most infinite detail, including restoration of the hoppers, inscribed with 'VII ER 1905' and the original crest above the entrance.

The modern extensions that compromised the original link walkway have now been removed and by working again with historical photographs City & Country has fully recreated the original design. The link walkway roof had previously served as an access route for staff but now has been transformed into a terrace area for residents to enjoy as a social space.

Analysis of the photographs and investigation of the building fabric has also allowed City & Country to bring the interiors back to their originally intended design.

The communal entrance hall now features fully restored teak staircases and balustrades. When purchased the buildings' beautiful Heals of London joinery was covered with over five layers of gloss paint and the restoration team had to carefully remove each layer taking care not to damage the wood underneath. The final result is transformational, with key joints now revealed the entrance hall is restored to its former 1905 glory.

Specialist craftsmen were also drafted in to cast the original intricate ceiling plasterwork in order to restore and reinstate areas, which had been

damaged or removed entirely.

Bespoke light fittings, which also feature throughout the communal hall, have been replicated using original designs found in archive photography of the estate.

Expert craftsman have also restored the detailed parquet flooring, wall panelling and fireplaces. Specialist masons also revived original parapets, stone copings and stone windows, and new replicas were made where necessary.

Modern interiors with Edwardian flair

Homes at King Edward VII Estate are designed to maximise space and natural light.

The interior design team has made the most of period features, sourcing replica materials and fittings where appropriate in keeping with the period while creating contemporary interiors fit for modern living.

The conversion homes have individually designed bespoke kitchens with contemporary slab doors painted in a selection of heritage colours, hand-made in-frame shaker doors, stone work tops, stainless steel appliances from Siemens and a palette of finishes to suit. Bathrooms are modern and understated, featuring soft colours, natural travertine tiling and quality brands with sanitary ware by Vitra, brassware from Hansgrohe and shower enclosures from Simpsons.

Original wooden parquet flooring is retained where possible and properties come with 100 per cent wool carpets and oak engineered flooring. Modern technology includes alarms, LED down lighters and pendant fittings. These features are subtly located to ensure all properties are suitable for contemporary lifestyles without compromising the historic character of the buildings.

The interior soft and muted colour palette is influenced by the Arts & Crafts period to emulate tones that appear naturally in the landscape, bringing the outside inside. Homes fully exploit the Estate's magnificent natural setting, with specific attention paid to the availability of natural light and superb views across the South Downs National Park or the restored gardens.

Glorious gardens

Heritage buildings not only provide wonderful proportions and architectural features, they also have some of the country's most impressive landscaping. King Edward VII Estate is no exception, with its outstanding registered gardens. Of considerable historic interest in their own right, they are listed on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens, and are a true example of a therapeutic garden, which encapsulated many of the aspirations and preferences of the Edwardian era.

For City & Country to bring the Estate back to its former glory, it is necessary for the restoration to stretch beyond the buildings, encompassing these remarkable gardens as well. Although the listed buildings and Jekyll designed gardens are of great significance (King Edward VII Estate totals



165 acres), the surrounding landscape and ecology are also of huge importance.

On acquiring the site, City & Country employed the services of a specialist Landscape Architect to undertake a detailed survey into the wider Estate. The survey identified the need to recondition the area to improve its ecological value. Redevelopment of this land was carried out in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Detailed planting plans based on the original drawings were created to restore, where possible, the original intention of the planting. Restoration of some areas of the gardens, which have been 'lost' for decades buried under car parks and hospital out buildings, also took place.

Analysis of historic Ordinance Maps showed that a large proportion of the former King Edward VII Sanatorium formerly consisted of heathland habitats. These are nationally threatened and are listed as 'Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation in England'.

More than 12 hectares of heathland is being reinstated providing a habitat for wildlife, including a number of heathland specialist bird species, such as nightjar and woodlark, to improve the ecological value of the Estate.

The result

In April 2015, the first exclusive show apartments and communal areas of the Estate were unveiled. With the final properties combining classic period features with sympathetic, yet contemporary,

interior design.

The apartments fully exploit the Estate's magnificent natural setting, with specific attention paid to the availability of natural light and far-reaching views across the South Downs National Park.

The Estate will also offer a range of leisure facilities conveniently located on residents' doorsteps. The luxurious basement swimming pool will include changing facilities, a sauna, steam-room and large circular Jacuzzi. A basement gym will be located nearby, which will include the latest workout and resistance equipment, while outdoors there will be a new tennis court in a peaceful, woodland setting.

In the main Sanatorium building, there are two areas of particular historic interest, which have been preserved for the exclusive enjoyment of residents. The first is the former dining hall with its double-height windows, original tiling and intricate plasterwork to the ceiling, which details various fruits and vegetables.

The south facing reading room will be a quiet sanctuary to both relax and enjoy the views of the gardens. These spaces will be available to hire for functions by residents. There will be on-site guest accommodation available for visiting friends and family. As a result of this facility potential purchasers do not feel the need to buy a large property, with often empty guest rooms, because family and friends can stay on site in the boutique guest suite.

The most pivotal sites of its time

Before City & Country's work on the King Edward VII estate English Heritage described the original hospital as an outstanding example of sanatorium and attendant buildings, which was badly in need of a new use. They also believed that the hospital belonged to the most exciting era of architecture to mark Sussex, in an age in which the Downland came to be appreciated for its topography and traditions. The hospital has always shown how topography was adapted and taken forward and has a good claim to be seen as one of the pivotal sites of its time and place.

The intricate and sensitive conversion of the hospital buildings supported by the creation of a community of new properties that fits seamlessly with the existing architecture proves that investment in bringing challenging buildings back to life can be, if properly planned, commercially viable.

Speaking about the King Edward VII project City & Country's Managing Director, Helen Moore said: "This exciting project features some of the most adventurous architecture of the period. The masterful manipulation of mass-production and craftsmanship, the architectural expectations of patients and royalty and the integration of building and landscape function produces a thoroughly English building. City & Country's sympathetic restoration of the existing listed buildings has brought this locally and nationally significant heritage asset back to its former glory."



FDS Consult expands with two new recruits

As part of its ongoing expansion, **FDS Consult**, a leading expert on fire engineering in the UK, has brought a further two Associate Fire Engineers to join its growing team. Both Granville Harris and Hayden Julian will be working on FDS Consult's impressive portfolio which includes The Corniche, a mixed-use development situated on the Thames' Albert Embankment. The pair have an extensive knowledge of the fire industry, having worked for the London Fire Brigade for a total of 60 years between them. Granville, who has also worked within London Fire Brigade's Fire Engineering Department, will be working on design proposals alongside architects and designers to create the most appropriate fire safety strategy for each individual project. Carrying out similar tasks to Granville, Hayden Julian will also be working with FDS Consult's range of impressive clients including Berkeley Homes and Lend Lease to deliver tailor-made fire strategies.

01322 387411 www.fdsconsult.com

Enq. 108



Get ready for the TTA Awards

The **TTA Golf Day** will take place at The Belfry on Saturday 14 May, the same day as the annual TTA Awards. This will be a great opportunity to meet up with industry colleagues for 18 holes of golf ahead of the big evening festivities. The PGA national course at Wishaw, Sutton Coldfield, is just a short distance away from the Awards venue. All the prizes for the day are sponsored by Mapei, to whom the TTA is very grateful. Tickets for the Awards and the Golf Day are available on the contact details below. The TTA has also announced the finalists for all but three of the categories in the TTA Awards 2016. Faced with a large field of entries which were of a universally very high quality, the judges this year had a particularly tough job to select finalists in each category. But after a lot of hard work and very careful scrutiny of all the entries, the finalists' names are now in the spotlight.

0300 365 8453 www.ttaawards.com

Enq. 109

Mapei announces its 2016 ceramic, resilient and EWI training course dates

Mapei is pleased to announce its 2016 ceramic, resilient and EWI training course dates, which are available to view on its website. All courses are free of charge and will be held in the newly refurbished Mapei Training Centre facility in Halesowen, West Midlands.

The training courses take place between 9am and 4pm with complimentary buffet lunch and refreshments provided. Each particular course is designed to incorporate both theory and practical sessions and is delivered by Mapei Training Managers. At the end of each course all attendees will receive a Mapei certificate of attendance combined with a Mapei goody bag.

All courses are aimed at installers, distributors, contractors, specifiers and designers. British Standard requirements will be explained within each field for those specialists attending certain courses. Each course will include an introduction to the Mapei group, a Factory Tour and a full explanation of the product ranges, coupled with practical demonstrations across a variety of topics, tailored to fit the training session.

In addition to the general dates, Mapei will offer product knowledge training and assessment towards the TTA Tile Retail Apprenticeship Scheme. Mapei has also taken on students from NSPP Vocational Training to help further expand youngsters educational experience as well as inspire students to reach their potential within the EWI industry.

Trainees are able to develop core competencies



by gaining more practical experience of the products and application techniques. Mapei will also provide bespoke courses for individual companies based on specific requirements involving the use of Mapei products.

Mapei is committed to helping trainees continue to build their knowledge of preparation and their use of new and existing products through to the application process. The company strongly believes in professional development and will therefore continue to offer training, free of charge. The practical element of the courses allows trainees to use both existing and new

products, further expanding the trainees current range of knowledge and skills in a risk free environment.

Ceramic training course dates:

- Monday 21 March
- Monday 18 April
- Monday 16 May
- Monday 20 June
- Monday 25 July
- Monday 12 September
- Monday 24 October
- Monday 14 November

EWI training course dates:

- Thursday 14 April
- Thursday 16 June
- Thursday 18 August
- Thursday 13 October
- Thursday 17 November

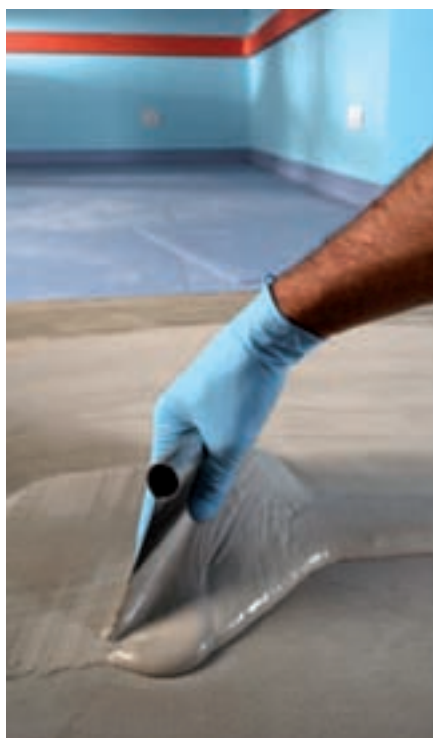
Resilient training course dates:

- Tuesday 22 March
- Tuesday 19 April
- Tuesday 17 May
- Tuesday 21 June
- Tuesday 26 July
- Tuesday 13 September
- Tuesday 25 October
- Tuesday 15 November

For more information on Mapei training dates or to book a place on the training courses please visit the website or contact Mapei directly. Places are limited so early booking is advisable.

0121 508 6970
www.mapei.co.uk

Enq. 110



CEDIA launches interactive online survey



CEDIA EMEA has introduced a new, interactive online questionnaire designed to engage consumer and professional audiences on The Future of the Connected Home. Sitting on the CEDIA EMEA website, and available for all members to embed on their own website, this useful tool will help the industry better understand the needs and views of

its target audiences, at the same time as educating them about key facts and issues in connected home technology. The interactive questionnaire forms part of CEDIA EMEA's substantial investment in a dedicated marketing campaign.

Enq. 111

Survey shows significant risk of polluted air



Vent-Axia, a leader in low carbon ventilation, has welcomed the raised awareness surrounding the importance of good indoor air quality following the latest findings which reveal the significant risk of polluted indoor air in our homes. According to a recent survey by trade association BEAMA over one third of UK homes are at an elevated or severe risk of

polluted indoor air. The My Health My Home survey revealed that 35 per cent of those surveyed potentially had this risk in varying levels of severity. For up-to-date ventilation guidance visit the company website.

08448 560 590 www.vent-axia.com/healthyhomes

Enq. 112

Y+ is YOU+BAL



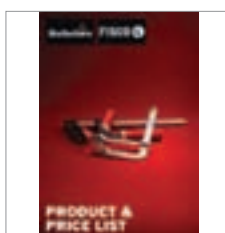
It's what everyone in tiling's been talking about, and now the team at BAL can finally reveal the true nature of Y+. YOU+BAL is a great opportunity for everyone to instantly benefit from the full support the company can offer. Registered users will receive a welcome pack including their BAL Partner card; their passport to a world of tools, support,

training and rewards. The YOU+BAL Partner Card is also the mark of a professional tiler backed by one of the market-leaders in full-tiling solutions. To register for YOU+BAL visit the website.

01782 591100 www.bal-adhesives.com/y-plus-bal-reg

Enq. 113

Hultafors Tools new product catalogue



Everything you find in the **Hultafors Tools** range carries the hallmarks of a company that has over 100 years experience in knowing what it takes to get a job done efficiently, effectively and safely. Hultafors' ingrained quality and innovation is found in every hand tool. Ergonomically crafted with built-in Fisco technology, there's a host of tools for

measuring and marking, chopping, striking and levelling – as well as the new range of saws and clamps. Whatever job you've got in hand, these tools deliver top-class solutions. Get to grips with this cutting-edge range – you'll be amazed how good they really are.

Enq. 114



CRL an associate member of the CML

Structural defects insurance provider **CRL** has become an associate member of the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML). CRL, which has eight offices throughout the UK and Ireland, elected to join the CML as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting good practice within the UK's property sector. In doing so CRL has become one of 90 associate members who collaborate, collect and share best practice on behalf of members with the organisations, government departments, and commentators who have an interest in the UK's £1.3 trillion mortgage market. Steve Mansour, CEO, CRL Management Limited, said: "Through the CML, and its lender members, CRL hopes to continue to promote the interests of its customers and we look forward to offering our complementary services to members and associate members alike." For more information, please visit the company website.

0207 127 5198 www.c-r-l.com

Enq. 115



Velux® hits the road with national tour

Leading roof window manufacturer, the **VELUX Group**, is on the road to unveil its new white-painted roof window range to customers. The VELUX 2016 Tour will visit 250 venues across the UK from until late July to give installers and suppliers a first look at the new white-painted roof window range, developed to meet contemporary demand for an alternative to traditional pine. Installers attending the event can win over £75,000 of rewards and prizes on the day including a brand new Vauxhall Vivaro van worth over £20,000, Makita Drill Sets and iPad minis. Everyone who pre-registers at www.velux.co.uk/2016tour and attends an event will receive an instant win scratch card with a guaranteed VELUX Reward worth between £5 and £50. For every VELUX white-painted roof window bought in April and May, customers will receive £25 worth of reward vouchers, redeemable at M&S, Argos, Pizza Express, Thomas Cook and Ticketmaster.

01592 778225 www.velux.co.uk/2016tour

Enq. 116

Fermacell ramps up production



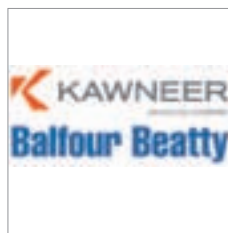
Record sales for leading building boards manufacturer **Fermacell** are leading to a ramp-up of production in several of the group's factories. The success was built on several key high-profile projects including Great Ormond Street Hospital and the on-going take-up of Powerpanel H2O. In addition, the number of builders' merchants stocking fermacell as a cost-

effective tile backer solution now numbers more than 400. This growth in demand means the group is now ramping up production at its factories where employees are working hard to keep up with orders.

0121 311 3480 www.fermacell.co.uk

Enq. 117

Kawneer remains Balfour Beatty supplier



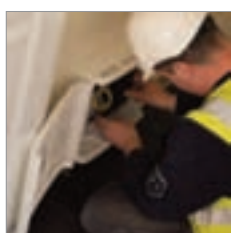
Kawneer has renewed its preferred supplier status with Balfour Beatty, signing a new UK-wide supply chain framework agreement to the end of 2017. As a framework partner, Kawneer will continue to provide Balfour Beatty with comprehensive design, technical, value engineering and installation assistance for the supply of curtain walling, window,

door and framing systems. This renewed agreement is the latest in a series of similar partnerships Kawneer has secured with some of the UK's largest construction firms.

01928 502500 www.kawneer.co.uk

Enq. 118

GTC celebrates two new fibre contracts



GTC has announced two new contracts to deliver Fibre to the Home (FTTH): with Lendlease in London and Taylor Wimpey in High Wycombe. All GTC's broadband connections are FTTH: ultra-fast, future-proof fibre broadband speeds are delivered right into each home, without reliance on traditional copper cables. Taylor Wimpey sees this as a key

differentiator between their homes and others: a reliable fibre connection, offering virtually limitless speeds, meeting all demands. A Sky TV package is also available.

01359 240363 www.gtc-uk.co.uk

Enq. 119

Developer chooses EnviroVent



Mark Hinchliffe, who recently appeared on Channel 4's *Restoration Man*, has specified an **EnviroVent** energiSava 400 Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) unit for the six bedroom conversion of Methodist Chapel on Grove Road in Harrogate. EnviroVent installed two energiSava 400 units which will provide sufficient ventilation for the

whole property. The installation of the units was more complex than usual as the building has extremely high ceilings – almost five metres high in (one room) and 12 metres high in the living area. EnviroVent's systems use multiple extract points to draw moist air out.

Enq. 120

Best range of trays from 'one stop shop'



MX Group's impressive 'one stop shop' range of shower and bathroom products continues to be welcomed by the building trade looking for high quality, reliable products for new developments and refurbishment projects up and down the country. Shower trays, electric showers, thermostatic showers, shower enclosures, taps and mixers and shower accessories –

it's a huge range of products. MX remains the leading shower tray manufacturer in the UK, manufacturing 100s of different tray sizes, in 6 main product types, catering for the specific needs of customers.

01684 293311 www.mx-group.com

Enq. 121

Accessible guidance



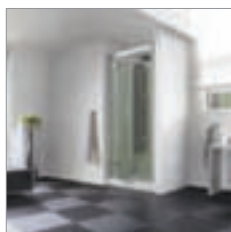
With the growing need to make homes adaptable, so occupiers can remain independent and in their own homes, new guidance is aiming to help get it right. 'Design Guidance & Considerations for a Domestic Accessible Toilet/Wetroom' has been produced and published by **Clos-o-Mat**. The white paper gives advice to ensure that all

aspects affecting the functionality and practicality of a bathroom, wetroom and toilet, as occupier needs change, are considered. The white paper can be downloaded free of charge from the website.

0161 969 1199 www.clos-o-mat.com

Enq. 122

Kinedo by Saniflo is a hit with housebuilders



The prestigious range of Kinedo shower cubicles by **Saniflo** is enjoying increasing success with premium housebuilders, as more switch from shower trays and enclosures to self-contained cubicles, realising the great benefits offered by these hassle-free, no tiling and no grout showering solutions. The Kinedo range of superior quality shower cubicles includes

Kinemagic Serenity, Kinemagic Design, Kinemagic Style, Horizon, Moonlight, Kineprime and Consort, and has been designed by the team at Saniflo to offer a comprehensive range of showering solutions.

020 8842 0033 www.saniflo.co.uk

Enq. 123

Lithofin has worktops and floors covered



Keeping your tile and stone surfaces in optimum condition is easy with Lithofin professional products from **Casdrón**. Lithofin products will clean, seal and maintain natural and artificial stone, porcelain, quarry and ceramic tiles. Use Lithofin MN Stain-Stop to protect against staining on absorbent, stain-sensitive natural and engineered stone

surfaces, as well as polished surfaces, internally and externally. Sealing prevents penetration of oil, grease and water and makes further maintenance easier. See website for full Lithofin range.

01962 732126 www.casdrón.co.uk

Enq. 124

FILA launches silicone and glue remover



Surface care specialist **Fila** is introducing a new treatment to its aftercare range. New **FILAZERO SIL** removes new and old silicone, glue and sticky label residue. It can safely be used on absorbent and non-absorbent surfaces, including stone, grout, porcelain and ceramic, marble, glass and metal. **FILAZERO SIL** also removes other residues, including candle wax and

resin. **FILAZERO SIL** has a fresh citrus fragrance and is safe to use in domestic home and contract environments. It is available in 250ml units and is offered alongside **FILA**'s award-winning range.

01584 877 286 www.filasolutions.com

Enq. 125

Latest products available from Screwfix



Tradespeople and serious DIYers can now stock-up on even more of the latest trade essentials and innovations, as multi-channel retailer, **Screwfix**, has released the latest copy of its much anticipated catalogue. The company has teamed up with leading power tool manufacturer **DeWalt** to bring to market the 18V XR Brushless Combi Drill at a price of only

£149.99. The latest drill is compact and powerful with added intelligent XR trigger to provide extra control, and comes complete with two 2.0Ah Li-Ion batteries, carry case and 30 minute charger.

03330 112 112 www.screwfix.com

Enq. 126

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Enq. 127

Beam & Block/Poly Flooring System

fpmccann.co.uk/flooring

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For sales enquiries, contact the Flooring Sales Team on **01335 361269** email flooring@fpmccann.co.uk

Enq. 128

Snickers' patented knee protection



Leading the way in reliable and certified knee protection for professional tradesmen and women, **Snickers'** new D30 Kneepads deliver the most advanced knee protection available today. With superior cushioning and protection, they're made from D30® LITE – a high-tech material that's flexible, durable and cut-resistant that complies with CE

standard EN14404. Like every other Snickers' Kneepad, the new D30® Lite Craftsmen Kneepads are designed to fit Snickers Workwear's unique and patented KneeGuard™ positioning system, allowing wearers to adjust the kneepads at different heights. **Enq. 129**

Rendaboard and Weber Secure BBA



Euroform is delighted to announce that Rendaboard and weber-rend MT have been awarded a BBA certificate (Cert. No. 15/5228). The certificate relates to weber.rend MT Systems thin coat external renders applied to Rendaboard for use as ventilated and drained exterior wall panel systems on timber-frame and steel-frame buildings. Key factors assessed included

weather resistance, strength and stability, fire resistance and durability, with the board demonstrating its capacity to perform for a period in excess of 30 years.

01925 860999 www.euroform.co.uk

Enq. 130

Dickies 2016 new look catalogue



The new **Dickies** 2016 catalogue is to be launched in March with nearly 200 pages of fresh photography on core lines. With new graphics, icons, pictograms it is easy to follow and it is packed with a number of exciting new products and ranges with style, functionality and quality being paramount in driving the Dickies business forward. Offering quality workwear in

both traditional and modern styles that delivers performance, comfort and protection at an affordable price. Details of all the new items will be uploaded in March and the new catalogue will be available then.

01761 419419 www.dickiesworkwear.com

Enq. 131

VBH stocks Siegenia Titan AF tilt & turn



Hardware specialist **VBH** now stocks Titan AF, the latest tilt and turn system from Siegenia. Titan AF is available in both surface fit and 'Axxent 24+' concealed hinge options, and has versions to suit PVCu, timber and aluminium windows with sash weights of up to 150Kg. The hardware clamps into the Eurogroove prior to screw fixing and

VBH advises that the 'click-on' coupling feature makes the hardware easy to fit. The security level can be easily upgraded from 'basic' to RC-1, RC-2 or PAS24 level by changing just a few components.

01634 263263 www.vbhgb.com

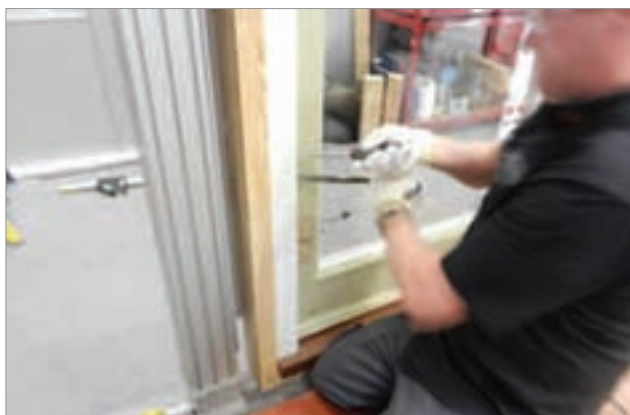
Enq. 132

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Westbury Joinery holds its own

Westbury Windows & Joinery products recently passed PAS 24 British Standard tests in accordance with Part Q security regulations introduced last year. The tests, which are conducted in a UKAS approved laboratory, involve a mechanical onslaught during which pistons, chains and a sandbag-style wrecking-ball are used to strike, push and pull the product imitating a break-in. Following that, a physical test ensues in which a person, armed with several tools, attempts to force entry, attacking any part or component of the product they choose including frames, locks and glass. Westbury Director John Mumford explains: "Using layers of laminated wood for added strength, specially sourced screws and fastenings, a robust multi-point locking systems, and PAS24 approved cylinder locks, we have been able to build a superior product that the PAS24 tests are no match for."

01245 326 510 www.westburyjoinery.com

Enq. 133

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Enq. 135

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Enq. 136



Waste not, want not: Thermally efficient aluminium building systems can help reduce energy consumption

Research by the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) found that 79 per cent of the population would like to see energy subsidies spent on schemes that reduce energy waste. Rising heating costs, coupled with the UK's inefficient housing stock, has put millions in fuel poverty, with an estimated 2.35 million households in England alone.

The main way to prevent heat loss in a building is through insulation. But with around 25 per cent of it escaping through the doors and windows, specifying thermally efficient aluminium building systems could help retain the warmth internally, resulting in comfortable homes and lower bills.

According to the Office for National Statistics, England and Wales had an estimated 43,000 excess mortalities in winter 2014/15, a 27 per cent rise against non-winter months. Cold homes have been identified as a major contributor to the ill health and additional deaths during this period. Combining insulation

Graham Hurrell, commercial director of AluK, looks at the measures in place to regulate domestic window and door installations in order to help tackle energy waste

with measures such as installing energy-efficient aluminium windows and doors, can help improve a home's thermal ratings, enhancing occupant comfort and health.

When installing new windows and doors, there are a number of regulations in place to help reduce the energy wasted in UK homes. These measures cover both new-build developments as well as the current inefficient stock. In England and Wales, there are two Building Regulations that cover the energy efficiency of window and door systems in dwellings, Approved Document (AD) L1A and L1B.

New-builds are covered by AD L1A which stipulates that installed windows and doors must meet a minimum U-value of $2.0\text{W}/\text{M}^2\text{K}$, due to enhanced insulation and air-tightness in the complete building structure. Upgrades to existing properties are covered by AD L1B and require systems to meet a minimum U-value of $1.6\text{W}/\text{M}^2\text{K}$ for windows and $1.8\text{W}/\text{M}^2\text{K}$ for doors, or a 'C' level or above Window Energy Rating (WER) and Door Energy Rating (DER). The lower U-values – when compared to new developments – take into account older structures having limitations on where further efficiency improvements can be made.

Further directives are in place to offer guidance and safeguard building owners, builders, fabricators and installers as well as end-users.

U-values

The U-value is a very useful measure of window and door energy-efficiency levels as it provides details relating to heat loss by calculating the amount of heat lost in watts per square metre when the temperature outside is at least one degree lower.

Thermally broken aluminium windows and doors offer enhanced energy-efficiency. Such systems have a barrier between the inner and outer frames to prevent temperature transfer through the frame and condensation on the inner frame. Thermally efficient products should provide lower U-values, equating to a better insulated property.

U-values are of most use to specifiers, builders

Continued overleaf...





and developers. However, fabricators and installers are responsible for ensuring that the windows and doors they supply or install in new and refurbishment projects meet the specified minimum U-value for windows and doors.

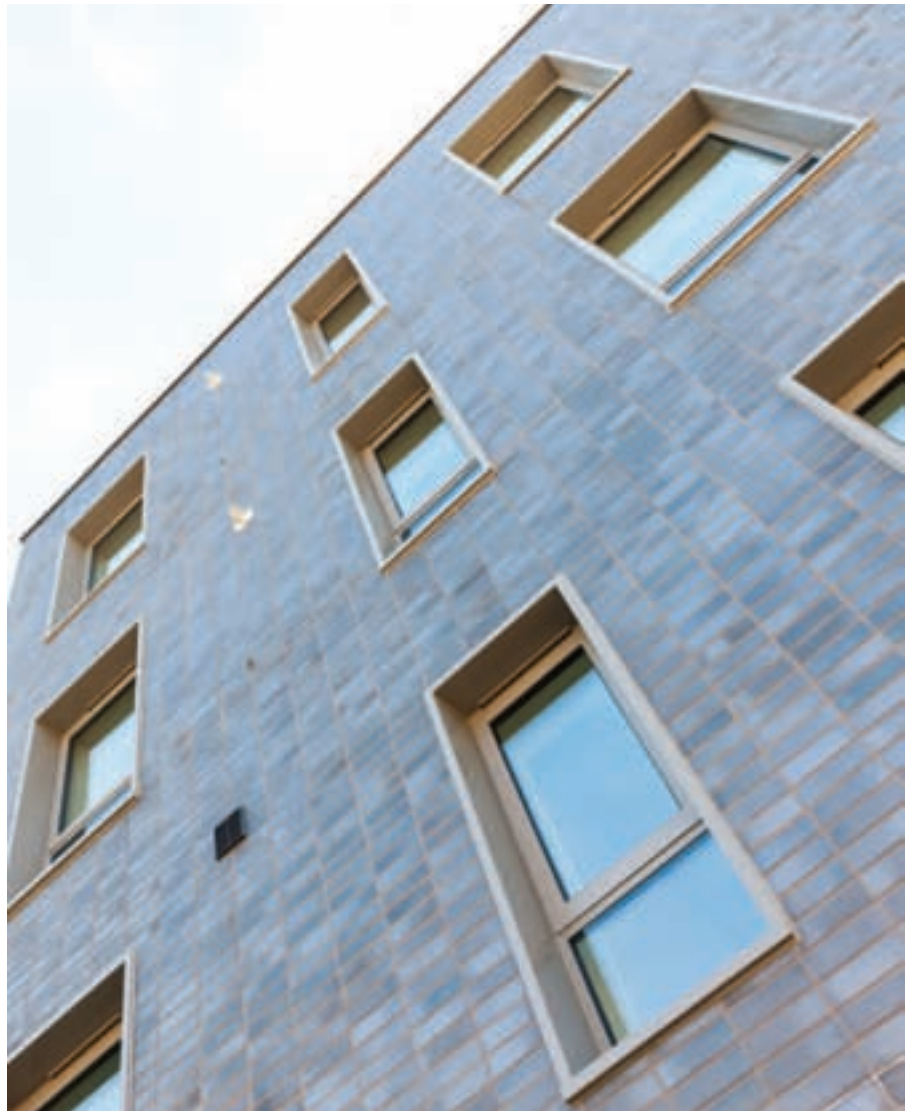
Window and Door Energy Rating

Window Energy Rating (WER) and Door Energy Rating (DER) are of most use to owners and installers. They measure the thermal efficiency of a standardised complete fabricated product to generate an energy performance level. Introduced by the British Fenestration Ratings Council (BFRC), the ratings range from A-G with 'A' being the most energy-efficient. In addition to thermal insulation (measured in U-values), WERs and DERs also consider air tightness to ensure systems do not lose heat from their weather seals and glazing seals. The ratings also take into account the positive heating effect (or solar gain) as a result of more glass and less frame, which can reduce the need for heating on colder days. Aluminium windows and doors offer slim sightlines, which provide a property with increased external light transmission.

Energy Performance Certificates

Building owners and occupants benefit the most from Energy Performance Certificates (EPC). Introduced by the government to tackle the problem of Britain's large stock of inefficient housing, an EPC is used to calculate the energy performance of a building. It provides prospective occupiers and owners with information relating to a property's energy use and carbon emissions so they can consider its thermal levels and fuel costs.

When making decisions on moving home, occupants can use the EPC to compare the



energy efficiency of similar properties. For owners, an EPC provides a recommendation report that lists cost-effective and other measures to improve the building's energy rating.

It is the joint responsibility of owners, builders and installers to ensure that Energy Performance Certificates are up to date and available to occu-

"It is the joint responsibility of owners, builders and installers to ensure that Energy Performance Certificates are up to date and available to occupants whenever any improvement work such as loft and wall insulation, new boiler installations or window and door upgrades takes place"

pants whenever any improvement work such as loft and wall insulation, new boiler installations or window and door upgrades takes place.

In the year to 31 December 2015, a total of 1,797,276 EPCs were lodged on the Domestic Register. Based on fuel costs, 11 per cent received

an A or B rating, 65 per cent got a C or D with the remaining 24 per cent rated E, F or G. Properties with an A or B rating exceed current standards whereas properties rated D-G are the worst performing.

Energy Performance Certificates are also used to calculate a property's Environmental Impact Rating (EIR), which is based on CO₂ emissions. During the same period, 12 per cent of domestic properties with an EPC lodged were awarded an EIR of A or B. An additional 48 per cent received a C or D rating and the remaining 40 per cent were rated E, F or G.

A total of 14,445,372 EPCs covering domestic properties have been lodged between 2008 and the period ending 31 December 2015. Based on fuel costs, 9 per cent of properties were given a rating of A or B. A further 66 per cent received a C or D with the remaining 25 per cent rated E, F or G.

From 1 April 2018, owners and landlords will be forced by new energy-efficiency regulations upgrade the energy-efficiency of the millions of homes currently rated F and G to a minimum of E or face being unable to let them until they improve the rating.



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138



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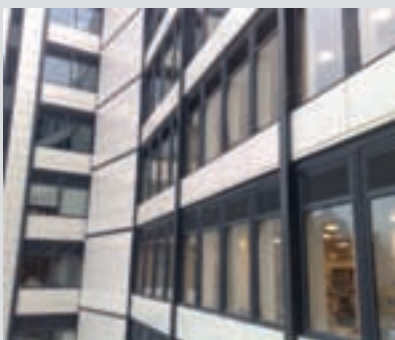
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Enq. 140



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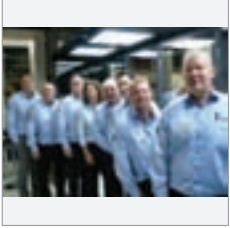
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Enq. 141

Lumi wows the crowds at exhibition



According to **Apeer**, the recent Selfbuild and Improve Your Home Exhibition in Belfast was the busiest and most exciting to date, attracting over 18,000 visitors. The consumer facing show was of particular significance to Apeer as it marked the first official launch of the G-15 Award winning Lumi system in Ireland, and as such the company seized

the opportunity to unveil the full range of its cutting edge 'frameless' products on its stand. Final preparations are under way for Apeer's next 'show stopping' stand for the FIT Show in April.

028 2563 2200 www.appeer.co.uk

Enq. 142

New Synseal installation video online



Synseal has launched a new and informative "Celsius Solid Roof Installation Guide" video on the company's YouTube Channel. The 10-minute video production features two highly experienced specialist roofing engineers – Matt Williams and Gary Woods from the Synseal Technical Services department – working as a team to fit the Celsius Solid

Roof above existing PVC-U window frames to mimic a typical UK conservatory retrofit-style installation. The video uses real time and time lapse footage, supported by graphic details where required.

01623 443200 www.synseal.com

Enq. 143



Sika Plastix - the complete package

Sika products have been used in more than 80 of London's largest and most iconic landmarks including the Shard, the Pinnacle and the Gherkin. **Everbuild** – a Sika company, is pleased to be launching Sika Plastix – a new brand of silicone sealants perfect for window, door and roofline installers. Within the new brand is Sika® Plastix- 22A Premium Grade, a high quality product that is sure to be loved by installers. Providing excellent adhesion to most common substrates including plastic, glass, brick and wood, this product is ideal for glazing and roofline applications, with low-dirt pick up and anti-mould properties. CE certified for glazing, facade, cold climate and sanitary applications this really is a premium product you can rely on. Also within the range is Sika® Plastix- 48N Contractors Grade, a great alternative product. CE certified for facade, cold climate and sanitary applications this is a great lower cost alternative product you can still have confidence in.

0113 240 2424 www.everbuild.co.uk

Enq. 144

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Enq. 145

Editor's Focus

Saint Gobain PAM

If you are looking to add value to your property by specifying a strong, durable, lightweight and aesthetic alternative to plastic rainwater systems, then take a closer look at Saint Gobain PAM UK's Cyclone steel system. With no risk of shrinking or leaking, Cyclone has a no fade colour warranty of 15 years and will typically last for more than 40 years. Its longevity, and 100 percent recyclability also means it has the lowest carbon footprint of any material, so it's the best choice for modern eco designed properties. Available in four standard colours black, white, silver metallic and dark grey, Cyclone will provide kerb appeal for decades to come.

Enq. 146



IronmongeryDirect

IronmongeryDirect, one of the UK's leading suppliers of ironmongery products, has added a new security product to its range. The Door Jammer is a unique and innovative security aid that can be used to jam the door shut from the inside. It is easy to fit to most doors and release quickly in an emergency. This one-off product is ideal as a temporary security measure if a lock can't be secured by a locksmith, or even as just an additional security measure. For more information on the new Door Jammer and to view IronmongeryDirect's full range of products, please visit the company's website.

Enq. 147



Building Product Solutions (BPS)

Window and door manufacturer for the new build sector Building Product Solutions (BPS) was founded in the midst of the recent recession. The company spotted a gap in the market and filled it with innovation and outstanding service levels. In an industry where average turnaround time is up to six weeks, Building Product Solutions stands out from the crowd having slashed this to five working days for cavity closers and 10 for glazed frames. Many leading housebuilders have quickly come to rely on Building Product Solutions as the partner who never lets them down. For more information visit the company's website.

Enq. 148



Clearstone Paving

From loose gravel that tended to get kicked onto lawns and into drains, Clearstone's resin bound has transformed and restored the Middle Temple paths into smooth, wheelchair accessible walkways. The porosity of Clearstone's resin bound enables air and water to circulate around the roots of the 200-year-old London plane trees. And the flexibility of resin bound means Clearstone's craftsmen were able to pave around the precious tree roots. Clearstone installed 1572m² of resin bound in Brewers Malt. They manufacture and install their own system using high quality UV stable resins, so can control quality and finish.

Enq. 149



RK Door Systems

RK Door Systems is continually improving its range of premium entrance doors and it's proud to announce its newest addition for 2016. To accompany its stunning entrance doors, it is launching secure, fire rated doors, specifically for flats and apartments. Beautifully designed contemporary styles that you've come to expect from the company, supplied as pre-hung doorsets and available in any size up to 1180 x 2400mm. All are available in a choice of wood veneers, laminates, or glass faced in any RAL colour together with enhanced accessories including digital spy holes and finger scan opening mechanisms for premium projects.

Enq. 150



Kolorseal

As one of the leaders in specialist colour coatings, Kolorseal has established an excellent reputation across the UK, primarily supplying uPVC, glass and metal coated products. For fabricators, Kolorseal will collect your item, coat it and return to you within seven days. For installers, Kolorseal will order the item for you, coat it and deliver to you with 14 days. All products in the range come with a 10 year guarantee. Managing Director Deborah Hendry says: "Regular feedback from our customers has helped us gain an insight in to their needs and position the business to cater for the varying services which are needed."

Enq. 151



Comar completes refurbishment



Comar Architectural Aluminium Systems, with its approved fabricator Anglia Fixing Ltd, recently completed a change of use refurbishment at Cater House in Chelmsford, Essex. The former eight-storey, purpose-built office block, which boasts a city centre location adjacent to the River Can, has been converted into 35 apartments. The project was completed

using Comar 5P.i Top Hung Casement Windows to the communal stairways, and Comar 5P.i ECO Casement, Top & Side Hung windows and Comar 7P.i ECO Rebated Doors for the apartments.

0208 685 9685 www.comar-alu.co.uk

Enq. 152

FAKRO roof windows for SIPs house



FPP-V U3 top hung and pivot and FTP-V U3 centre pivot roof windows from **FAKRO** have been used in HebHomes design of a SIPs home in Abernethy, Perthshire. Windows were fitted with external combination and internal airtight flashings, underfelt collars and internal support trims and construction was undertaken by a HebHomes affiliated

contractor. The new home owners have scope to switch window opening on the FPP-V from centre pivot to top hung simply by use of a switch in the frame.

01283 554755 www.fakro.co.uk

Enq. 153

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Enq. 155

Arkay Windows expands its business



Continuing its exciting business growth, **Arkay Windows** has expanded its aluminium fabrication division to meet customer demand, following a move to bigger premises. It has enabled Arkay to stock more products, add machinery and employ more staff, resulting in increased production. The company has also upgraded its software system to streamline

its entire operations. Investment in the new facility, its staff and advanced technology will see fabrication rise by 40 per cent through increased stock holding and a streamlined production line.

020 8889 6821 www.arkaywindows.com

Enq. 156

The Window Outlet benefitting from VEKA



The Window Outlet is making the most of **Network VEKA's** extensive support and enjoying big business benefits. Director Graeme Pritt quickly became an advocate for Network VEKA's radio adverts after trialling their effect for The Window Outlet: "Based on our experience, I would recommend Network VEKA membership to any hard-working

company looking to build their business. There's so much assistance at hand. Being part of this organisation has had a massive, positive effect on The Window Outlet."

01282 473170 www.networkveka.co.uk

Enq. 157

The VEKA UK Group scoops national award



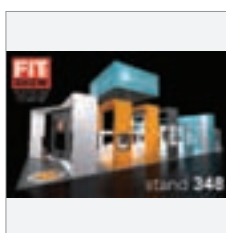
Industry-leading PVC-U systems supplier **The VEKA UK Group** has been named a British manufacturing champion after scooping a prestigious national business award. The Burnley-based firm, which employs 400 staff, saw its success recognised by judges at the EE Future Manufacturing Awards held in London. The company took gold in the Business

Efficiency Award, awarded to the manufacturer that has most successfully brought in new operating practices to boost productivity and business performance.

01282 716 611 www.vekauk.com

Enq. 158

Synseal return to the FIT Show in style



Synseal Group will be returning to Telford on 12-14 April in style, with the largest stand at FIT Show 2016. Synseal's display at this year's event will give visitors a chance to get fully updated and appraise the sheer breadth and quality of Synseal's product range. Synseal will be launching several new products at the show, which are sure to be of interest to fabricators and

installers alike, including the much anticipated WarmCore aluminium window system, the Masterdor solid timber Craftsman door range and a sneak preview of the stunning new thermally broken Lantern roof.

01623 443200 www.synseal.com

Enq. 159

FIT Show stand no 334 & 348

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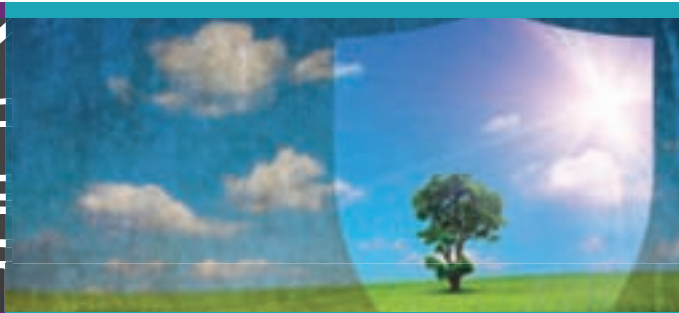


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Enq. 160

Housebuilders: windows are just windows, right?

Visit the FIT Show at The International Centre, Telford, from 12 - 14 April



There are few elements of a building that are so crucial to its performance and aesthetics and which therefore, can make or break a sale.

So important to homeowners are windows and other related features such as residential and other external doors, a healthy industry has thrived for more than forty years out of replacing those installed by builders.

The housebuilding industry cottoned on a long time ago to the importance of appearance to potential buyers, but also that they were aware of the potential cost of replacing windows soon after the home was built. PVC-U frames promised that original frames would not require replacing for some years, but also that they would require minimal maintenance compared to their timber counterparts. All of the benefits upon which the replacement window industry was founded, in fact.

So as a housebuilding professional you know all of this and you make sure that the windows and doors in the homes your company builds are well spec'd and attention is paid to the style. Not only that, but high performance windows and doors are required to satisfy ever more demanding building regulations and of course, the energy performance of a home is increasingly crucial in a buyer's wish list: these are elements that can be a deal maker or breaker.

So while windows and doors, and in some properties conservatories and orangeries, play such an important part in the marketing and sales of properties, it would make good sense to visit an exhibition that was dedicated to the subject.

There is such an event: The Fabricator Installer Trade (FIT) Show first appeared in 2013 and since then has become the essential UK showcase for the industry, to sell to itself of course, but more importantly to show, quite literally, what it is made of to specifiers, designers and maintainers of residential buildings of all types.

This year the event has come of age. The biggest show yet in terms of the number of exhibitors – 180 – the space occupied and the variety and number of new products being wheeled out for the first time make this event an essential destination for anyone concerned with the design and specification of dwellings.

Essentially, The FIT Show is designed to allow



professionals to focus their attention on everything glass and glazing in a short, sharp and highly focused burst. Is it going to be worth your while? Most of the major brands of windows, composite doors and conservatories and their derivatives available in the UK will be on show, together with legions of hardware, patio and French doors, and the current homeowners essential add on, bi-folding doors.

After almost two years since the last FIT Show the industry has clamoured to develop hundreds of new products and systems in time for the April show, including at least four new window systems that have previously never been shown there, three of which will remain closely guarded secrets until the event.

Of these, the only product for which details are available is Lumi, from Irish-based Apeer. Described recently as "A product that truly re-invents the window" by the judges of a glazing industry award, Lumi is a complete range of customisable, matching frameless windows and bi-folding patio and residential doors. The triple glazed units bonded to an internal GRP subframe give tremendous strength, performance and looks, especially on a wide span of bi-folding doors.

Of the others, Profile 22 is rumoured to be

unveiling not one, but two new window systems, while Residence 9, which has made a name for itself with a system that mimics the 19th century flush sash, is said to be bringing to market a derivative of that product.

Composite door producers will be at The FIT Show in their droves, as will bi-folding doors including a hinge-less version that is proving highly popular for those seeking an alternative. And something for builders looking for a more sublime feature with which to woo buyers, US manufacturer SageGlass, a member of the Saint-Gobain Group, is launching its electronically tintable glass that can be controlled using a smartphone app. Imagine, says the manufacturer, being able to manage the heat, light and glare and of course privacy in your home. To demonstrate the product, SageGlass has replaced a whole wall of the exhibition hall with the product, an area of 314 metres², in what will become a permanent feature of the building.

The upshot is that a day – or two, preferably with so much to see – at The FIT Show will offer an invaluable insight into the latest that the window and door industry has to offer, a focus that no amount of internet surfing could achieve; a truly worthwhile investment in time for any housebuilding professional.

The Fabricator Installer Trade (FIT) Show takes place at The International Centre Telford on 12, 13 and 14 April 2016. Register now for fast entry: www.fitshow.co.uk/24/reg




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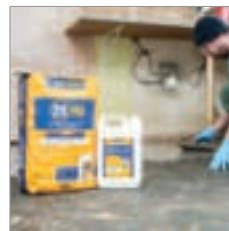
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Enq. 162

Setcrete 2K Pro for difficult installations



Setcrete™ 2K Pro fast setting floor levelling compound has been specifically designed with the time-pressed professional builder in mind. This easy to use floor levelling compound can be applied directly over old adhesive residues without the need for priming. This can save professional builders a great deal of time, effort, and money. Setcrete 2K Pro is

applicable in thicknesses of 2-30mm, and can be walk on hard in as little as 60 minutes. It has excellent self-levelling properties, meaning that minimal work with a trowel is required. It is low-odour and ammonia free. For more, please visit the company website.

Enq. 163


Nicobond launch ScreedPro



N&C Nicobond has introduced ScreedPro, a new high-performance range of smoothing compounds, for easy, efficient and effective levelling of the floor prior to applying the floor covering. Nicobond ScreedPro offers clients fast drying capabilities and exceptional handling characteristics, as well as high levels of flow compared with other

manufacturer's offerings. Nicobond's portfolio is vast and offers features such as rapid drying capabilities, OPC (Ordinary Portland Cement) free formulations that are fast drying. Many of Nicobond's smoothing compounds are pumpable.

Enq. 164



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Enq. 165

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Enq. 166

Kährs wood floor design specified throughout iconic tower



Kährs Walnut Linnea wood flooring has been specified throughout No. 1 Hagley Road – a landmark renovation programme in Birmingham City Centre. Conceived by developer, Seven Capital, the project comprises 20 levels of apartments across an iconic tower building in Five Ways. The specification totals over 14,500 m² of Kährs flooring, which has been installed by West Midlands-based BAC Flooring Ltd for main contractor, Colmore Tang Construction. Kährs is also working with Colmore Tang Construction on further project specifications across the West Midlands and North West. Kährs Walnut Bloom, from the Linnea Lodge Collection, was chosen to complement the elegant design and clean contemporary lines. It was installed throughout kitchens, living areas, hallways and bedrooms. Kährs Walnut Bloom is a two-strip wood floor with a warm nut-brown tone and discreet grain variation. All Kährs Linnea floors feature a smart, eco-construction. Just 7mm thick, the design provides an exceptionally durable real wood option with a high performance core and a satin lacquer prefinish. The Linnea Lodge Collection includes 12 designs, from white-stained Ash Blizzard to nut-brown Bloom and Rain.

023 9245 3045 www.kahrs.com

Enq. 167

Mapei launches new Adesilex P9 Express



Mapei UK has launched its new adhesive – Adesilex P9 Express to its existing Adesilex product range. Adesilex P9 Express is a cement based, rapid-setting adhesive, ideal for the internal and external installation of porcelain, ceramic and non-moisture sensitive natural stone materials to floors. Whereas Mapei's existing Adesilex P9 adhesive is best suited for the bonding of interior and exterior ceramic tiles and mosaics on walls. The new adhesive can fix tiles to suitably prepared timber substrates such as 15mm overlaid plywood floors. Floors containing wet or electrical underfloor heating systems are also suitable substrates for the bonding of tiles using Adesilex P9 Express. Adesilex P9 Express has a high performance 'Fast Track' formulation so the setting time is 4 hours which is ideal for areas subject to high foot-traffic. Each product is supplied in 20kg bags and is available in white and grey colours. Alongside new Adesilex P9 Express, Mapei's Adesilex family now consists of Adesilex P9, Adesilex P10 for mosaic fixing and Adesilex P4 for large format tiling on floors. For more information about Mapei ceramic products and training days please contact the company directly or visit the website.

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Enq. 168



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Enq. 169

Calling all chocoholics



The Chocolate Works is a prestigious development of one to four-bedroomed homes and apartments, built on the site of the former Terry's Chocolate factory. Unfortunately, the waft of chocolate orange is unlikely to reach you these days, but Vortice will ensure that your energy-efficient home will have superb air quality due to its range of intermittent extract

fans. David Wilson are installing the Vort Quadro and Punto Filo range of ventilation products. Both ranges are unobtrusive, modern in their design and are energy-efficient.

01283 492949 www.vortice.ltd.uk

Enq. 170

Thin-joint venture



H+H's Thin-Joint System of aircrete blocks and Celfix Mortar is a key element in the construction of a Passivhaus development on the Isle of Wight. External walls of homes on the Cameron Close development are constructed from H+H's 200mm thick thermally efficient Celcon Plus blocks, enhanced externally by an additional 230mm thick layer of

phenolic insulation on the houses and 150mm thick layer on the apartments. The Thin-Joint solution is ideal for Passivhaus construction because it helps minimise air leakage through the external walls.

01732 880520 www.hhcelcon.co.uk

Enq. 171

Giacomini becoming extra-care experts



Italian based **Giacomini** is widely recognised in the sector as being a leading supplier of European manufactured heating products. In addition to this, the UK office, based in Bristol, is increasingly becoming an expert in extra-care housing projects. Giacomini has noticed a significant increase in its involvement in extra-care underfloor heating projects.

The company specialises in providing a unique complete underfloor heating package, taking projects from design through to manufacturing and installation via its network of approved UFH installers.

01454 809100 www.giacomini.co.uk

Enq. 172

Knauf offer innovative ThroughWall Solution



Collaboration between **Knauf** and strategic industry partners has produced a unique innovation for the facades market, the Knauf ThroughWall Solution. The ThroughWall Solution combines quality Knauf products that give Knauf the unique advantage of being able to specify the facade infill panel through to the internal partitions. Developed by Knauf –

one of the world's leading manufacturers of lightweight building materials and systems – the system is the first in the industry to be supplied by a single manufacturer.

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Enq. 173

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Enq. 174



Leave no impression whatsoever

New and exclusive to **James Latham**, Super Matt is a range of highly durable, finger print resistant, MFC decors from Kronospan Italy that are set to change the market.

With eight 'on-trend' colours, Super Matt offers a premium quality, durable surface that reduces the need to be constantly wiping away unsightly finger marks and smears. It also has a high resistance to scratches, so it's perfect for home and office furniture as well as kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms. Plus, there is a range of ABS edgings to match.

Paul Morson, Group Product Champion for Melamine at James Latham said: "We are now one of the leading laminate and melamine suppliers in the UK and many of our exciting new ranges, including this one which has been extremely well received by customers, are exclusive to James Latham."

Enq. 175

At home with LEDs

LED bulbs (or “Lamps” to those in the trade) have been available for more than 10 years now. With many people having tried them with mixed results, unfortunately some early users may have some bad memories hanging around of poor output and bad colour. As confidence in LED is rising, and the costs are falling, Luceco discuss the story so far, providing the important information necessary to get the most from the technology

The love for halogen

The halogen lamp is how we are used to the average home being lit; they turn on instantly and provide a nice coloured light.

But we need to use less power, and by September 2018 you will no longer be able to buy a halogen bulb.

We have had options to reduce our energy usage within our homes for many years by replacing halogen with U-shaped fluorescent lamps. Simply, the majority of us didn't bother because the light from them did not perform the same. The colour wasn't right and no one wants a delay when they turn on their light switch.

Give yourself a pay rise...

By using a mixture of lamps and fixtures you can create a more interesting environment, but most importantly reduce lighting energy bills by more than 80 per cent. LED also lasts more than 15 x longer than traditional halogen. Many people now have all LED houses.

Different colours?

The colour of the light is known as the colour temperature, one of the big changes to get used to with LED is the different colours available. Colour temperature is measured in kelvin (K) the lower the number the warmer the colour.

- 2700K – 3300K = Warm White
- 3300K – 5300K = Neutral White
- >5300K = Cool White

If you match the colour to either the use or the surface finish you will get the best results,

examples of this are that people in warm climates tend to prefer cooler colour temperatures. When considering surface colours, warm colours need to be illuminated by a warm light source.

If you like the colour of the light from an old style lamp, you will want to go for warm white. Warm white is fine for the majority houses, although some people like a slightly whiter light in their kitchens and bathrooms so a neutral white may be preferred. Cool white is not typically desired in a house as it is very blue looking.

“The halogen lamp is how we are used to the average home being lit; they turn on instantly and provide a nice coloured light. But we need to use less power, and by September 2018 you will no longer be able to buy a halogen bulb”

How much light?

If you want more light, you need more Watts, and vice versa. With LED the light output is measured in Lumens (Lm) the higher the number the more light is emitted.

It can be difficult to know which output to choose, and end users should purchase lamps that specify on the packaging the equivalent wattage.

As a very rough guide you can usually use an LED light source that is 10 - 15 per cent of the traditional halogen wattage.



Can LED be dimmed?

Yes, but not all LED lights are dimmable – typically you will need to pay a little extra for a dimmable version.

Because the load is much lower than conventional technology, some dimmers do not work well with LEDs. This can cause some flicker, although this issue is occurring less and less as the technology is being developed.

Different types available?

There is now an LED equivalent for every lighting point in your house. This may include a replacement lamp, or alternatively a complete LED fixture. When looking for a replacement lamp, if you are unsure which lamp you need it may well be best to take the old one with you. The most important part to match is the cap at the base of the lamp.

Other areas that you may want to consider LEDs for is lighting under kitchen cupboards, floodlights and wall mounted amenity lighting. LEDs can also be used for lighting in areas that you would not have considered lighting previously, such as marker lighting in steps, under hand rails, and general garden accent lighting.

LED has also provided us with the option of colour changing light. Red, green and blue LEDs can be mixed, which allows creativity in the home or garden.

Summary

LEDs are now available in most major retailers, the technology is further advanced and the costs are very realistic. Eventually legislation will dictate that we only have LED to light our homes – but why wait until then, when we can save money now.

Enq. 176





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Enq. 177



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Enq. 178



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Enq. 179

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Benefits of building with SIPs

Building with timber is becoming an increasingly popular choice for developers and self-builders who need to produce a highly energy efficient building as quickly as possible. With off-site construction requiring less time on site, and therefore reduced labour costs, it is a competitive alternative to traditional brick and block construction methods. Here, Andrew Carpenter, chief executive of the Structural Timber Association (STA) discusses the benefits of using Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) and off-site construction methods for residential buildings

Recent government announcements surrounding the residential housing sector, in particular the aim to build 400,000 affordable homes by 2020, demonstrates the need for an alternative construction method to the time-consuming traditional brick and block. Given the current labour shortage within the construction sector and the four-year period outlined to produce the homes, developers need to look to modern methods of construction to generate their contribution.

Providing a quick build time, low carbon alternative, off-site construction and pre-manufactured panels are the ideal solution. Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) are an advanced method of construction, offering superior insulation, structural strength and air-tightness.

Consisting of two parallel faces, typically Oriented Strand Board, the boards sandwich a rigid core of Polyurethane foam or Expanded Polystyrene.

Ideal for use in floors, walls and roofs for residential properties, the panels can be designed with window and door spaces in place and ready for on-site installation.

Lightweight, and therefore quick to erect on site, the panel manufacturing process ensures there are minimal disruptions to the erection process.

Manufactured off-site the panel can be monitored at every stage of its construction and is not reliant on a number of other trades and factors. Constructed in a precise manner within a controlled environment, the panel manufacturing process utilises the latest industry methods and technology. Due to the factory environment, not only are working conditions improved for employees, the schedule is also not reliant on good weather. This is a huge benefit for developers, given the temperamental nature of our climate. Through the use of off-site construction methods, strong winds, heavy rain and below freezing conditions have no impact on workers, leading to a safer, better quality and more efficient production.

Consequently, this increase in efficiency results in a range of cost benefits associated with the use of off-site pre-fabricated panels. For example, as weather is not a determining factor in the readiness of the panels, there is a substantially reduced risk of the project missing essential deadlines due to materials not being ready, which



can result in unforeseen costs.

Furthermore, through the stringent manufacturing process, architects' plans are strictly adhered to, presenting the truest likeness to the original designs. This results in less waste materials, as offcuts can often be repurposed or recycled. In addition, when using SIPs, window and door voids can be pre-cut, resulting in fewer modifications and waste materials on-site as well as a faster time to building completion.

Also, an increasingly important consideration is the energy efficiency and sustainability of the building produced and its materials.

One of the few truly renewable building materials, timber – when controlled in a responsible manner – is an environmentally sustainable resource that can be utilised without impacting the surrounding environment.

The sustainability of building materials is important, however, equally important is the sustainability of the building as a whole, over its complete lifespan. By reducing the level of thermal energy lost from the building, energy conservation is increased, resulting in reduced heating costs and, therefore, fewer carbon emissions from the property.

In line with Part L of the Building Regulations, the use of SIPs constitutes a 'Fabric First' approach. By prioritising the building fabric and energy efficiency before considering more expensive renewable energy systems, the need for costly maintenance of renewable technologies and heating systems throughout the building's lifespan are greatly reduced. SIPs offer this

through their superior energy efficiency and ability to minimise cold bridging.

To reduce U-values and increase a building's energy efficiency, the thickness of the building material is traditionally increased to reduce the ability of heat to transfer. However, as U-values as low as 0.11 W/m²K can be achieved through the use of SIPs, increasing the wall thickness is not a necessary requirement.

Once on-site, the benefits of SIPs are easily seen. Taking approximately 55 per cent of the 'time to weather tight' as a masonry build, the use of SIPs saves a considerable amount of time on-site.

This in turn reduces the cost of labour required to complete the structure. During a period in which the construction sector as a whole is experiencing an extreme skills shortage, with a recent Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) survey revealing 60 per cent of respondents have difficulty finding bricklayers for projects, a shorter period on-site using a less labour intensive construction method is ideal.

This allows for the skills within the sector to go further, while aiding the housebuilding community to meet the government's affordable housing ambition.

SIPs as an off-site construction technique provides a multitude of benefits for developers. Providing developers with a faster build time, highly energy efficient properties, and a less labour intensive construction process, SIPs present the solution to aiding developers to meet the 2020 housebuilding targets.

Enq. 180



The pros of aluminium guttering

Martyn Reed, the technical director of ARP Ltd in Leicester, is keen to discuss the benefits that aluminium can offer as a rainwater and roofline solution

With the government looking to deliver a strategy of building affordable housing, improving the quality of rented housing, helping more people to buy a home, and providing housing support for vulnerable people through local authorities and developers, there has been a huge increase in the number of manufacturers working with green sustainable materials.

When it comes to building or refurbishing homes, builders are often challenged to use good quality sustainable building products that can improve cost, save time and achieve targets as set by government. In a typical installation uPVC rainwater gets fitted by default against other material systems, and while not disputing any environmental credentials of uPVC systems, they will not deliver the design life of 40-60 years as offered by aluminium.

Aluminium is a very versatile and abundant material. It has many uses and is visible in a multitude of everyday items. Furthermore, it is

“Where aluminium comes into its own, is in its ability to help deliver an enhanced aesthetic design. We can see when viewing many of the ‘homebuilder’ programmes on TV, the ambitious way in which both architects and clients are looking to deliver a modern and bespoke style”

100 per cent recyclable, with no loss of property so it presents itself as a leader in the modern ‘green’ thinking generation. Considering that aluminium rainwater has between 33 per cent and 40 per cent recycled content (90+ per cent with seamless systems) the environmental impact is significantly reduced.

Where aluminium comes into its own, is in its ability to help deliver an enhanced aesthetic

design. We can see when viewing many of the ‘homebuilder’ programmes on TV, the ambitious way in which both architects and clients are looking to deliver a modern and bespoke style, which is unique from the norm. Utilising the strength and formability of aluminium gives a homebuilder free licence to design a house with confidence and one that the rainwater drainage aspect can be produced.

There is often a requirement for homes which are being developed in Green Belt or Conservation areas to use eco-friendly building materials, therefore aluminium rainwater systems provide the ideal choice due to their eco-friendly credentials and longer lifecycle.

Further, with the extensive use of RAL colours in external building products e.g. window frames and other architectural fittings, house design now allows matching or coordinating colours to be used. A buildings appearance can be dramatically transformed which can give it “curb appeal” especially when it comes to attracting clients.

Traditional thinking goes out of the window and it is now common to see both rainwater products and roofline systems blending in to the building envelope and providing aesthetic appeal.

Often there is debate over cost versus quality in the housebuilding programme. There are different types of aluminium rainwater systems, so whether a pressed, roll-formed, extruded or cast profile is required, there is almost certainly a product that will suit any budget, providing a cost-effective and high performance solution.

In looking to provide the one million homes by 2020, it is quite likely that there will be an increase in the number of multiple occupancy dwellings split between both public and private ownership. Generally designed to be over two storeys high, these builds will have maintenance programmes in place and will make whole life time cost consideration of any installation an important commercial factor. The use of aluminium for roof drainage and on the eaves as fascia/soffit and coping provides a 'fit and forget' solution over the design life period, being easy to install, light and long lasting, which also reduces the need to incur replacement material costs compared to other systems that may fail.

More recently, we have seen that changing environmental conditions in the UK are producing more storms and increased rainfall intensity. Leaking gutters can cause extensive damage, not

only to the brickwork but also to the interior of the property resulting in costly repairs. Rainwater systems provide a defence against this damage, which is often neglected, or given lower priority within the projects budget. Having a product that can either offer a jointless / seamless system, or one where there is a reduced thermal movement will greatly reduce the chance of maintenance and repair costs getting out of hand.

Manufacturers have stepped up to the mark by offering a variety of interactive tools. The use of 'Rainfall Calculators' makes it easy for architects, engineers and installers to evaluate current drainage abilities of actual roofs, therefore allowing the planning and developing projects a lot easier than it used too.



In summary, using aluminium as a rainwater drainage option should be considered as an alternative to other types of systems as they're both a cost-effective and high performance solution.

Enq. 181

Gutter maintenance

- Gutters should be checked twice per year and cleared
- Gutters and pipes should be kept clear of obstructions
- Rainwater systems should be washed down annually and inspected for damage
- Any damage discovered be rectified and touch up paint applied if required

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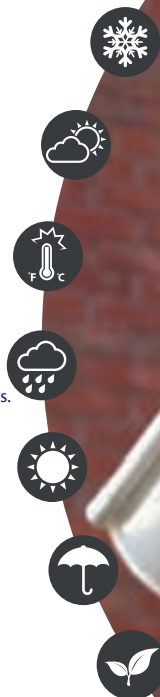
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Enq. 184

Schöck demonstrates its skills with large balconies at Rathbone Market

The Rathbone Market scheme is part of the Canning Town and Custom House regeneration. It is a three-phase development with a new market square at its heart; bordered by around 35,000 sq ft of new shops and cafes; plus offices, community facilities, two public squares and 652 homes. This final phase will deliver 216 new homes in a mix of one, two and three-bed designs in a horse-shoe configured three blocks, ranging in height from six to 14 storeys. The majority of apartments on the upper levels will have balconies finished in a powder-coated gold.

The balconies are an unusually large 2.3 metre cantilever and to meet this demanding specification, the Schöck Isokorb type KS for concrete-to-steel connectivity is incorporated. The units can bear extremely heavy loads, making them ideal in meeting the thermal and structural demands of large cantilever steel balconies. With such a large cantilever, thermally effective insulating elements like the type KS, can make steel balconies prone to vibration. Whereas those connected with simple pads are more rigid and

less susceptible to vibration. Connections, such as the Isokorb type KS, are indeed 'softer' than traditional connections, due to their material properties, but if planned properly, virtually any balcony geometry can be designed using the module. To assess how prone to vibration type KS thermally separated balconies might be, Schöck offers a free service which calculates the Natural Frequency of the steel balconies. This uses geometric and material variables and on this project the Natural Frequency of the balcony constructions was above the recommended limit frequencies.

In addition to concrete-to-steel capability, the Isokorb range provides solutions for concrete-to-concrete and steel-to-steel, meeting full compliance with the relevant UK building regulations and offering BBA Certification and LABC Registration. BRE IP1/06 requires that the temperature factor used to indicate condensation risk for occupants in residential buildings (the fRsi value), must be equal to or greater than 0.75. This is comfortably met by incorporating the Isokorb.



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Freefoam Building Products are delighted to announce the launch of a new range of rainwater products in the contemporary colour Anthracite Grey. With a 45 per cent increase in sales of Anthracite Grey fascia and soffit in 2015 and a growing overall market trend towards grey window frames, doors, fascia and soffit adding an Anthracite Grey Deep gutter range was the next logical step. Freefoam has created a product that allows customers to create a truly co-ordinated roofline with the new rainwater range offering an exact match (Ral No.7016) to the already popular fascia and soffit products. With a 77mm depth and a 116mm width the Deep gutter is designed to manage the increasing levels of rainfall that are being experienced throughout the UK. Available with the full range of matching fittings, the Freefoam Freeflow range offers a long lasting, leak free, no fade, low maintenance solution all with a 10 year guarantee.


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Enq. 190

Making the right choices with balustrades

As one of the more complex and varied architectural elements, balustrade can have especially variable results in terms of site impact and carbon footprint. Peter Melia, UK business development Manager at neaco, explains how making the right choices can deliver major benefits in the immediate and long term

Methods

With a multitude of design options on the market, from top rails and stanchion clips to infills and floor fixings, it can be difficult to know where to start when designing balustrade. Putting aside the aesthetic details for a moment, the best starting point is perhaps the most fundamental consideration: the method of construction and its compatibility with modern practices.

Optimum site efficiency, maximum safety and minimal environmental impact are at the forefront of modern methods of construction. It is therefore desirable to complete as much of the construction off-site as possible and for that reason many designers, developers and contractors now prefer pre-fabricated modular systems with all components finished at the factory stage, ready for fast assembly on delivery to site. Advanced forming technology can achieve virtually any curvature or angle necessary. The requisite combination of measurements and angles is calculated to a precise degree through consultation between the architect/designer and the manufacturer's technical support, so time spent on site is significantly reduced.



Modular balustrade components are generally connected with (ideally internal) fixing systems which provide 'dry works' installation – in other words, without the need for hot works such as welding. The impact on the existing site is substantially lower with less noise, dust, pollution and energy consumption. Factory conditions also provide superior quality control (with testing, prototyping and checking of uniform quality), avoid on-site delays caused by adverse weather and enable better Health & Safety risk management. Construction works is a significant waste stream to landfill sites and the controlled factory environment facilitates far better waste management with off-cuts very easily collected for re-use or recycling.

Choosing materials – aluminium

Popular choices of material for high-aesthetic handrail and balustrade are aluminium, timber, stainless steel and toughened glass. Aluminium has a number of natural advantages: it is

lightweight yet durable, non-toxic, non-combustible and with time generates a protective oxide film coating with excellent resistance to corrosion. It is also 100 per cent recyclable, with no downgrading of its properties and very little energy required for re-melting, and has the ability to accept different surface finishes such as anodising and powder coating, thereby providing aesthetic versatility with RAL or metallic colours. Powder coating offers a maintenance-free, non-chip finish which is smooth, safe and warm to the touch. In extreme conditions, external metal handrails can become extremely cold and uncomfortable to the touch (BS 6300 recommends that handrails should not be cold or hot to the touch) and the low thermal conductivity of powder coating addresses this problem.

Timber

The natural beauty of timber is an attractive option, especially when the development has a more traditional aesthetic, but a number of

Continued overleaf...

disadvantages are worth considering: ongoing treatment is required to maintain its appearance, prevent absorption of bacteria and control infection. The alternative is metal handrails and balustrade in a wood-effect finish. In the past these types of products have suffered from a credibility issue – put simply, they didn't look real enough – but thanks to advances in powder coating technology, the distinction between real and fake has become considerably harder to discern. The intricate detailing of natural wood grain can now be reproduced to the extent that, to the naked eye, it is virtually indistinguishable from the real thing. Aluminium is an ideal metal for wood-effect – it readily bonds to powder coating to provide a smooth finish which, while similar in appearance, offers several contrasts to real timber: it is non-absorptive, warm and safe to the touch and highly resistant to surface damage.

“With their manufacturing uniformity and largely standardised components, modular balustrade systems provide reliable and consistent performance in meeting Building Regulations”

Stainless steel

Stainless steel also provides high-class appearance and, compared to timber, its aesthetic virtues are less compromised by practical disadvantages. It is extremely hard wearing – no ongoing maintenance is required to maintain its visual quality, bringing further carbon savings to the lifecycle of a building. The quality of its finish can be enhanced by unidirectional polishing at the manufacturing stage. Different grades suit different environments – for example, typically Grade 316 for external use and Grade 304 for dry internal use.

Structural glass

Structural glass requires no supporting uprights and therefore provides an ideal balustrade solution when seeking maximum visibility or a more 'minimalist' aesthetic style. A factory heatsoaking process can accelerate crystallisation, reducing the risk of potential breakages when the glass is in situ. Low Iron glass options provide a noticeably clearer panel than the inherent green cast of standard clear float glass used in balustrade applications. The top of the glass can be secured by a top rail – ideally oval or tubular aluminium which again can be made warm-to-touch with powder coating.

Regulations

Balustrade suppliers must ensure that their products comply with the requirements of BS6180: 2011 which provides a comprehensive guide to



the design, structure, height and strength of barriers. Balustrade must offer suitable horizontal load-bearing capability for its particular environment – for example, in areas where people congregate without crowding, such as a stairs or corridors, it should bear uniformly distributed line load of up to 0.74kN/m, whereas restaurants, retail/public areas not subject to overcrowding and pedestrian areas in car parks require a load-bearing capability of up to 1.5kN/m. Free-standing structural glass must be toughened in accordance with BS EN 12150-2:2004 – the stronger systems on the market will offer load bearing capability of up to 1.15kN/m. With their manufacturing uniformity and largely standardised components, modular balustrade systems provide reliable and consistent performance in meeting Building Regulations.

When all factors are considered, it is important to remember that the practical, environmental, regulatory and aesthetic demands of balustrade needn't be competing forces – with expert technical support from an knowledgeable and experienced manufacturer, complex requirements can work together to deliver reliable, consistent and accurate results.

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Balustrades by Sapphire add signature style



Sapphire's glazed balcony balustrades are being used to stunning architectural effect at Century House, a new high-rise residential development near Tower Bridge. Sapphire manufactured and installed around 1,000 linear metres of glass balustrading from its Crystal and Aluma ranges to apartment balconies and terraces. The transparent nature of glass

creates the illusion of light and space from inside the apartments, while also delivering a sleek and stylish finish to the outside of the building. All balustrades for Century House were purpose-designed. For more information, please visit the company website.

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Kallisto invests in new technology



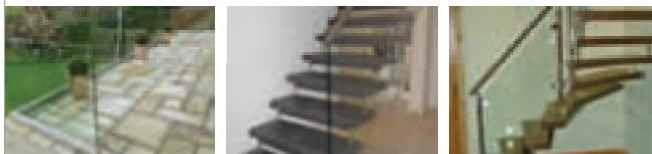
Kallisto, the pre-cast concrete spiral and helical staircase division of **Milbank Concrete Products**, is delighted to announce it has invested in the latest technology to provide customers with a bespoke product, tailored to suit the individual needs of all domestic requirements. From the initial enquiry, straight through to the design, manufacture

and installation, Kallisto has extensive experience designing stairs to fit either traditional or contemporary projects. Working closely with architects, engineers and designers they assist in achieving stunning, yet functional pre-cast stair case installations.

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