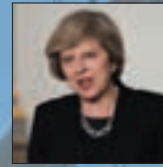




Tackling the real world of housing the homeless in the context of LA cuts



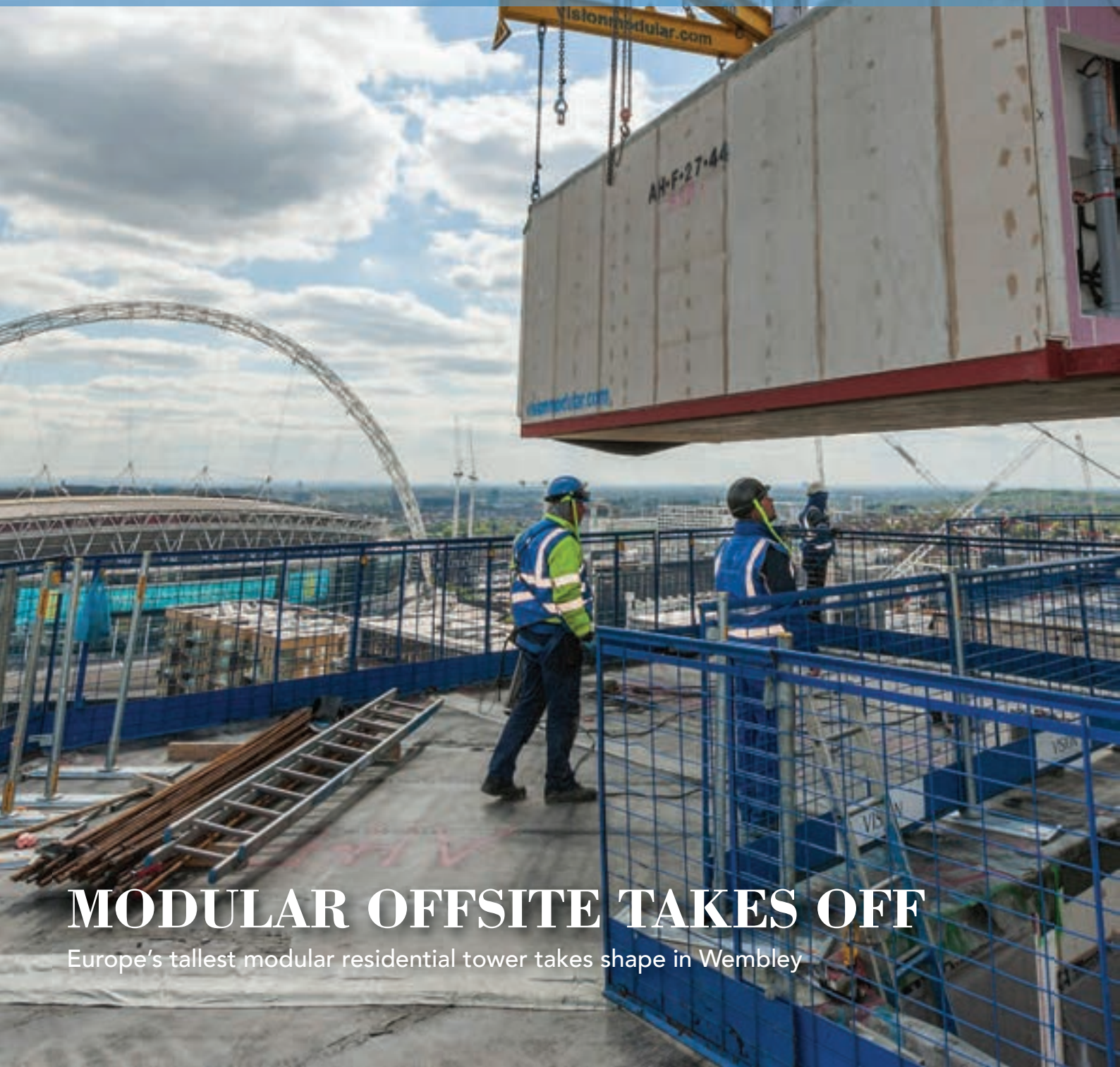
Brian Berry on what the next Government's construction priorities should be



Collating the industry views on May's snap June election

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James Parker  
james@netmagmedia.eu

# FROM THE EDITOR

No one should really have been surprised at Theresa May's decision to hold a snap general election. Political history teaches us that if nothing else, politicians tend to be opportunists. She seized this opportunity to strengthen her majority on the back of a recent groundswell of patriotic fervour, of course claiming the decision was taken 'in the interests of the country' and nothing to do with party politics.

With her Government now likely to return, it has the hammering out of a messy EU divorce to look forward to, but in the meantime housebuilding needs to get on with things. It looks increasingly unlikely that Corbyn will be getting near no.10, so Labour's pledge of a million homes, half of which would be social housing, is not an urgent concern.

The recent 'State of the Nation' report by the Government's watchdog the National Audit Office confirms that housebuilding has not kept pace with need, and that this is "particularly acute" in London. The NAO says that 227,000 new households are appearing per year in the capital, well outstripping the national average. The industry needs to deliver 174,000 additional new builds and conversions per year to hit the Government's target of 1 million new homes by 2020, says the NAO.

Recent economic results have been a mixed bag. GDP slowed sharply in the first quarter of 2017, and if people have less money in their pockets as inflation worsens, less houses are likely to be bought and built. Despite the GDP figures, housebuilding performed well in April, at a four-month high according to the PMI. Some however are attributing the slowing in growth as 'the first signs of the Brexit effect.' With a continuing weak pound likely as we leave the EU, no matter how big the demand for homes, if costs are too high then no-one wins.

DCLG was also "reliant on the market," said the NAO, and criticised the fact that it was "dominated by around 10 large firms" who between them accounted for nearly two-thirds of all new private homes built. The body said that even the HBF has agreed that these large firms "limit the rate at which they build to what they believe the market can absorb."

Mark Farmer has responded to the recent DCLG select committee report on capacity in housebuilding following the NAO report, agreeing that more diversity was needed in the market "both in terms of tenure and delivery models." He added that stable policy direction on this beyond 8 June would be ideal, however this sounds like wishful thinking given that Brexit is the sole short-term focus.

And with skills and labour shortages acknowledged as the big issue by DCLG and most others, especially in the light of Brexit, this needs to be addressed in the negotiations. It may not be a vote winner, but failure to do so could see a lot more people waiting for homes.

*James Parker*

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## ON THE COVER



05.17

### HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



**MODULAR OFFSITE TAKES OFF**

Europe's largest modular residential tower takes shape in Wembley

Apex House, Wembley  
© Vision Modular Systems  
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# General election “the ideal opportunity” to review housing

Prime Minister Theresa May has called for a snap general election on 8th June, giving the reason that “after the country has voted to leave the European Union, Britain needed certainty, stability and strong leadership.”

As British Ministers prepare for Brexit negotiations, commentators said May was seeking a clear mandate to give her a stronger negotiating hand in the talks, after so-called “division” in parliament. “The country is coming together,” said the PM, “but Westminster is not.”

She made it clear that the party intends to fulfil its plan for Brexit: “Britain is leaving the European Union and there can be no turning back.”

## INDUSTRY REACTION

The industry generally appeared to react favourably to the news, but many implored politicians to give priority to the construction sector, hoping for new and effective solutions to problems in housing.

CIH chief executive Terrie Alafat has said the early election could be an “ideal opportunity” for each political party to look at “pragmatic proposals” to solve the housing crisis.

She said: “We would like to see housing take centre stage during the campaign, with a proper debate on how we solve our housing crisis and policy proposals which reflect the scale and seriousness of the problems facing so many people in the UK.

“This is a key opportunity for all parties to look at rethinking the balance of housing investment,” continued Alafat, pushing for “specific measures to get us building the genuinely affordable homes we so desperately need.”

Mark Farmer, author of the government-commissioned Farmer Review of the UK’s

skills shortage and CEO of Cast Consultancy, said that whatever the outcome of the election “the construction skills gap will remain,” as will the “impact of Brexit.”

He hoped that the campaign will see “some serious solutions on offer as part of the main parties’ manifestos that adequately reflect the importance of the construction industry’s welfare and future. Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders, believed the PM was “right” to call an early election, “if she wants a clear and decisive mandate to lead the Brexit negotiations.”

“However,” said Berry, “it’s important that the general election is more than just a vote on the UK’s approach to the Brexit negotiations.”

“The construction industry will want to hear from the various parties about how they would overcome wider challenges, such as how they would increase house-building and how they would ensure that we train more apprentices.”

Lewis Johnston, RICS parliamentary affairs manager, said he believes the motivation for calling the Election was clear. “With a working majority of just 17,” commented Lewis, “the Government’s freedom of action is restrained and under-

standably the Prime Minister wants a stronger mandate as she embarks on the Brexit negotiations.”

“In the immediate term,” continued Lewis, “the move inevitably puts a question mark over policy and creates further uncertainty across the built environment.”

He believes it is now the responsibility of all parties “to set out clear policy proposals across land, property, construction and infrastructure to ensure the UK can deliver the homes, infrastructure factories, offices and major building projects it needs to thrive.”

Mark Naysmith, UK CEO at WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff, suggested that, with a “clear mandate,” the new government will “hopefully create a more stable environment that reinvigorates confidence.”

“Whilst infrastructure delivery is supported by all main political parties in some form, 80 per cent of the construction industry believes that the public doesn’t understand the role it plays in enabling growth.

“We’ll therefore be looking for parties to explain at a national and regional level why pro-infrastructure policies are good for UK plc, for productivity and for local housing, services and jobs.”

**WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE HOUSING TAKE CENTRE STAGE DURING THE CAMPAIGN, WITH A PROPER DEBATE ON HOW WE SOLVE OUR HOUSING CRISIS**

CIH chief executive Terrie Alafat





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# Election reaction: social housing

Patrick Mooney, editor of Housing Management & Maintenance, looks at how the general election is likely to affect the social housing sector.

A period of uncertainty is the inevitable outcome of the general election, with parts of the Housing & Planning Act 2016 still to be enacted and question marks over the future of many policies outlined in the recent Housing White Paper.

It appears the Homelessness Reduction Bill just managed to get Royal Assent before Parliament closed for the election campaign and while this is good news for the homeless, it will require councils to provide far more support...at considerable cost. The Government has offered some financial support but inevitably it will not cover all of the costs, particularly in London.

Nuts and bolts of the private rented sector's regulation have yet to be implemented, with planned consultation exercises now put on hold. For once this pause for breadth might work in the policy-makers' favour, if it allows work on the Rugg Review (Part Two) to inform the process and produces better and more effective legislation.

However, Labour have come out boldly saying they will strengthen regulation of private rented housing by bringing in legal minimum standards, mandatory licensing and increasing the fines on rogue landlords to £100,000. Jeremy Corbyn has also promised to build one million new homes, with half of them built by councils. Gavin Barwell has rubbished both policies saying the first would drive up rents, while the second is undeliverable. Instead he says the focus should be on implementing the White Paper.

The uncertainty might be welcomed if it allows the incoming Government to have a serious rethink over extending the Right to Buy to housing association tenants, halting the enforced sale of council assets or for cancelling further welfare benefit cuts which affect the weakest and most vulnerable members of society. With deregulation of HAs creeping in ahead of Parliament

being dissolved, a number of social landlords are already selling much needed affordable homes as part of stock rationalisation strategies. This appears to be the new game on the block, edging ahead of merger mania and is likely to increase as HAs focus on building new homes.

Social housing leaders have been vociferous in attacking the Conservatives' policies to cut local housing allowances and funding for supported housing. But many of them have been impressed by the approach taken by Gavin Barwell, who many want to see returned as the Housing Minister if Theresa May is returned as Prime Minister after the June election.

## NAO looks at state of sector

The National Audit Office (NAO) has published an overview of the housing market in England, detailing the Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) housing strategy and the overall housing policy landscape.

Two of the DCLG's current four strategic objectives are focused on housing: increasing home ownership and increasing the supply of homes, with the ambition of delivering a million new homes in England by 2020.

According to the NAO, housebuilding has "fallen short of demand for many years," especially in London. Projections suggest there will be at least 227,000 new households formed each year between 2011 and 2021. This is substantially higher than the annual average of 166,000 extra homes in England over the last 10 years. Delivery of the Government's million new homes target by 2020 will require 174,000 net additions a year.

The report expressed "concern over the lack of urgency and ambition in view of the rising costs, both human and financial, of homelessness." It reiterated that homelessness not only severely affects those who experience it, but also puts strain on councils. Spending on temporary accommodation reportedly amounted to £840m in 2015-16, a rise of nearly half (47 per cent) in five years.

Total estimated Government spending on housing in England was approximately £28bn in 2015-16. The most significant element of this is housing benefit. In 2015-16 there were 4.1m claimants in England, costing around £20.9bn.

The report noted the DCLG's "reliance on the market to achieve its housing objec-

tives," warning that it is not yet clear what impact Brexit will have on the market. Despite early indications of an immediate slowdown after the referendum result however, more recent evidence points to modest increases in numbers of sales being agreed in England.

In the report, the NAO brought attention to the private housebuilding markets domination by around 10 large firms, reportedly accounting for nearly two-thirds of private homes. According to the report, The Home Builders Federation agreed that such firms "limit the rate at which they build to what they believe the market can absorb."

To aid evidence-based consideration of alternative policy options to accelerate housebuilding, the NAO recommended the DCLG "review international evidence and report to Parliament on lessons to be learned from the housing policy and institutional landscape of other countries with higher rates of housebuilding than England, in particular focusing on innovative methods of accelerating construction and improving affordability." It asked the DCLG to write to the NAO within six months, with estimates of how many homes councils will be able to build up to 2020.

The NAO also recommended that the DCLG should "improve the transparency with which it reports both its objectives" and "progress towards achieving them." In particular, it suggests that in its Single Departmental Plan, the DCLG should set out both the cumulative total of net additions since the beginning of its one million homes ambition, showing how many homes need to be completed in future years, and how its individual programmes and spending are contributing to the one million homes target.





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# CLG Select Committee: Mark Farmer responds



Mark Farmer, the author of the government-commissioned Farmer Review into the construction industry, responds to the CLG Select Committee report on current capacity in the housebuilding industry.

This report from the Communities and Local Government Select Committee on the capacity of the homebuilding industry has clearly ratified the fact that the industry faces some huge challenges in order to meet this country's increased need for more homes.

The conclusions confirm, as has the recent White Paper, that the housing market is broken, and to fix it we need a robust, innovative and productive construction industry. The report sets out clear recommendations on how we can improve the capacity of the homebuilding industry which must be prioritised by the new government that will be decided on 8 June.

What is noteworthy in the recommendations is clear Select Committee recognition that we need more diversity in the market, both in terms of tenure and the delivery models employed and this must only be a good thing in terms of the need for some policy stability beyond the election. There is explicit support for the role in increased delivery of housing associations, the institutional Build to Rent sector and the application of modern construction techniques alongside a fit for purpose skills and training regime that is aligned with industry needs.

I particularly welcome the endorsement and indeed increased urgency given to the current government's intention to actively intervene in the market to promote construction innovation and develop capacity in the emerging pre-manufacturing sector. In this regard, the recommendations include a request for specific progress

reports on the Accelerated Construction Programme and also urge government to back a single quality assurance scheme for offsite construction which makes it easier to fund and supports mainstream acceptability. Interestingly the Select Committee also highlight the need for the construction industry's reliance on migrant labour to be recognised in the upcoming Brexit negotiations in order to make sure that the deal Britain gets doesn't worsen the trends already found in the industry.

If the recommendations set out in this document aren't acted upon, homebuilding and the construction industry in the UK will continue to deteriorate, impacting economic growth at a time when we need a solid platform for domestic industrial performance. The findings only reiterate my previous challenge to both Government and the construction industry to modernise the home building policy framework and the basic delivery approaches used.

## RICS says resi sales still lack impetus

The UK housing market continues to lack impetus, with new buyer enquiries and agreed sales stagnant in March, according to the RICS.

Properties coming on to the market have also dropped further, and consequently respondents to the March 2017 RICS UK Residential Market Survey have reduced predictions for sales growth in the year ahead.

New buyer enquiries in the UK were reported to be flat for a third successive month in March, and although the picture remains mixed across the UK, the areas with declining buyer interest outweigh those with increasing demand.

The strongest growth in new buyer enquiries was seen in Northern Ireland and the South West (+34 and +22 net balances respectively). In London, buyer interest has been increasing modestly over the last four months (+9 net balance in March).

Stock on estate agents books has dipped to a new record low, with branches (on average) currently holding only a total of 43

unsold properties.

The lack of supply in the market continues to underpin prices, with 22 per cent more respondents seeing a rise over the last month across the UK. However, the difference between Central London and the rest of the UK continues to widen.

Prices in Central London have progressively deteriorated, and at -49 per cent, the net balance was the weakest since 2009.

Further ahead, sales expectations over the next 12 months were reduced, with 24 per cent more respondents predicting a rise, down from +37 per cent in February. Expectations for year-ahead sales growth were reduced in eight of the 12 UK regions/countries covered in the survey.

Simon Robinson, RICS chief economist, said the latest results show "little change in the underlying picture."

"High end sale properties in Central London remain under pressure," he continued, "while the wider residential market continues to be underpinned by a lack of stock."

He concluded: "For the time being it is hard to see any major impetus for change in the market, something also being reflected in the flat trend in transaction levels."



# Industry beats performance expectations

Activity in the construction industry has risen at a faster pace since the EU referendum than had initially been expected, according to the Construction Products Association (CPA).

Construction output is expected to rise each year between 2017-2019, by 1.3 per cent in 2017, 1.2 per cent in 2018 and 2.3 per cent in 2019.

While the figures may fuel hope that the UK construction industry will be resilient in the face of Brexit-related concerns including rising costs, the growth masks a considerable difference in activity across the key construction sectors.

Housebuilding is expected to remain an important source of growth, with private housebuilding starts rising by 7.2 per cent between 2017 and 2019, underpinned by a continued upward trend in house prices, demand from first-time buyers and Help to Buy equity loans. In 2016, Help to Buy accounted for 39.8 per cent of new homes sales in Q4 and has been a significant policy for supporting building activity.

Infrastructure projects are expected to be the industry's main growth engine, driven by a strong National Infrastructure and Construction Pipeline, valued at £300bn over the next four years.

In particular, growth to 2019 is expected to be primarily driven by a 34.5 per cent increase in infrastructure activity due to major projects in the energy, rail and water sub-sectors.

Noble Francis, economics director at the CPA, believed that construction output has been sustained "primarily due to projects signed up to before 2016."

"Looking further forward," he said, "a fall in contract awards during the second half of last year is likely to impact the greatest, where Brexit uncertainty affects sectors requiring high investment up front for a long term rate of return, such as commercial offices and industrial factories."

Francis Noble commented that, "given the dependence of construction industry growth on activity in the infrastructure and private housing sectors," it is "essential that government focuses on delivery of infrastructure projects."

He concluded: "As major housebuilders are reliant upon Help to Buy equity loans, which are due to end in 2021, it is vital that Government outlines its plans early to support housebuilding growth as we approach the end of the scheme."

# Builders bullish despite rising costs

Small firms enjoyed rising workloads in the first quarter of 2017, despite growing concerns over the cost of labour and materials, according to the Federation of Master Builders (FMB).

The FMB's State of Trade Survey for Q1 2017 has been released recently, which is the largest quarterly assessment of the UK-wide SME construction sector.

It revealed that UK construction SME workloads increased more significantly than at any time since Q2 2016 (i.e. the quarter immediately prior to last June's EU referendum).

In the survey, one in two construction SMEs predicted rising workloads in the coming months, with just 5 per cent predicting a decrease in activity.

85 per cent of builders were reported to believe that material prices will rise in the next three months, with 58 per cent of firms struggling to hire carpenters (a post financial crisis high).

Brian Berry, chief executive at the FMB, said the first three months of 2017 proved to be "very positive" for construction SMEs, who "reported strong growth, underpinned by continuing resilience in the home improvement sector."

He continued: "Workloads rose in every part of the UK, with particularly positive results in the devolved nations. Given the concerns that wider consumer confidence

might be weakening, it's encouraging that smaller construction firms aren't sensing any drop-off in demand for their services."

Reminding of recent events, Berry said: "The survey covers the period before the announcement of a snap general election, which may well cool consumer demand in the coming months. The results are also tempered by a clear rise in output costs for construction companies."

"Material prices and wages rose markedly in the first three months of this year, with larger numbers of construction SMEs believing that all three will rise further during the next quarter. Indeed, although only 20 per cent of construction products and materials used in the UK are imported, the depreciation of Sterling since the referendum last June has seen material prices shoot up — with 85 per cent of builders predicting further rises — this pressure on margins looks set to continue."

Brian concluded that the combined effects of rising material costs and the "ever-worsening construction skills crisis" will be "reason enough" for SME construction firms to be cautious in their optimism. "As of yet," said Berry, "the much anticipated 'Brexit effect' has yet to hit what is considered to be the bellwether sector of consumer confidence and wider economic health."





# More than 200,000 UK homes left idle

England has 200,145 long-term empty homes worth more than £43bn, according to investment website Property Partner.

In London alone, there were 19,845 homes sitting idle for over six months in 2016. That equates to £9.4bn worth of property.

Birmingham was the worst performer outside London, with 4,397 properties sitting empty, up 13 per cent in a year. Bradford had the second highest figure at

3,944, down 5 per cent, followed by Liverpool at 3,449, up 5 per cent from the previous year. Manchester has seen the greatest fall over a decade, dropping 88 per cent to 1,365.

The tables have been turned in London, said Property Partner, where one of the most deprived areas has swapped places with one of the wealthiest as the capital's worst performer. Prime property area Kensington & Chelsea has London's highest number of long-term vacant homes, with 1,399 empty, up 8.5 per cent last year and a rise of 22.7 per cent in a decade. Previously, the last place in the capital had gone to Newham, but it has staged a turnaround in 12 months, reducing the number of empty homes by 55 per cent to 593 from 1,318 in 2015.

It has been reported that over the last decade, the number of long-term vacant homes in England has dropped 36.4 per cent from 314,719 in 2006 but it has barely moved year-on-year, showing a drop of 35 per cent in the decade to 2015. The estimated value of empty property in England now stands at £43.5bn.

Dan Gandesha, CEO of Property Partner, believes the figures "lay bare the huge amount of housing stock lying empty across the country."

He commented that councils have had the power to apply to seize empty homes since 2006, and "huge advances" have been made.

Dan said: "Our research shows there is some great work being done," and that "dealing with this issue represents a fantastic opportunity to free up supply and help alleviate the scarcity of affordable housing nationally."



## Council boosts Empty Property Strategy

A new initiative to further reduce the number of long-term empty residential properties has been announced by the City of Wolverhampton Council.

Its Empty Property Strategy has seen more than 1,500 privately-owned homes which had been left unoccupied, often in poor condition, brought back into use in the last eight years.

The number of properties empty for five or more years has been reduced from 330 in 2009 to 59 in October 2016, a reduction of more than 82 per cent.

Additionally, at the time of writing the Cabinet is expected to rubber stamp a pilot programme that will offer grants of up to £500, from an initial £50,000 fund, to encourage more owners of empty properties to act.

The grants are intended to help either owners with legal/agent fees to sell their property, or provide an incentive to rent it under the Private Sector Leasing Scheme.

Councillor Peter Bilson, deputy leader and cabinet member for City Housing and Assets, said the council aims to ensure that, rather than the properties becoming a "blight" on their neighbourhood, "they are either sold to new homeowners or rented out to tenants."

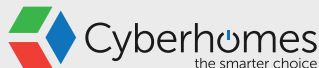
"This strategy is helping to put these houses back on the market."

He continued: "This is the equivalent of us building hundreds of new houses across the city and we will continue to focus our efforts on empty houses."

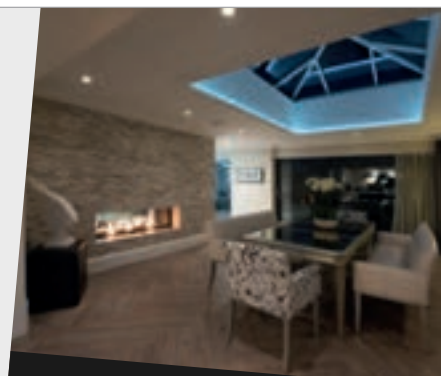
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# Events & awards

## 2017

### FIT Show

23 – 25 May, Birmingham  
www.fitshow.co.uk

### Housing Excellence Awards

25 May, Manchester  
awards.housingexcellence.co.uk

### PLANTWORX

6 – 8 June, Leicestershire  
www.plantworx.co.uk

### Housing Heroes Awards

26 June, Manchester  
hha.secure-platform.com

### CIH Housing

27 – 29 June, Manchester  
www.cihhousing.com

### Housing Design Awards

10 July, London  
www.hdawards.org

### National Housing Awards

7 September, London  
www.nationalhousingawards.co.uk

### RESI Conference

13 – 15 September, Newport  
www.resiconf.com

### NHF Annual Conference & Housing Exhibition

19 – 20 September, Birmingham  
annual.housing.org.uk

### UK Construction Week

10 – 12 October, Birmingham  
www.ukconstructionweek.com

### Build Show

10 – 12 October, Birmingham  
www.ukconstructionweek.com/build-show

### 24housing Awards

12 October, Coventry  
www.24housingawards.co.uk

### Women in Housing Awards

2 November, Manchester  
www.womeninhousingawards.co.uk

### WhatHouse? Awards

17 November, London  
www.whathouse.com/awards

## Plantworx 2017 – “be part of the biggest working construction show”



Plantworx is thought to be the UK's largest “working” construction equipment show, hosted by the Construction Equipment Association (CEA). The 2017 event will be the biggest event to date, where visitors can expect to see the latest in construction machinery and equipment innovation, which will set future trends.

The event combines live machinery demonstrations and applications offering an invaluable day out for everybody who works in construction. The event is designed to attract all types of construction professionals – from those involved in purchasing and operating to the people who specify plant equipment or services.

The 2017 event will be 20 per cent larger than the 2015 show. More exhibitor stands have been included and there is an increase in demonstration areas to meet the demands of both exhibitors and visitors. To date Plantworx has over 311 confirmed exhibitors including all the major leading brands in construction equipment, plant tools and services.

If you want to visit then register on the

website [www.plantworx.co.uk](http://www.plantworx.co.uk). Tickets and car parking are free. The venue for the event is just south of Leicester in Bruntingthorpe, junction 20 of the M1.

The organisers said: “There is only a month to go until the biggest construction machinery event of the year – so make sure 6-8 June is in the diary.”

## Buyer activity on the rise

Home buyers borrowed £8.9bn, up 6 per cent on January, and 2 per cent on February 2016, according to the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML). This came to 48,600 loans, up 7 per cent on January and 2 per cent on February 2016.

First-time buyers reportedly borrowed £3.8bn for home-owner house purchase, up 6 per cent on January and 12 per cent on February 2016. They took out 24,200 loans, up 7 per cent month-on-month and 11 per cent year-on-year.

The CML revealed home movers borrowed £5.1bn, up 6 per cent on January but down 4 per cent year-on-year. This equated to 24,400 loans, up 6 per cent month-on-month but down 6 per cent compared to February 2016.

Home-owner remortgage activity was down 26 per cent by value and 23 per cent by volume on January. Compared to February 2016, remortgage lending was up 8 per cent by value and 9 per cent by volume.

Gross buy-to-let saw month-on-month decreases, down 13 per cent by value and 12 per cent by volume. Compared to February 2016, the number of loans decreased 26 per cent and the amount borrowed decreased by 13 per cent.

Paul Smee, director general of the CML, commented on the figures: “2017 began relatively strong on the house purchase side.

“Borrowers took out more loans to purchase a home in the first two months of 2017 than any year since 2007. This is down to strong first-time buyer activity, which has consistently matched home mover borrowing over the past six months, a trend not seen in the UK for 20 years.”

Paul said that house purchase activity on the buy-to-let lending side however “remains weak,” and that the trend “is expected to continue.”



# Developers call for brownfield land release

Releasing more publicly owned brownfield land for development is the biggest opportunity arising from the government's recently launched Housing White Paper, according to new research among property developers commissioned by Amicus Property Finance.

Over two-thirds (69 per cent) of developers think increasing the availability of brownfield sites will offer the most potential for developers.

The proposed reduction in the time permitted by local authorities to approve planning applications from three to two years (49 per cent), continuation of the Help to Buy scheme (45 per cent) and increasing the focus on building homes in the affordable sector (41 per cent) were the second, third and fourth most popular measures respectively.

Despite showing support for elements of the White Paper, property developers are sceptical of the government's target to build one million homes by 2020, with just one in five (21 per cent) believing this target to be realistic.

Amicus' research revealed a number of additional policies property developers would like to see the Government introduce in order to address the housing crisis. 78 per cent called for a repeal of the stamp duty rises and tax relief reductions on landlords, 44 per cent would like to see incentives for elderly people to downsize and free up family homes, 41 per cent think stamp duty should become a "seller's tax rather than a buyer's tax," and 37 per cent recommended a suspension in capital gains tax to encour-

age more land to come to the market.

Keith Aldridge, founder and managing director at Amicus Property Finance, commented: "Property developers appear highly supportive of a number of the ideas in the White Paper, particularly releasing more brownfield land to the market and the greater focus on affordable housing.

He concluded: "Though large scale Government investment plays a part in stimulating supply, developers see the current tax laws as one of the biggest obstacles to solving the housing crisis, particularly repealing the recent stamp duty increases for landlords."

## Property developer jailed

A former Ascot-based property developer, Keith Conner, 55, who "hijacked" details of an offshore company and forged documents to commit fraud and evade VAT, has been jailed for three years and seven months.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) investigators discovered that in June 2011 Conner obtained the details of the British Virgin Islands registered company to buy and sell a residential property in Thurloe Square, Kensington, London. Conner then forged a Power of Attorney document to transfer £309,000 profit from the London sale into a company bank account he controlled.

A similar property deal in October 2011 involved the purchase and immediate sale of a business property in Earls Court Road, Kensington. Conner again hijacked the details of a company to commit the fraud.

None of the profit from either sale was declared to HMRC, meaning the tax wasn't paid. As a business property, VAT was due on the Earls Court Road purchase and sale. Connor failed to declare or pay this money to HMRC, evading a total of £150,000 in VAT.

Conner also used counterfeit 'proof of funds' letters to carry out the fraud and was also trading while disqualified as a company director.

He pleaded guilty to five offences at Reading Crown Court in January 2016 and was jailed for three years and seven months in April 2017.

Sentencing had been delayed to allow Conner time to sell his Ascot home to pay any future confiscation order, which was set at £640,709 at the sentencing hearing.

# Strong start for 2017 home registrations

Over 42,000 new homes were registered in the UK by NHBC in the first three months of the year, according to figures released at the NHBC's Q1 statistics briefing.

42,470 new homes were registered in Q1, an increase of 17 per cent on the 36,351 registered 12 months ago, resulting in the highest quarter in 10 years.

For the first time in seven years, all 12 regions across the UK experienced growth in registrations, when compared to the same period 12 months ago. The North East (up 39 per cent), London (up 38 per cent) and Eastern (up 31 per cent) were among the regions with the most notable growth.

Commenting on the figures, NHBC managing director Neil Jefferson said: "These figures, which show growth across the entire country, are clearly encouraging for the sector, at a time when there is considerable demand for new, high-quality homes."

Brexit doesn't appear to have affected registrations to any long term degree yet, and though numbers haven't risen back to the highs preceding the 2008 financial crash, the results were almost equal to the long-term average over the last 40 years.

It was unclear which way the election would swing registrations, but past further uncertainty, it was generally agreed across the table that an expected Conservative win was only likely to stabilise the market.

Speaking alongside Neil Jefferson and NHBC business development director Mark Jones, Colin Cole, chief executive of Lioncourt Homes, gave a housebuilder's perspective on the current market.

When asked whether the execution of Brexit will exacerbate the skills shortage, Cole said he believed that "it might."

"We just have to be careful about looking two years ahead now," he said, "It's all about land buying in the housebuilding industry, and the land we buy today we'll be building on between 18 months from now and five years."

He revealed the company were treading careful when looking to the future.

"Whereas once we would be buying sites of somewhere between 50 and 150 plots, I'm starting to think I want to buy sites at 50 plots."

"I don't know all the answers," concluded Colin, "I just know there's something in my mind that makes me think I want to be a bit more careful."



## CALA launches £15k bursary scheme



A £15,000 community bursary initiative across the West of Scotland has been launched by CALA Homes West to help charities and organisations within the local communities it is building.

The housebuilder is inviting local charities, community groups and organisations to apply for a share of the bursary across three specific regions within the area.

Split into three regions, the fund will see Lanarkshire, Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire each receiving a £5,000 allocation from the total funds.

Liana Canavan, sales and marketing director for CALA Homes West said she believes that the company are building homes that “belong to a wider community.”

Liana continued: “The £15,000 fund has the opportunity to help lots of local organisations and charities do good within the community, so we are looking forward to helping as many as we can throughout the coming months.

“We would like to welcome all charities, groups and organisations in the areas that could benefit from our assistance to complete the application form by 9 June.”

## Miller Homes' online buying tool launched

The introduction of new tools by housebuilder Miller Homes is set to make buying and settling into a new home easier.

A new online tool will enable homebuyers to visualise their kitchen. Once they have moved into the property, they can instantly and easily get familiar with all the new mod cons in their brand new home through QR codes.

The Kitchen Visualiser tool allows visitors to the Miller Homes website to create their dream kitchen in “a couple of clicks” by choosing from a selection of kitchen styles, cupboard door fronts and worktops to find their ideal combination. Once users have selected the kitchen of their choice, they can print or share their chosen combinations via social media or email.

In addition, once new customers move into their new home, the appliance and products in the property, such as heating, hob, oven and even the front door and windows, now feature QR codes as standard. By downloading the Miller Homes QR reader app and scanning the code on each appliance or feature, customers can access simple and informative instructional videos.

Anne Marie Britton, national sales and marketing director at Miller Homes, said the tool is an “engaging way for customers to consider the options for their home and share their choices with friends and family.”

## Larkfleet gives model home to Peterborough school

A model house has been donated to the Greater Peterborough University Technical College (GPU TC) by the Larkfleet Group.

The scale model of a typical timber-framed house built by Larkfleet Homes can be taken apart and re-assembled using a set of drawings, which Larkfleet has also supplied.

It is intended to help the school's students, who are studying the built environment to understand how a modern house is put together, as well as getting to grips with topics such as architectural design and planning.

The model is also being used to make practical points about communications. In one test the house plans are held by a group of students in one room, with the model held by another group in a separate room. One student from the planning group has to quickly carry instructions to the

construction group in a time trial to see which team of students can correctly build the house the fastest.

Larkfleet CEO, Karl Hick said: “Investing in the future of the construction industry by supporting local young people in their training and development has always been part of Larkfleet's ethos. The model house is just one more way in which we are supporting the next generation of construction professionals.”

## Barratt preserves native black poplar trees



The first of fifty black poplar trees to be planted at Barratt Homes' Kingsbrook development in Aylesbury has taken root, and children from a local school were on hand to help plant it.

Black poplar trees are the most endangered native timber trees in the UK. The trees used to be a familiar sight in the British countryside, but numbers have been on the decline for the last 200 years.

They are particularly significant to the Aylesbury Vale, as this is where half of the current black poplars can be found.

Barratt Homes is assisting in the conservation efforts of black poplars by planting a number of these iconic trees at Kingsbrook. Barratt claims the development will eventually be home the largest black poplar woodland in the country.

The planting process of the black poplars is being overseen by ecologists Southern Ecological Solutions.

Children from Bierton Primary School, which is situated close to Kingsbrook, were also invited to the ceremonial planting of the first tree.





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**- EMMA ALLEN, PROJECT MANAGER AT BIMINSTER HOMES**

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# INDUSTRY MOVERS



James Dunne

## Bovis Homes

Bovis Homes has announced the appointment of James Dunne as managing director of its Thames Valley region.

James joins Bovis Homes after more than a decade working as operations director for Barratt and David Wilson Homes. In his new role, he will be tasked with overseeing a period of significant growth for the company's newest region. With a background in technical and planning roles, a key focus of his position will be the region's build delivery programme and driving the process of taking new land acquisitions and turning them into finished developments.

James Watson, managing director of Bovis Homes' East Division, said: "We're delighted to welcome James to the team. Having operated in the busy South East market for a number of years, he brings with him significant knowledge and experience, particularly of the development process in volume housebuilding. His leadership in the Thames Valley region will be key as it grows significantly in 2017, with new locations set to open throughout the course of the year."

James Dunne said: "It's a very exciting time to be joining Bovis Homes and I relish the opportunity. The Thames Valley region is new and growing fast in a very competitive local market. There is already a hugely skilled and experienced team working to deliver big things in the region in the coming months and years, and I'm delighted to be part of it."



Dave Brown &amp; Tracy Iles

## Galliford Try Partnerships

The North East division of Galliford Try Partnerships has bolstered its plans for growth in the region with the appointment of two senior people. Dave Brown has joined as operations director and Tracy Iles has taken up a role as sales director. They are also joined by four more new employees.

Dave Brown has over 21 years of experience in the construction sector. He said: "After completing a degree in the late 1990s, I started work as assistant site manager for a national regeneration contractor. Over almost two decades, I worked with and progressed through the company to eventually become operations manager. I felt that it was time for a change and this new role offers a great opportunity for me to progress in the sector."

Iles moved into the housing sector 15 years ago from a role as the regional manager of an airline. Initially working for a company that delivered MOD housing for the Army and Air Force, she then took up a role as a field sales manager with a well-known developer, with whom she progressed to a sales and marketing director role. Tracy's previous job saw her return to the north east as senior sales manager.

## Cushman & Wakefield

Cushman & Wakefield's residential team has continued its expansion with the arrival of Daniel McDonagh as a partner in the land and development team.

Daniel, who joins from Berkeley Homes, has extensive experience in the residential development market, having previously worked for both Linden Homes and St James. He will spearhead the continued expansion of the firm's instruction base in the south east.

He said: "I am delighted to be joining a successful team with significant ambitions for growth at this exciting time in the firm's evolution."

## BAM Construct UK

BAM Construct UK has appointed Ian Fleming as the regional director of its Salford-based North West Construction business.

Ian was previously one of BAM's construction directors and his promotion follows 17 years with the company.

Ian said: "I believe the North West Construction Hub can also play a big part for many clients who want to look at how they procure schemes in this area. Such frameworks are a critical part of the regional economy and they bring added social value. They can also serve the Northern Powerhouse."



Richard Fagg

## Countryside

Countryside Properties is continuing to grow its Partnerships business with the appointment of Richard Fagg as land and new business director.

He joins from Linkcity where he was deputy managing director, specialising in defining, assessing and implementing strategic initiatives. He was responsible for their Workplace 2020+ concept, ambition in the Private for Sale and PRS sectors and Corporate Social Responsibility.



Hannah Harvey

## Hanover

Hanover Housing Association has announced that Hannah Harvey has joined as Regional Director for the eastern region.

Hannah said: "Hanover is an exciting opportunity and its ethos was a huge draw for me in joining the housing and support team. I look forward to being part of an organisation that is always looking to offer value for money."



Brian Berry is chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

## COMMENT

# THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

After the shock election announcement, Brian Berry looks at what the next Government's construction priorities need to be

Even by the standards of the time, Theresa May's announcement that there was to be a general election was an extraordinary development, one that has left little time for our industry to react. Typically, elections are clearly signposted months, if not years, in advance, giving plenty of time for different industry groups to lobby and persuade as the various party manifestos are drafted. This being the first snap election since 1974, there are few with first-hand experience of how to get their voices heard when the time between an election being announced and polling day is so short.

As much as it will be framed as such, the election should not be seen as being simply a second referendum on Brexit. The pressures on infrastructure, the economy and housing, are simply too significant for the major parties to make their pitch solely on how they would take the UK out of the European Union.

How these issues can be addressed will nevertheless intersect with Brexit in a number of significant ways. First and foremost, the skills question will be on the mind of construction companies large and small. As I touched upon in my last article, EU labour has become vital in plugging skills gaps that are a real danger to the health of the housebuilding industry. In London alone, there are more than 157,000 non-UK construction workers, constituting almost half of the industry's workforce in the capital.

With the rights of those already resident still not guaranteed, and the prospect of a vital supply of labour being squeezed as a new, more restrictive immigration system is introduced,

there will be many anxious bosses out there wondering where the workers will be coming from in the future. When you consider how severe the skills crisis is currently with freedom of movement – the FMB's latest State of Trade Survey showed that 60 per cent of construction SMEs are struggling to recruit bricklayers and 58 per cent of firms are struggling to hire carpenters – then the consequences of the industry being cut off from the current supply of skilled foreign workers have to be a concern.

It's this prospect that has led to the FMB calling on the next Government to commit to a flexible system of immigration that allows key strategic industries, such as construction, to draw upon adequate levels of skilled labour from the EU and beyond. Moreover, we believe it's crucial that this system works in such a way as to allow SMEs to recruit foreign labour in a way that isn't overly bureaucratic or obtrusive. One of the big concerns we have is that the immigration system the next Government ends up introducing may well make provision for skilled construction workers to come into the UK, but in such a way as to effectively prevent SMEs, who tend not to have the capacity to deal with masses of paperwork, from being able to access non-UK labour.

Of course, there is plenty more we'll be calling on the next Government to deliver. The goal of reinvigorating the SME housebuilding sector is far from achieved and whoever wins the election must build on the promise of the recent Housing White Paper. However, a house building strategy without a workforce there to enact it will be very much putting the cart before the horse.

AS MUCH AS IT WILL BE FRAMED AS SUCH, THE ELECTION SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS BEING SIMPLY A SECOND REFERENDUM ON BREXIT





# LAUNDERING JUST GOT RISKIER

Alex Ktorides of legal firm Gordon Dadds explains the impact that new money laundering laws will have on housebuilders

Developers should be aware that new laws relating to money laundering that come into force in June are likely to impact the property market.

The far-reaching effects of money laundering in the UK are well known. Last year the House of Commons published a report stating that: "at least a hundred billion pounds is being laundered through the UK every year." Furthermore, "it is astonishing that just 335 out of around 1.2 million property transactions last year were deemed to be suspicious. This suggests to us that supervision of the property market is totally inadequate, and that poor enforcement has laid out a welcome mat for money launderers."

The Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (4AMLD), a piece of EU law that comes into force on 26 June, directly addresses this. Processes undertaken by regulated firms including estate agents are to be tightened in order to prevent terrorist financing and money laundering.

Interestingly, despite being an increasingly attractive target for money launderers, letting agents are not to be included in the regulated sector. However the 4AMLD will implement substantial changes to agents' checks and procedures. Customer due diligence on both the buyer and seller will need to be carried out, rather than just the buyer, which in turn will double both the work and the cost of the process. It will also slow down the conveyancing chain massively, which will be bad for business.

There will be a requirement to complete due diligence on not only 'Politically Exposed Persons' (PEPs) – people with prominent public functions – but all close ties and family members. Domestic PEPs will also be included for these purposes.

Further procedures will require estate agents to sign up to an online verification system, seek evidence of source of funds, test riskier transactions and targets far more deeply, train staff to see the warning signs, appoint a money laundering officer to document decisions and reflect on how many suspicions they have officially reported in the last six months, regularly monitor riskier clients and seek advice

when their instincts are warning them.

How will housebuilders and developers be affected by the new rules? Developers themselves will only have obligations under the new rules if they offer estate agency services beyond the scale of their own constructed or bought units. However the changes to estate agents' procedures are still likely to have a knock-on effect.

Estate agents' fees may rise as a result of the increased procedures required of them. Agents are also likely to become more cautious in dealing with clients. One area to watch is reservation fees taken prior to completion of new-build projects; estate agents may become less willing to take reservation fees where there is any risk of money laundering being involved.

The message from the Government is loud and clear. Criminals will always try and launder money and the regulated sector and property professionals alike are the first line of defence to prevent the financing of crime. Developers – particularly those targeting the luxury market – take heed!

*Alex Ktorides is a partner at Gordon Dadds*



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Patrick Mooney is managing director at Mooney Thompson Consulting

COUNCILS IN THE UK SPENDING ON AVERAGE £2M A DAY ON TEMPORARY HOUSING BECAUSE OF A SHORTAGE OF PERMANENT OPTIONS

## THE SOCIAL NETWORK

# HARD PRESSED

After the Lord Mayor's show (the Housing White Paper) things can always seem a little bit flat, but that's usually when the hard work really starts.

In this instance, we've all heard the commitments to building more new homes of all tenures in the future, but in the here and now social landlords are getting on with the day to day business of trying to find accommodation for homeless families and trying to collect rent from tenants whose income is being cut (again).

As many readers will know, local authorities have already borne a heavy burden of the public expenditure cuts imposed from 2010 onwards, with some councils seeing their financial support cut by as much as a third.

Other figures are equally as frightening – according to the Local Government Association, councils are spending on average £2m a day on temporary accommodation because of a shortage of permanent housing.

Add that together across the country and the LGA says councils have spent £2.6bn in the last three years on housing people in temporary accommodation and the total spend has risen by 30 per cent since 2013.

To make matters worse, this accommodation includes some of the worst places to live and bring up children in the country. Often families will be living and sleeping in a single room, with washing and cooking facilities shared with several other families, all of whom are desperate to move into settled accommodation.

### HARD PRESSED

Over 75,000 households are currently living in temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfasts, hostels and private rented accommodation – a 10 per cent increase on the same period last year and a 58 per cent increase since 2010. These are staggering statistics for the fifth largest economy in the world, but things could be about to take another turn for the worse.

The latest round of welfare benefit cuts are being rolled out with young adults (the under 35s) in the firing line, while hard pressed council managers are waiting to hear when the Homelessness Reduction Act is due to go live, adding to their responsibilities to the homeless and those in imminent danger of being made homeless.

The general principle of helping unfortunate and deserving people is not at issue. Far from it. The concern is how can the new responsibilities be discharged? Even where suitable accommodation can be found, there is the small matter of how can it be afforded?

Nearly two-thirds of English councils are struggling

to find tenancies for homeless people, a report commissioned by Crisis and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has found.

Of 162 councils to respond to the survey, 64 per cent said they are finding it increasingly difficult to house homeless young people and large families, and 85 per cent said they are struggling to help single people aged 25-34 into accommodation. A majority of councils said they expected the roll-out of Universal Credit to exacerbate homelessness, mainly because of the potential impact it will have on landlords' willingness to let to homeless people.

### DIFFICULTIES

Nearly half (49 per cent) said they are finding it very difficult to find private rented accommodation for homeless applicants. Councils nearly unanimously (94 per cent) said they expect more difficulties in finding accommodation for homeless people aged 25-34 in the next two to three years.

Welfare cuts and Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates falling short of rent levels in many areas were also cited as barriers to councils' attempts to house homeless applicants.

The LGA has been calling for a temporary lifting of the Local Housing Allowance freeze, to help provide more accommodation for vulnerable families. But at the time of writing, Ministers have yet to respond positively to this request.

And the people they are trying to help have even less to live on than a few years ago, with further reductions in benefit payments on their way. Childless tenants under 35 will only be eligible for housing benefit at the 'shared accommodation' rate, and those aged under-21 will not be eligible at all unless they fit into one of 11 exemption categories. These are grim times indeed.

According to Government estimates around 1,000 young people will be affected by the cut to housing benefit for under-21s this year, rising to 11,000 by 2020/21.

There is a further complication for young adults to overcome in the way that Universal Credit operates. This requires a claimant to provide an address before benefit can be paid. If they do not have an address, then they can't claim benefit. And until they can confirm the benefit, it will be extremely difficult to get an address. It is a chicken and egg conundrum of the most difficult form to resolve.

### RESTRICTIONS

Councils can claim for, and they do make, discretionary housing payments to help those in the most need. But even here the rules can be very difficult to comply with, and in the meantime



many vulnerable people are wholly reliant on charitable agencies or they simply fall through the net and have to somehow fend for themselves.

The LGA has once again called on the Government to lift the restrictions on councils' borrowing caps, a move which Housing and Planning Minister Gavin Barwell recently ruled out. Just prior to the recent budget, the LGA asked the Government to allow councils to set their own rents, to keep 100 per cent of their Right to Buy receipts to reinvest in replacement homes and make the high-value asset levy a voluntary policy.

Conservative politician and chair of the LGA Lord Gary Porter said: "With councils continuing to face huge financial pressures, it is unsustainable for them to have to spend £2m a day to house vulnerable people at the sharp end of our housing crisis. Councils would much rather invest this scarce resource in building new affordable homes and preventing homelessness happening in the first place."

Ministers responded (in part) by making £402m of funding available over the next two years, with the money being targeted at the councils with the greatest homelessness demand. There will be £186m in 2017/18 and £191m in 2018/19, with £25m set aside for London councils to work together to

provide homelessness accommodation.

While any additional money will help, many experts in the sector say this money is not new and is simply being taken from other social care funding pots and it's a case of robbing Peter in order to pay Paul.

Local government leaders are desperate to play a more active part in resolving the current. But more radical solutions are needed if they are to positively tackle the growth in homelessness. As evictions from private rented sector tenancies are the major cause of homelessness at present, it would appear logical to tackle the problem at source and make it less easy for private landlords to evict tenants who have not broken any tenancy conditions.

#### NEW DUTIES

The new homelessness reduction act seeks to prevent homelessness by placing extra duties on councils to intervene at an earlier stage with households who are at risk of homelessness, provide more detailed advice on housing options for those at risk of homelessness, and make it easier for applicants to appeal a decision.

The Government is making £61m of funding available for councils to cover these new duties in the first two years. But once again, council leaders have said this will not cover the full extra costs which

their councils will face.

Jon Sparkes, chief executive of homelessness charity Crisis, spoke for many about the bittersweet moment of getting the new law, when he said: "This is an important moment for tackling homelessness and a major victory for those calling for change.

"Yet even as we mark this success, we are reminded of why it is so urgently needed. The number of people in temporary accommodation in England continues to rise. This is the sharp end of the housing crisis, and while this bill is by no means a cure-all, it is a vital part of the solution, and will help to prevent more people from losing their home in the first place."

Now is the time for Theresa May and her Government to demonstrate they are listening. If May is serious about targeting help towards the just about managing and the most vulnerable members of society, then taking more radical steps would be a good place to start along with giving local councils the tools that they and the LGA have been asking for.

If they do not, then I'm afraid we risk staying on this spiral of growing numbers becoming homeless and councils spending a fortune on placing them in unsuitable, temporary accommodation instead of building them secure and affordable homes for now and the future.

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Mike Lomax is marketing communications manager at Tarmac

WHEN  
LOOKING TO  
MAKE THE  
PERFECT  
CONCRETE,  
LESS IS  
ALWAYS  
MORE WHEN  
IT COMES TO  
WATER

# THE VIEW FROM THE SITE

Mike Lomax from Tarmac offers advice on how to get the perfect concrete mix, tackling a few myths.

## A CONCRETE PLAN

We've been packing cement and unpacking myths for years, which make us pretty expert on what makes the perfect concrete mix. But not everyone has as many years' experience, and knows the pot-holes and pitfalls to avoid. Mixing together knowledge, experience and some professional myth-busting, we're here to give you guidance on how to make a solid batch.

## WETTER IS NOT BETTER

When looking to make the perfect concrete, less is always more when it comes to water. A common misconception is that the best way to get more workable concrete is to add more water – this is untrue. When too much extra water is added, the mixture becomes unstable and the positive effects are temporary. It will weaken the concrete, oversaturate it, and make it porous and hard to work with after it has settled. Too much water can lead to concrete cracking, which can cause a multitude of problems on building sites.

There are a few fail-safe ways to prevent it happening. Firstly, cracking can be avoided by adding only just enough water, when mixing, to make it workable enough to place and tamp down. Secondly, if your concrete remains too hard to mix after the initial addition of water, use an admixture (plasticiser). This is a material other than the water, aggregates, or cement that is used as an ingredient of concrete or mortar. This will help to control setting and early hardening.

## CONCRETE ALWAYS CRACKS (OR DOES IT?)

Those that believe that concrete always crack need a few hints and tips! In addition to ensuring that the right amount of water is used, covering and protecting concrete after it has been mixed, known as 'curing', will allow it to gain strength and withstand shrinking without cracking. Curing plays an important role in the strength development and durability of concrete taking place immediately after concrete placing and finishing. But you can also avoid cracking by placing in joints before the concrete has been poured. Each bay should be no more than 1-2 times as long as the width. If a bend in the path is present, place another joint. After you have poured the concrete,

then push appropriately spaced thin wood strips vertically into it. When the concrete has hardened, remove the strips. Now if cracks will appear they will be hidden at the bottom and out of sight.

## ALL WASHED UP!

For the perfect mortar, 'don't fake it while you make it.' Avoid the temptation of reaching for the bottle of washing up liquid that sits perched on your kitchen cabinet! There is a common myth in the production of mortar for laying bricks which claims that there is an advantage to adding washing up liquid to your mix. Although believed to be a viable alternative, dish-liquid is not a substitute for a specialised plasticiser and will end up doing more harm than good. Adding washing up liquid will also add large air bubbles to your mixture, reducing the strength and hindering frost resistance. Make sure you grab a mortar plasticiser to ensure it will mix well, stand strong, and last as long as the China plates in your cabinet.

When making your own concrete and mortar, remember the three golden rules: less water means more strength, take extra steps to ensure less cracking, and never substitute quality for anything, especially not washing up liquid!



# THE BLIGHT OF REFUSAL

Solicitors Irwin Mitchell offer a comment on the Secretary of State's recent refusal of six planning appeals, comprising a total of 725 new houses.

**F**riday 21 April appears to have been a 'deck-clearing' day for the National Planning Casework Unit.

In what was, no doubt, a last minute effort to release decisions before the start of the purdah period for the general election, the Secretary of State issued seven recovered planning appeal decisions in a single day.

All seven of the recovered appeals related to residential development schemes, comprising a total of 805 potential new homes.

The Secretary of State refused all but one of the appeals – quashing the hope of 725 new dwellings and permitting the creation of only 80 new homes.

Despite the current rhetorical and political push to increase housebuilding (and in particular the Secretary of State's recent attacks on NIMBYism and a lack of delivery by housebuilders and local councils

alike), the Secretary of State's purported reasons for these refusals are depressingly familiar – particularly in the run up to an election.

Three appeals were refused on the basis of a conflict with the local Neighbourhood Plan. In all three appeal decisions the local planning authority in question did not have a five year housing land supply (and in fact had a significant shortfall) and the Inspector had recommended that the appeal be approved.













One appeal was refused, against the Inspector's recommendation, as the Secretary of State held it to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Another appeal was also refused on Green Belt grounds, but this time in line with the Inspector's recommendations. In total 580 of the 725 homes refused permission had been recommended for approval by the Secretary of State's planning inspectors.

The final refusal followed the Inspector's recommendation and was due to a finding that the "less than substantial harm" caused by the scheme to the setting of a listed building was not outweighed by the benefits brought by the proposed development.

In short, as is often the case, the themes of the refusals were:

- localism/neighbourhood planning
- protecting the Green Belt
- conserving heritage assets.

Carl Dyer, national head of planning at Irwin Mitchell commented on the recent spate of refusals: "Unbelievable! They scream we must build more homes for seven years, and in the last tranche before the election the Secretary of State refuses over 90 per cent of the 805 homes before him, including 580 in four appeals where the Inspector had recommended that permission be granted."

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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

# Shipping containers can be useful in an emergency

A new innovative emergency accommodation development was officially opened recently in Ealing, London; providing a new option for under-resourced councils.

The 34 apartment development was created using a kit of moveable and reusable parts, based around re-purposed shipping containers, offering a sustainable, robust, affordable and flexible solution to short-term accommodation.

Reportedly the first of its kind, Marston Court has been created by ISO spaces in partnership with QED Property, Cargotek and Ealing Council.

The need for immediate accommodation across England is growing, with nearly 15,000 households in the last quarter of 2016 considered homeless and more than 75,000 households last year in temporary accommodation, up 10 per cent from the previous year.

In London, the situation is particularly acute, with 53,370 household's homeless and 2293 in Ealing alone. Emergency accommodation in Ealing has become critical, with a steady decline in the availability of suitable options. Ealing council has found it increasingly difficult to provide in-borough temporary accommodation. The opening of Marston Court is intended to improve this.

Marston Court is a joint development by QED Sustainable Urban Developments and social housing repairs and maintenance provider Mears Group.

CargoTek, a specialist supplier of sustainable and flexible spaces, provided the modular accommodation manufactured by ISO Spaces at their production facility in Cornwall.

The development, which is located on Bordars Walk, Ealing, sits on a previously disused brownfield site that attracted fly tipping and anti-social activity. The development, which brings vacant land back into productivity through interim use, will help those in immediate need of emergency accommodation, including young families and low-income individuals.

In order to house up to 72 people, the development comprises four pavilions with 34 secure, ready to move in, fully furnished apartments, a management office, laundry and refuse storage. The site is built to Secured by Design principles and landscaped with open outside spaces including a play area.

Gregg Curtis, founder/director, ISO Spaces, commented: "Homelessness is an issue that is always critical at any scale. We need to design and develop more solutions to these issues."

Councillor Jasbir Anand, cabinet member for housing at Ealing Council, believes "radical thinking" is needed to face Ealing's "massive" housing crisis.

He said: "The Marston Court development is just one of a number of projects that we are undertaking to repurpose underused brownfield sites and transform them into assets that benefit our local community in as cost-effective a way as possible."

**EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION IN EALING HAS BECOME CRITICAL, WITH A STEADY DECLINE IN THE AVAILABILITY OF SUITABLE OPTIONS**





# L&Q announces 68 pet-friendly homes in Sutton

The launch of 68 new homes for private rental has been announced by L&Q as part of Seventeen, a development in Sutton, south west London.

A rarity in rental properties, the 46 one bedroom apartments and 22 two bedroom apartments are pet friendly, so new tenants can “really make their house a home.”

The homes have been designed to be ideal for sharers, with selected two bed properties also boasting two bathrooms, as well as a furniture package available for an additional monthly cost.

Offering large interiors, the new Seventeen PRS apartments are available in varying sizes to suit the differing needs and budgets of potential tenants, and are located moments from Sutton High Street.

A two minute walk from Sutton railway station, the homes are intended for those looking to swap the inner city for a more relaxed approach to London living.

Designed by Formation Architects, Seventeen’s blue and yellow facade creates a strong impact on the surrounding townscape. The homes feature fitted kitchens and fully integrated appliances. The bathrooms are fitted with good quality fittings and are finished to a high standard, while occupants will be able to benefit from built-in wardrobes to master bedrooms. Each of the new homes benefit from private outdoor space, and floor to ceiling windows provide ample natural light to the interiors.

Sutton retains a ‘market town feel’ and is home to a local market, a variety of retail stores and a host of cafés and eateries. The town centre, a two minute walk from Seventeen, also has a number of bars and restaurants, a cinema and a theatre. Close to the development are a number of local primary and secondary schools.

The area also provides an abundance of green spaces, including Manor Park which runs parallel to the development.



# 173 homes approved in Newark

Planning permission has been granted for 173 new homes to Avant Homes, as part of the Newark urban extension project at Middlebeck.

Avant Homes has acquired a 16.8-acre site for the £48m development, which forms part of the initial stage of the £500m Growth Point project planned for the south of Newark by Urban & Civic.

The properties will be a mixture of three, four and five-bedroom semi-detached and detached homes. Groundworks are expected to commence in summer 2017, with the first homes ready for occupation in early 2018.

A new 5km Southern Link Road, connecting the A1 to the A46 along the southern fringe of Newark is a key feature of the project, with the site benefitting from connections to the town centre and the wider area. Phase one of the road is already complete, and as a result the land has been unlocked for the first homes at Middlebeck.

As well as 3,150 new homes, the Newark

Urban extension project will provide new schools, community facilities and extensive green spaces and amenities, including walkways, footpaths and cycleways.

Avant Homes Midlands managing director, Glyn Mabey (pictured) said he was

“very pleased to be the first housebuilder to be granted planning permission.”

She continued: “This development will offer buyers exceptional quality and innovative design features and we are looking forward to work getting underway.”



Caption: Avant Homes Midlands MD Glyn Mabey

## CASE STUDY

# The Apex of offsite construction

Apex House, a 29-storey student accommodation scheme in Wembley, stands tall as Europe's highest modular tower yet built, demonstrating the reach now possible using offsite systems.

Europe's tallest modular tower has seen its final module lowered into place. The 29 storey structure in Wembley, London is a student accommodation scheme developed by Tide Construction and Vision Modular Systems.

Apex House is made up of 679 modules, delivering over 580 rooms that will be ready for students to move into by September. The development will also include communal facilities, such as a cinema and an outdoor courtyard.

Each module is manufactured at Vision's factory in Bedford, where the furniture, windows, electrical wiring and plumbing are all installed before the modules are transported 60 miles to the site in Wembley.

Vision Modular Systems' manufacturing process uses a controlled assembly line environment, manned by skilled operatives who are supported by quality control and technical guidance personnel.

Automated production lines transfer the modules through the manufacturing process where all internal finishes, M&E installations, windows, external insulation and some external finishes are applied. The units are built using integrated structural steel framing with solid concrete floors.

Christy Hayes, chief executive officer at Tide Construction, said she was "delighted" at recent government support for offsite construction.

Hayes detailed the benefits of the process: "Modular construction provides a much faster alternative to traditional construction, without compromising on the quality of the building or the versatility of the design. Modular produces 80 per cent less waste, requires fewer onsite workers and provides certainty of cost and time."

Apex House's total build time was 12 months, with the modules being stacked to a height of 90 metres in just 13 weeks. The project was designed by architects HTA Design LLP and will be managed by student housing operator Scape. The building has a BREEAM rating of Excellent.

Rory Bergin, partner at HTA Design

**THE FURNITURE, WINDOWS, ELECTRICAL WIRING AND PLUMBING WERE ALL INSTALLED BEFORE THE MODULES WERE TRANSPORTED 60 MILES TO THE SITE**







**THE TOTAL BUILD TIME WAS 12 MONTHS, WITH THE MODULES STACKED TOP THE HEIGHT OF 90 METRES IN JUST 13 WEEKS**

LLP, said that modular volumetric construction “presented a new design challenge for architects.”

He said that architects “need to be involved from the very beginning of a modular project to get the best results, working closely with all parties to get the design finalised early, and understand the manufacturing and delivery process.”

Tom Devaney, managing director of Scape Student Living, also commented: “Starting work offsite, before the foundations were in, meant our interior architects Ab Rogers Design could make sure every single studio is designed to give students exactly what they need.”

“The time saved on the build process also let us focus on creating a ‘vertical campus,’” continued Devaney, “with cinemas, gardens and study spaces that bring students together.”

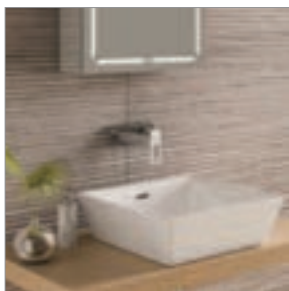
The development is being funded by GCP Student Living, a closed ended fund, which is listed in the London Stock Exchange and already owns a number of other completed developments.

Prior to this project, Tide Construction and Vision Modular Systems also held the title for the tallest modular tower in Europe, with a 25-storey student accommodation building in Wolverhampton that was completed in 2009.





# PRODUCT FOCUS



## HiB

With a focus on making products for the bathroom with a plethora of innovative features, HiB has created a new cabinet with Bluetooth Technology, incorporating integrated speakers for outstanding sound. The Aluminium Cabinet also includes heated doors to clear condensation, mirrored sides and LED lighting which can be altered from cool white to warm white. With an interior illuminated magnifying mirror, double charging sockets and central divide on the 60cm & 80cm, the Groove Cabinet is the most complete cabinet available today. Groove is available in 50x70cm, 60x70cm and 80x70cm

Enq. 111



## Kloeber

Kloeber is recognised as a market leading specialist in timber and aluminium folding sliding doors and bespoke glazing solutions in timber, aluminium and composite. Offering a complete package of glazing solutions including folding sliding doors, sliding doors, windows, French and single doors, fixed frame glazing and roof lights Kloeber is a one stop shop for the self-builder and home renovator. With a tailor-made service from inception to completing including survey and fitting service if required. Visit one of their three extensive showrooms or call to discuss your individual project.

Enq. 112



## Hambleside Danelaw

Hambleside Danelaw is excited to announce the launch of its new environmentally friendly, lead alternative flashing, Fast Flash! Designed with a fully self-adhesive reverse to minimise waste, Fast Flash is 50 per cent quicker to install than lead, extremely flexible, malleable and requires no specialist tools to fit. Fast Flash can be installed on most common roof coverings and multiple applications, including; valley head and eaves; wall abutments; chimney perimeters and dormers and rooflights. For more information contact Hambleside Danelaw.

Enq. 113



## Civils and utilities given efficiency boost

A leading UK infrastructure supplier launched its first civils, utilities and specialist hire-combined branch on 23 March, in a bid to drive industry and supply chain efficiencies. The **Burdens** Bristol branch is now a single point of access to three Wolseley UK infrastructure brands – Burdens, Fusion Utilities and MCA-Fusion Hire & Repair. Announced in response to growing industry need for more time and cost efficient solutions to infrastructure supply, the move means contractors can fulfil all their supplies and hire requirements at the same time, from one location. As well as civils supplier Burdens, the branch now also features utilities infrastructure provider Fusion Utilities, and utilities equipment hire, repair and calibration company MCA-Fusion Hire & Repair. And as well as the new branch, Wolseley has invested £1.4million in lorries across its infrastructure brands to increase delivery capabilities and comply with new, upcoming legislative requirements.

0117 301 4413 [www.burdens.co.uk](http://www.burdens.co.uk)

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## JDP celebrates 45 years

Water management specialists **JDP** is celebrating its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a period of significant expansion, growth and investment. The company is driving major investment in new branch openings, continuous branch improvement and upgrades, expansion of sales teams, sales office support, technical services and marketing and trade counter staff. Having grown over 45 years to become one of the UK's leading and most respected distributors of water management systems, JDP has dedicated manufacturing capabilities through its partners in Tessengerlo Group and close partnerships with the world's leading manufacturers of drainage, civil engineering and building products. JDP provides a one-stop shop for residential, commercial, public and industrial building as well as civil engineering, utilities and agricultural projects. In this milestone year, managing director Steve McLellan invited local MP Rory Stewart and Val Tarbitt for a guided tour of JDP's head office.

01228 791503 [www.jdpipes.co.uk](http://www.jdpipes.co.uk)

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## BSI recognises Ancon's ongoing commitment



Structural steel fixings manufacturer, **Ancon Building Products**, has had its commitment to business excellence further recognised with long tenure awards for two of the industry's key systems management standards. The awards, which were presented by BSI (British Standards Institution), mark

over 20 years of continuous certification of Ancon's quality management system under ISO 9001 and over 10 years' tenure of ISO 14001 certification for its environmental management system. To maintain these internationally recognised certifications, Ancon has demonstrated effective control and improvement in every area of its business.

0114 275 5224 [www.ancon.co.uk](http://www.ancon.co.uk)

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## Double success for Vent-Axia



Leading British ventilation manufacturer **Vent-Axia** is celebrating winning not one, but two categories in the prestigious H&V News Awards 2017. Within the Air Movement category the company scooped the award for its Lo-Carbon Revive, designed specifically for social housing ventilation. Meanwhile, in the

Domestic Ventilation Product of the Year category, Vent-Axia collected the award for its innovative Sentinel Kinetic Advance Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) unit. The Sussex-based company received the accolades hosted by comedian Russell Kane.

0844 856 0590 [www.vent-axia.com](http://www.vent-axia.com)

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## The environment tops the agenda



The environment is top of the agenda for **Designer Contracts**. The company's award-winning recycling scheme sees all waste removed from site and taken back to its 12 regional centres, saving a staggering 250 tonnes of waste going to landfill every year. The programme not only includes

flooring. Designer Contracts has invested £40,000 in a baling machine that helps to recycle 70 tonnes of cardboard and 20 tonnes of plastic every year. At the company's national distribution facility in Kettering, which holds £2m worth of stock, it uses a computerised planning system to ensure maximum efficiency and to reduce waste.

01246 854577 [www.designercontracts.com](http://www.designercontracts.com)

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## Demonstration vans display Ecoslide with style



As part of an additional £1.5 million investment in increased Sales & Marketing initiatives, **Victorian Sliders** have introduced a dynamic way to demonstrate their product quality to installers and homeowners. A new fleet of mobile showrooms is now out and about on UK

roads, professionally kitted-out with stylish sample ECOSlide vertical sliding sash windows and informative display graphics. Designed for Trade Installers and their homeowner customers who want to see a sample before placing an order, these special sales demonstration vans provide the perfect way to closely inspect ECOSlide PVC-U vertical sliding sash windows and review foil colour and hardware finish options.

01269 846200 [www.victoriansliders.co.uk](http://www.victoriansliders.co.uk)

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## Westbury products sound & secure



**Westbury Windows & Joinery** has recently published its latest in a string of successful test results.

Following on from its energy and security (PAS24) achievements in 2016 Westbury's products have now also had acoustic assessment too. The products, including casement and sliding sash windows, and French doors, were independently tested at a UKAS-accredited laboratory and performed well across the board; particularly in the reduction of traffic noise. However, the unexpected star of the show was the French doorset; a product that is notorious, industry-wide, for poor sound insulation. To our knowledge, no other timber door manufacturer has published an acoustic test result for a French doorset, yet Westbury's has proved to be as effective as a casement window, scoring 38Rw on the Weighted Sound Reduction Index (meaning it reduces sound by approximately 38 decibels!). Westbury's combination of classic, heritage design with high tech performance, makes its windows and doors the ideal solution for any new build or renovation project located near to a busy road, railway, flight path or factory.

Videos of the testing in action can be found on the website.

01245 326510 [www.westburyjoinery.com/performance/acoustic](http://www.westburyjoinery.com/performance/acoustic)

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## MEDITE SMARTPLY announces major investment in new factory



In a significant move, **MEDITE SMARTPLY**, producers of innovative timber panel products, has signed a commitment as part of a consortium planning the construction of the world's first Tricoya® wood chip acetylation plant. To be built in Hull, the plant will produce the raw material for the manufacture of MEDITE® TRICOYA® EXTREME, the market leading high performance wood panel. The consortium is between MEDITE SMARTPLY, chemical technology group Accsys, venture capitalists BP Ventures and Acetyl industry leader BP Chemicals. The plant, due to come on stream in 2019, will produce Tricoya Wood Elements using Accsys' proprietary technology for the acetylation of wood chips and particles. These acetylated elements are used to manufacture the high performance MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME Medium Density Fibre panels. The panels exhibit outstanding durability and dimensional stability which allow them to be used in exterior and wet area applications once limited to products such as concrete, plastics or metals. With the added benefits of light weight, sustainable raw materials and a guarantee of up to 50 years above ground and 25 years in ground, these revolutionary panels provide entirely new construction material, allowing great design flexibility and endless opportunities for creativity.

01322 424900 [www.mdfosb.com](http://www.mdfosb.com)

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## LRWA appoints its first CEO



The **Liquid Roofing and Waterproofing Association (LRWA)** has announced the appointment of Sarah Spink (MloR) as its first Chief Executive Officer (CEO). With more than a decade of experience in the liquid roofing sector, Sarah will provide strategic direction to the association as it continues to grow, raising awareness of both the technical and financial benefits of specifying liquid applied waterproofing systems. As CEO, her primary role will be to enhance the support, training and guidance the LRWA already offers to its members and the wider industry, as well as encourage new membership to the association.

0207 448 3859 [www.lrwa.org.uk](http://www.lrwa.org.uk)

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## Andrea Leadsom MP Is VIP visitor



Andrea Leadsom, MP for South Northamptonshire and Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was a VIP visitor to the headquarters of **Johnson & Starley** on March 24. Managing Director Chris Yates hosted a visit that demonstrated the company's commitment to environmentally product development and marketing initiatives. Johnson & Starley is a member of the BEAMA Ventilation Group that promotes the importance of indoor air quality and the need for efficient ventilation in new and existing properties.

01604 762881 [www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk](http://www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk)

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## GTC announces new regional sales manager



**GTC**, one of the leading independent multi-utility network provider, is expanding its sales management team with the appointment of Andy Thatcher MBA as Regional Sales Manager for the Midlands region. Andy has over 25 years' experience in the energy supply and distribution sector,

specialising in the water and communications industries, working for a range of utility companies including British Gas Business, Eon, Cable and Wireless and Three Valleys Water. His in-depth knowledge of business and project management will be key to understanding the priorities of housebuilders and developers.

01359 240154 [www.gtc-uk.co.uk](http://www.gtc-uk.co.uk)

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## Vortice showcased innovations at ISH



From 14-18 March **Vortice** Italy exhibited at the international ISH tradeshow in Frankfurt with new ranges of innovative products and services for the residential and industrial air-conditioning sector. Products on display reconfirmed the company's innovation, technological development and keen focus on

both reducing energy consumption and improving environmental comfort. New products demonstrated both high performance and energy saving features. Among many products showcased is the new Quadro Evo centrifugal fan which has low specific fan power, low noise and can be recessed or surface mounted.

01283 492949 [www.vortice.ltd.uk](http://www.vortice.ltd.uk)

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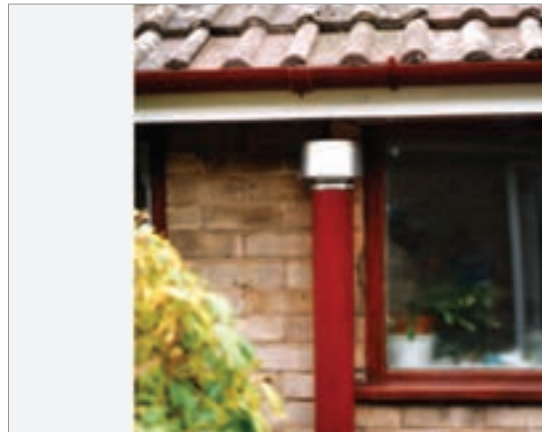


## £1million investment

A leading fenestration partner, **Nationwide Windows Ltd**, announces a further £1 million investment in automation at its door and window manufacturing facility in Rugby. The company recently reported it is now manufacturing and installing an impressive 60 products an hour – that's one product every minute of every working day. But these results are no surprise because the company has enjoyed double digit growth (13 per cent) year on year, every year since 2009. John Whalley, MD of Nationwide Windows & Doors, comments: "Production levels have been at an all-time high at our 126,000ft<sup>2</sup> manufacturing facility in Rugby. We've experienced growth across all product ranges including our core PVC-U windows and doors, composite doors and insulated glass units. In addition, specialist products like aluminium windows and doors, patios, vertical sliders and bi-folds are also seeing hikes in demand. To continue to deliver this growth, it is imperative that we keep investing in our business."

01788 224466 [www.nationwidewindows.co.uk](http://www.nationwidewindows.co.uk)

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## New clarity given for air admittance valves

Drainage ventilation expert **Studor** has responded to market confusion about Air Admittance Valves (AAVs) and whether they can be used externally. "There does seem to be confusion in the market and we're frequently asked whether AAVs are suitable for exterior use," comments Studor's Technical Director Steve White. "Both our own Studor Maxi-Vent, as well as the Wavin branded OsmaVent 110, can all be used externally. The latest BBA Agrément Certificates clarify this and specifically refer to their external use." The BBA certificates verify that the A1 rated valves perform in extreme temperatures, from -20°C to +60°C in accordance with EN12380. However, it should be noted that the independent testing actually carried out exceeded the requirements of the standard and proved that the valves operate in temperatures down to -40°C without the insulating cap. In addition, the ABS plastic which the valves are made from includes a UV stabiliser to protect against any degradation effects from ultraviolet radiation.

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**Mermaid Laminate.** Create the lifestyle you desire.



Our shower panels are designed to look good, fit quickly and most importantly stay waterproof.

Our decorative Laminate shower panels are available in a range of unique designs and natural materials, all of which will give your bathroom a stunning modern look. Not only do they look great but unlike tiles, no grout is required, making it easy and quick to fit and as no professional tiler is needed to install, this makes it the ideal solution for a developer seeking to eliminate trade disruption.

Shown above a full wall of Mermaid Panels in Concrete not only perfectly fits within the modern space it sits, but also blends beautifully with the tiled floor.

For further information, on this, or any of our other new products give us a call on: [01472 279940](tel:01472 279940)



Saves time  
and trades



Saves money  
versus tiles



## FLOORSYNC



## MEGAPRO SOFTWARE



## Deck planning &amp; estimating software available from Wallbarn

**FLOORSYNC:** New software available from **Wallbarn** allows clients to create an image of how the **DURO EXCELLENCE** decking will look on their own project. The exact colour swatch of EasyClick or EasyChange decking boards can be visualised on the deck space. Our gallery has a selection of images to choose. Alternatively, users can send Wallbarn a photograph of their own deck area. Click the "Floor" icon and choose the preferred "DURO EXCELLENCE" colour. The deck will change colour, giving the user an accurate account of how their project will appear when decked out in DURO EXCELLENCE. **MEGAPRO SOFTWARE:** MegaPro is an estimating software which will calculate and place the correct number and size of pedestals required for the paving or decking project. Users should send a PDF or drawing to Wallbarn of the deck space. The software then calculates the distances and area. The "calculate" button is pressed and the software lists the exact number and height/product code of each pedestal required. It will separate them by height/code and create a drawing of the exact layout. This drawing will colour code each pedestal type, creating a user-friendly drawing to give the reader a visual layout of where each pedestal is located.

0208 916 2222 [www.wallbarn.com](http://www.wallbarn.com)

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## VEKA UK invests in BIM for convenience



Industry-leading PVC-U systems supplier **The VEKA UK Group** has demonstrated its commitment to the commercial sector once again. The Burnley-based company has invested a significant amount in creating highly intelligent, data rich, parametric, three

dimensional models of its most popular systems for the Building Information Modelling (BIM) sector in order to benefit architects, specifiers, engineers, designers and developers. These new models are hosted on [bimobject.com](http://bimobject.com), arguably the World's best known content platform of this kind. This makes them easily accessible to all, along with the relevant, up-to-date technical spec information.

01282 716611 [www.vekauk.com](http://www.vekauk.com)

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## When the roof becomes the facade



A striking zero carbon family home in Belgium has been clad entirely in clay plain tiles from **Marley Eternit** to give character to the minimalist design, meeting the planning requirement for a brick look but offering a long lasting and high performance technical solution. The clay facade forms part of the light-

weight thin wall construction, adding to the thermal properties whilst maximising the internal living space. Marley Eternit's range of clay tiles also offers impressive environmental credentials. To find out more, visit the company website.

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## FACING MODULAR CONSTRUCTION

- Used by modular sector for over 25 years
- Can be installed on or off-site
- Lightweight and easy to install
- Low maintenance and durable
- Wide range of brick slips in stock

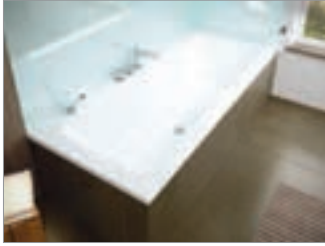


0117 971 7117  
[www.eurobrick.co.uk](http://www.eurobrick.co.uk)

**EUROBRICK**  
CLADDING SYSTEMS



## Presenting Puro Set Wide bath from Kaldewei



Puro Set Wide is the latest steel enamel bath from Kaldewei, perfect for bathing and showering with a centrally-positioned waste outlet and extra wide rim, giving maximum freedom for positioning taps and fittings. With an ergonomic backrest and extra steep walls on three sides, Puro Set Wide offers reclining comfort and

optimum legroom while bathing and freedom of movement and excellent underfoot safety while showering.

01480 498 053 [www.kaldewei.co.uk](http://www.kaldewei.co.uk)

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## Engel workwear stretches your comfort zone



Recognised the World over for its comprehensive range of comfortably fitting, stylish and practical workwear, F Engel build further on their reputation by introducing a collection of slim-fit, stretchable work trousers which allow wearers to be especially comfortable in any work situation – and look and feel

smart at the same time. Called 'X-treme', the trousers are made from 65 per cent polyester and 35 per cent cotton incorporating a specially developed mechanical stretch factor; they are available in various choices both with and without useful hanging pockets.

07933 150197 [www.fe.dk/en](http://www.fe.dk/en)

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## New Simpson Strong-Tie catalogue

The 2017 edition of Simpson Strong-Tie's flagship catalogue is here. Alongside the UK's largest range of connectors for timber and masonry construction, sit over a dozen new products and several range extensions, including: Post Bases; I-Joist hangers; Angle Brackets; Structural screws and Masonry Ties. The catalogue is also brimming with installation advice and performance characteristics and safe working loads. Sales Director, Jon Head explains: "It's been a busy time for Simpson Strong-Tie, with all new ranges for Light Gauge Steel and CLT construction, as well as our significantly expanded nails and screws ranges. We've really pushed the boat out to increase our core range though, which, coupled with our rapid made-to-order service, we really can say that if we don't have it – you don't need it." The latest version 'Connectors for Timber and Masonry Construction' is available from Simpson Strong-Tie on request and can be downloaded from the website.

01827 255600 [www.strongtie.co.uk](http://www.strongtie.co.uk)

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# Looking for a **Reliable** Sign Supplier?

For over 35 years Glendining Signs has reliably and competitively supplied sign solutions to some of the biggest names in the Construction Industry.

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## SHOW PREVIEW



# TACKLING THE SUPPLY CHALLENGE AT HOUSING 2017

Housing 2017 will explore hot topics including tackling the housing supply challenge and homelessness, coping with deregulation and mergers, and thriving in the current and future political environment.



**H**ousing 2017, taking place in Manchester on 27-29 June, is set to welcome 1,500 delegates and a total audience of 8,000 people who can expect to walk away with bright ideas and inspiration.

The conference will explore the biggest questions our industry is facing and will aim to identify the solutions that can help make a difference. In such a crucial period of change and Brexit uncertainty, Housing 2017 is the perfect opportunity for the sector to come together, take stock and re-energise.

Over the three days we will examine and explore the political and policy environment, the economic outlook and the latest thinking across the sector. By attending the conference delegates will get the following benefits:

- A deeper understanding of how the sector can meet the housing supply challenge.
- Strategic sessions on how housing can

## AS A LEADING EVENT, HOUSING 2017 OFFERS THE HOUSING SECTOR A UNIQUE PLATFORM TO TAKE STOCK AND PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

underpin economic development and create successful communities.

- Best practice examples of delivering genuinely affordable housing.
- Ideas around what the business models of the future will look like.
- A clear picture of the opportunities and the risks that deregulation presents.
- Leading insights on leadership, strategy and mission.



- A toolkit to balance commerciality and social purpose.
- Expert analysis on the current and future political and economic environment.
- Different perspectives on mergers and acquisitions.
- The latest thinking around social innovation.
- International initiatives to tackling homelessness.
- An increased understanding of how housing can help shape the health and social care agenda.
- The latest thinking around social innovation.
- A comprehensive overview with practical examples of how organisations are reacting to welfare reform.
- The latest thinking in housing management.
- Up to date analysis of the White Paper and practical guides on how to implement it.

#### UNMISSABLE

This year, Europe's largest housing event is bigger and better than ever. Over the three days, 200 speakers, 300 exhibitors, 1,500 delegates, and over 8,000 visitors will convene in Manchester at Housing 2017. With greater investment in features, over 100 hours of content, and more networking

and hospitality opportunities, Housing 2017 will offer essential insight into the current industry affairs.

Delivered across five conference theatres, Housing 2017 delegates will enjoy unrivalled insight, debate, and discussion provided by more than 200 speakers including Housing and Planning Minister Gavin Barwell MP. From Keynotes to Think Tanks and topics covering everything from housing management to the supply of new homes, Housing 2017's five theatres will offer innovative learning opportunities that ensure delegates leave with actionable and implementable solutions.

#### INCLUSIVITY & NETWORKING

Even more housing professionals can now benefit from the full conference week experience with new corporate group

packages, junior delegate rates, and the award-winning delegate of the future offer – all this ensures everyone who wishes to join the show can be part of the conversation at Housing 2017. Whether delegates, speakers, exhibitors or visitors, Housing 2017 offers the housing sector a unique platform to take stock and plan for the year ahead.

With more investment in the event experience than ever, and over 300 of the sector's leading suppliers, Housing 2017 is the perfect place to revisit professional relationships, make new contacts, keep up to date, share best practice and forge new partnerships. Over 30,000 meetings took place in 2016, and with 2017 set to be much bigger, make sure you are part of Europe's largest housing event.

Visit [cihhousing.com](http://cihhousing.com) and secure your place.

For more information and to register visit

**[WWW.CIHHOUSING.CO.UK](http://WWW.CIHHOUSING.CO.UK)**

and follow Housing 2017 on Twitter for the latest news

**[@CIH\\_HOUSING](#) [#HOUSING2017](#)**

## Windoor balcony enclosures at CIH



Balcony enclosures are our speciality; a concept embraced by both the public and private housing sectors. A sustainable solution, they are suitable for new build, refurbishment or infill and have transformed buildings throughout the UK. Our sample balcony will be on our Stand C4 near the entrance; handle it to appreciate the quality and ease of operation. Our comprehensive image portfolio featuring projects across all design styles and within a range of budgets will help you visualise how our unique system will enhance

your future projects and make them a reality. Improve energy efficiency and enhance tenant lifestyle with a **Windoor** balcony.

**CIH Housing stand no C4**

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## Stelrad at Housing 2017 – Stand G50



**Stelrad Radiators**, a UK leading manufacturer of radiators will once again be in attendance at the Housing 2017 Conference and Exhibition, the annual showcase of the Chartered Institute of Housing. This year's event takes place at Manchester Central between 27th-29th June. Stelrad will

have its full range of radiator options on display on its stand from its best-selling Compact range, its designer and decorative options, its specialist LST – low surface temperature range and its special application series including its Compact XP rust resistant radiators.

**01709 578 950 [www.stelrad.com](http://www.stelrad.com)**

**CIH Housing stand no G50**

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## Grey is the new white!

There is an undeniable trend within the housebuilding market from white towards colour when choosing replacement windows, doors and roofline products. Grey is rapidly becoming the new white! At **Freefoam** we are seeing these market forces converting into sales and have seen a significant increase in orders for Anthracite Grey fascia and soffit during the last year. Architects, specifiers, builders and developers can now create a fully coordinated roofline for their clients by offering Freefoam's new Anthracite Gutter. Introduced last year, the Anthracite Grey rainwater range is an exact match (RAL No.7016) to the already popular fascia and soffit products and coordinates with many popular shades of window frames and door finishes. 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 including Union Brackets, Running Outlets and Hoppers, and manufactured using co-extruded PVC-U, the Freefoam Freeflow range offers a long lasting, leak free, no fade, low maintenance solution all with a ten year guarantee. The new Anthracite Grey rainwater range is manufactured using Freefoam's patented Colormax™ technology.

**01604 591110 [www.freefoam.com](http://www.freefoam.com)**

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Photo: Alastair Carew-Cox

## Copper in the Park

Distinctive Nordic Brown Light pre-oxidised copper cladding from **Aurubis** plays a unifying role in Glancy Nicholls Architects' competition-winning design of the Chamberlain Hall complex for the University of Birmingham. Set in a 'listed' historic park, the new complex replaces 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings that proved unsuitable for modern, sustainable student accommodation and unfeasible to improve. Conceived as a landmark tower with three adjacent, linear 'finger' wings, the complex provides 726 student rooms, split into five and six en-suite bedroomed clusters and one bedroom studios. Communal facilities including a bar, restaurant and conference space are provided in the ground floor of the tower. The footprint of the new complex sits within the perimeter of the previous buildings, minimising impact on the surrounding parkland. The architects' ambition was to create a cohesive concept using materials and building forms to tie together the development as a whole. On the three 'finger' wings, brickwork matching local buildings acts as a 'grounding' material at low level with Nordic Brown Light pre-oxidised copper cladding as a striking, robust and high-quality finish above. The ends of the wings overlooking the park are highlighted by copper frames projecting out to add solar shading.

01875 812144 [www.aurubis.com/finland/architectural](http://www.aurubis.com/finland/architectural)

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## Timber Cladding - the natural choice



Canjaere timber cladding from the **A. Proctor Group** has been supplied for an exciting new housing development for property developer Eskdale Homes. Each of the houses at the Ballenlochan development were built using Val-U-Therm®, a unique closed panel, factory insulated timber frame system with class leading thermal performance and

manufactured off-site by Scotframe Timber Engineering. Canjaere Classic Timber Cladding in the golden natural colourway, Tongue and Groove finish was chosen for its high quality and natural appearance, created during manufacture.

01250 872261 [www.proctorgroup.com](http://www.proctorgroup.com)

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## 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](http://www.euroform.co.uk)

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# OFFSITE, ON-TREND

The ongoing shortage of housing in the UK has led to a resurgence in modular construction. Richard Haines of Eurobrick considers the benefits of brick slip systems in this context.

**W**ithout doubt, speed of delivery has to be one of the most important considerations for the modular building sector. Brick slip cladding systems are both quick and easy to install, with some only requiring the use of semi-skilled labour.

The ability to install cladding off-site during the manufacturing process is of key importance. This reduces onsite operations, which can be costly, subject to other scheduled site activities or delays, and (particularly significant in the UK) be at the mercy of the weather.

The ongoing skills shortage in the construction industry is a real concern, and in a sector that is expected to grow in the coming years, reducing dependency on traditional skilled labour will be a plus. As mentioned, some brick slip systems can be assembled by semi-skilled labour, which could help to ease labour pressures, both in terms of finding workers and the associated costs.

## BENEFITS

Brick slip cladding systems are generally light-weight and do not require the foundations associated with traditional masonry. This helps to simplify the design of foundations and reduce costs compared with traditional brickwork. Cladding can also be fitted to a number of different substrates, including timber and steel frame.

A well-designed cladding system offers a level of product consistency that is essential in the modular construction industry and vital for mass produced buildings. In a controlled factory environment, an installer should be able to fix at least a square metre of system per hour, however this can vary from system to system.

Third party product certification may be required by the client, but not all available brick slip systems have been rigorously tested and certified. Modular companies should always request confirmation of certification from the cladding supplier.

Quality brick slip cladding is robust enough to withstand the stresses of being lifted, transported to site on the back of a lorry and craned into position. A modular building that can be delivered to site, and that does not require substantial exterior finishing works, is a major benefit. It costs money to have installers and builders working away from home, so the less time spent onsite the better.

**THE ONGOING SKILLS SHORTAGE IN THE INDUSTRY IS A REAL CONCERN, AND IN A GROWING SECTOR REDUCING DEPENDENCY ON TRADITIONAL SKILLED LABOUR WILL BE A PLUS**

Another benefit is durability. When offering a modular housing package to clients, longevity of the product will be an important consideration, including the required external finishes. Kiln fired clay brick slips weather and age in the same way as conventional brickwork, and brick slip exteriors require little to no maintenance. It is important to note however that the life span of different cladding systems may vary, and they should be checked with the suppliers.





Aesthetics are also a key consideration. Brick finishes remain popular, particularly in British architecture and design, and in many areas may be the vernacular building material. It is often part of planning requirements that a new housing development must use bricks, or a particular colour or type of brick, to fit in with the surrounding area. For modular housing developments, it would not be viable to achieve this with traditional construction techniques for all the reasons outlined above.

It is possible to build an outer skin using standard bricks, but this would have to be constructed onsite once the building has been delivered, which would negate many of the benefits of offsite construction.

### AESTHETICS

The brick slip market has grown significantly in recent years and there is now a wide selection of manufactured brick slips and corners available. Manufactured (extruded) brick slips are competitively priced and generally enjoy a reliable supply chain. In addition to extruded slips, it is also possible to have brick slips cut if a specific brick has to be sourced, although this is a more costly option.

The extent of brick colours and textures available means that most aesthetic designs are possible. Brick slip cladding systems are



flexible and may be used in conjunction with other cladding systems such as timber and render. This means that a mixed pallet of finishes, popular for creating a contemporary look, is achievable. It is also possible to add layers of insulation for better thermal performance, and the slip profile means that the overall thickness of walls is reduced. This flexibility appeals to modular builders as they can offer a greater selection of finishes to their clients, giving a development a more bespoke feel.

There are many benefits to using brick slip cladding when constructing housing offsite. The opportunities and quality products are there, and cladding allows you to achieve a real brick finish within an energy efficient modular design, without compromising on the speed of delivery. This all puts brick slip cladding in a prime position to make a positive contribution to the modular construction industry.

Richard Haines is general manager at Eurobrick  
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## Specialists in stone cladding

Contact us for specialist services and advice by calling **01869 220 050**. Alternatively you can email us on **info@century-stone.co.uk** or visit the website **www.century-stone.co.uk**



## SD Sealants launches commercial tiling service



SD Sealants, a UK leading sealants & cosmetic repairer, is branching out by launching a new tiling service. As well as it's highly successful sealant and cosmetic repair divisions, the company will now provide tiling services nationally for house builders and commercial businesses in the hotel, leisure and retail

sectors complimenting our existing services. The business has also strengthened its management team with the appointment of Andre Hunt and Jay Miller who will be heading up the service. Both Andre and Jay have over 10 years' experience in handling commercial marble, porcelain and ceramic tiling projects for the construction sectors.

08700 717 273 [www.sdsealants.co.uk/services](http://www.sdsealants.co.uk/services)

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## Rational windows help Crest Nicholson



Rational's high performance timber windows helped Crest Nicholson achieve Level 4 in the Code for Sustainable homes at Halo, Cambridge. Simon Watt, senior technical manager for Crest Nicholson said: "In order to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 on this development, we predominately followed a Fabric First specification. We were in part able to achieve this by using Rational's

AuraPlus range of with their whole window U

value of 0.79W/m²K. This adequately achieved the energy efficiency figures we required to achieve our requirements."

01869 248181 [www.rational.co.uk](http://www.rational.co.uk)

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## Paint Away – The Ultimate Paint Stripper!

Stripping paint and varnish from surfaces can be a difficult and laborious task, requiring time, patience and a lot of elbow grease. **Everbuild – A Sika Company** now have the answer to this age old problem with the arrival of Paint Away® – the ultimate paint and varnish stripper. The new triple strength, non-drip formula of Paint Away can remove up to 3 layers of paint or varnish from masonry, wood, metals and most common building substrates in just one easy and fast application. Simply brush the gel on to the painted area, leave for 20 minutes and watch as the paint begins to blister and crack, before scraping the area to fully remove. Available in 750ml tins with 10% extra free, Paint Away can be used with most paints and varnishes on both vertical and horizontal applications. For further information on Paint Away or any other product in the Everbuild or Sika ranges, contact your local sales representative, call the sales office or visit the website.

0113 240 2424 [www.everbuild.co.uk](http://www.everbuild.co.uk)

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**WHY DO EXTERIOR COATINGS DEGRADE?**

The major requirement of interior/exterior protective coatings is durability for long term protection. This is especially critical when products are specified for long-lasting exterior protection.

Outdoor durability of coatings, often called weatherability or exterior durability, refers to the resistance to degradation during outdoor exposure.

So how does degradation occur? Photo-oxidation by the UV component of sunlight is an important process during the deterioration of coatings during outdoor exposure. Also, a coating can yellow, crack, lose gloss or lose adhesion because of degradation.

**SPEED OF DEGRADATION**

The speed of degradation of a coating during outdoor exposure depends upon two key factors.

Firstly, the strength of the bonds in the resin system. The higher the bond energy, the more difficult it is to break the system down.

Secondly, the amount of UV absorption by the resin governs how many radicals can be formed. Radicals act as the 'scissors' for chemical bonds during photo-oxidative degradation of coatings.

**DEFINITION OF A PAINT**

To go back to basics, the definition of paint is 'A liquid material, that when applied to a substrate in a thin film, dries to form a cohesive, solid film that changes the properties of the substrate.' There are five main components in paint:

- White pigment — to give the paint whiteness, opacity and durability
- Extenders — to add bulk, reduce gloss and boost selective properties
- Binders — to stick the paint together, form a film and give adhesion
- Additives — to provide a degree of control over the vast amount of molecular interactions providing stability to complex systems
- Colourant tints — to colour the paint, control gloss, prevent corrosion, add bulk and other properties

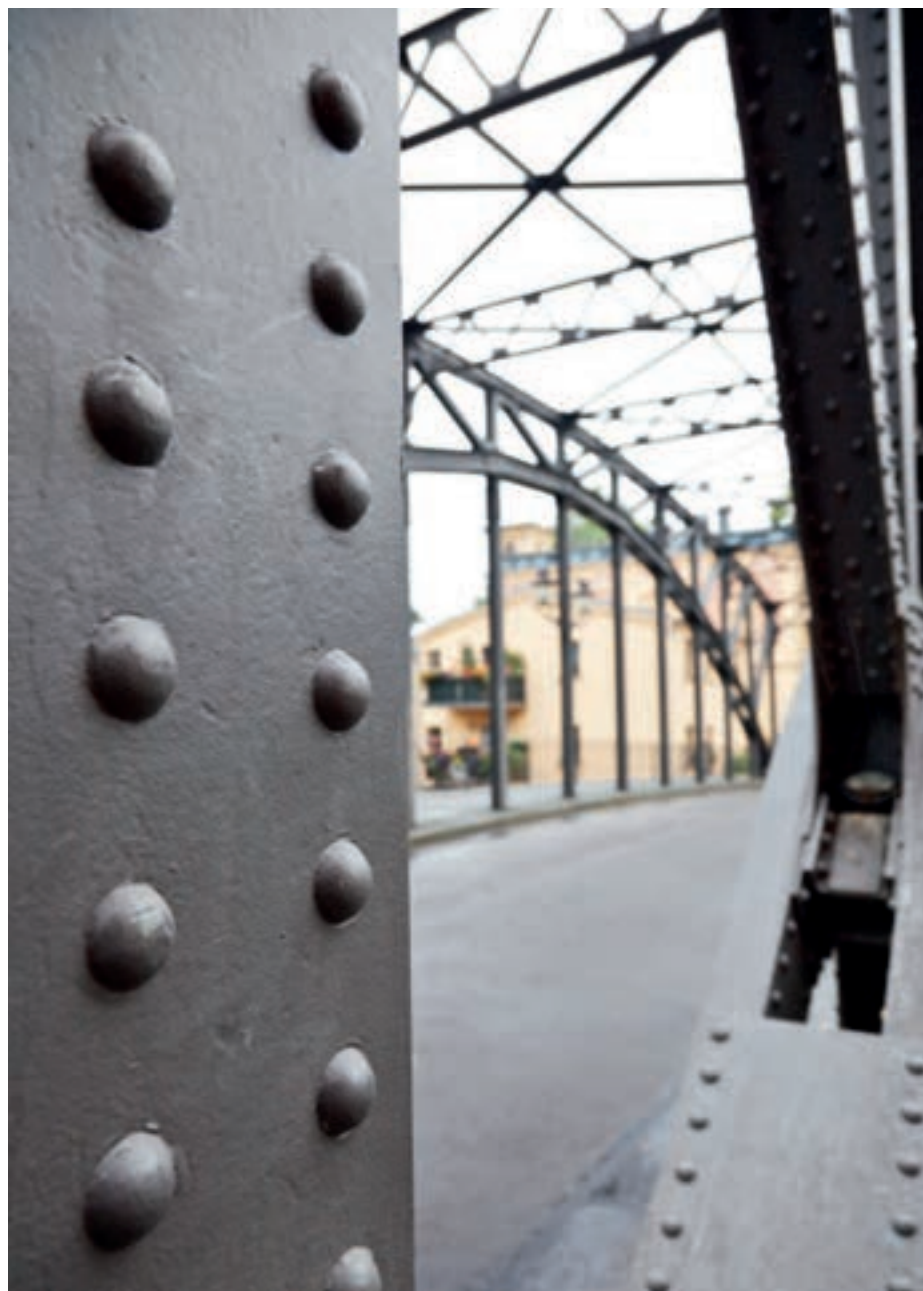
The chemistry and physics of each of these components determines the role they play in the formulation. Paint properties also depend upon the ratio in which these are combined, the degree of dispersion and the order of their addition to the formulation.

There are hundreds, if not thousands of each component commercially available at a range of prices, from 'value' paints to paints of the highest quality.

It's always good to remember — if you use higher quality baking ingredients, you get a nicer tasting cake!

# THE CHEMISTRY OF QUALITY

Bradite's chief chemist Sean Tormay explains why only the best makes sense when it comes to paint formulation.

**SILICONE ALKYDS**

A silicone alkyd coating is a special type of coating in which alkyd resins are modified by adding silicone. The backbone of silicone alkyds consists of silicon and oxygen atoms. When silica is added to

alkyd resins, the end result is a specialised series of products that can be further used to formulate coatings. These coatings are tough, durable and offer resistance to cracking and abrasion. They are often used in maintenance paints for steel, concrete and

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that a high amount of energy is needed to break down the backbone. Secondly, silicone is nearly transparent towards UV radiation.

This is a premium technology for top quality protective coatings and can be used as a pure polymer i.e. 100 per cent silicone, or incorporated into a more traditional alkyd resin.

#### PROS

- Superior exterior durability
- Superior flexibility
- Superior heat resistance
- Superior chalk resistance
- Superior yellowing resistance
- Superior water repellence
- Improved solvent/pigment compatibility
- Improved adhesion

#### CONS

- Cost - at least three times more expensive than conventional alkyd technology

A good manufacturer will look to optimise its products based on technical performance first, cost second and actively invest in the highest performing technology to meet the expectations of its customers. This ensures a commitment to quality.

Sean Tormay is chief chemist at Bradite

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other high quality exterior features, making them ideal for housebuilding.

Two key properties of silicone alkyds can

be directly linked to the excellent outdoor durability of these polymers. First, the bonds in the polymer are strong, implying

## Reddiseals launches internal door furniture range



One of the UK's leading quality suppliers of sash and casement window components and accessories, **Reddiseals**, has introduced the Abberley range of internal door furniture. The move enables joiners to perfectly match handles, hinges and other furniture on doors and windows throughout a property from a single, specialist supplier. Matching the standards seen in similar window accessories, the Abberley range of internal door furniture is forged in high quality brass. It includes both traditional and modern designs in a wide range of colours to offer plenty of choice, with styling that corresponds precisely to Reddiseals' sash and casement window components. This offers a significant advantage to joiners and property developers, who generally look to source products from a small number of reliable suppliers whilst trying to match the colours of all furniture required. The Abberley door furniture range includes eight different styles of handle including Swirl, Swirl Deco, Arch, Wedge, Dorsal, Dome, Tempo and Scroll, available on a variety of carefully chosen plates including rose, bathroom and lock plates. Victorian and beaded door knobs are also in the range, alongside a useful selection of colour matched accessories such as latches and hinges. Internal door handles from the well-known From the Anvil® brand are available.

01905 791876 [www.reddiseals.com](http://www.reddiseals.com)

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## SpeedSet Plus, exclusive to Premdor



As a result of extensive research in both the New Build sector and the RMI market, **Premdor** developed SpeedSet Plus, a revolutionary, adjustable internal doorset system which is an industry first and unique in the Building and Construction marketplace. SpeedSet Plus saves on-site time and therefore costs, by allowing the doorset to be adjusted +/- 10mm, to compensate for variances within wall thicknesses of up to 300mm. The clever simplicity of the system means installation can be achieved in less than twenty minutes, alleviating delays and costly joinery skills.

With doors factory pre-hung with CE marked latch and adjustable hinges, the SpeedSet Plus doorset package comes complete with white re-coatable, foil faced frame and pre-mitred architrave, requiring minimum on-site decoration. Door styles may be chosen from the Premdor interior door range and are available as an FD30 fire door option. With a system so versatile it can be fitted much later in the internal fix programme, thereby avoiding possible damage risk. SpeedSet Plus, another innovative construction joinery solution from Premdor.

For further information, please call for a brochure or visit the website.

0844 209 0008 [www.premdor.co.uk](http://www.premdor.co.uk)

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## Schueco's ASS 77 PD.HI has new innovations



Schueco UK, has announced the introduction of a new, updated version of its manually operated panoramic sliding door system, the Schueco ASS 77 PD.HI.

Innovations include an integrated, full-height handle that improves the appearance of the door and makes it easier

to open and close. The system is also equipped with an optimised locking concept that makes use of spring-loaded mushroom heads. There are new designs, in particular a 90° all-glass corner without a mullion. In addition, the overall level of thermal insulation has been improved, with  $U_w$  values from 0.96 W/m<sup>2</sup>K with triple glazing now as standard.

01908 282111 [www.schueco.co.uk](http://www.schueco.co.uk)

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## VEKA customer 'secures' major developments



Valued VEKA customer M&M Windows has gained two impressive commercial contracts thanks to the company's commitment to PAS 24 testing. The Wigan-based M&M team believe that their company is the first in the industry to achieve PAS 24 on the VEKA's

new M70 PVC-U profile system. The company partnered with hardware supplier ERA and glass suppliers Regency Glass to put their casement windows through rigorous testing to ensure they met the requirements of PAS 24 and Document Q. MD Mike McCoy explains: "As a company, we are very committed to quality and that's why we chose to fabricate VEKA's PVC-U profile exclusively when we were established in 2004."

01282 716611 [www.vekauk.com](http://www.vekauk.com)

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## The environment tops the agenda



The environment is top of the agenda for **Designer Contracts**. The company's award-winning recycling scheme sees all waste removed from site and taken back to its 12 regional centres, saving a staggering 250 tonnes of waste going to landfill every year. The programme not only includes

flooring. Designer Contracts has invested £40,000 in a baling machine that helps to recycle 70 tonnes of cardboard and 20 tonnes of plastic every year. At the company's national distribution facility in Kettering, which holds £2m worth of stock, it uses a computerised planning system to ensure maximum efficiency and to reduce waste.

01246 854577 [www.designercontracts.com](http://www.designercontracts.com)

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## EVO-STIK launches tile adhesive



EVO-STIK, from **Bostik**, has launched a new, white floor and wall tile adhesive, ideal for use with ceramic, stone and porcelain tiles with no risk of show through. Setting in as little as two hours, the cement-based adhesive can be used to fix tiles to a range of materials including wood, concrete and plaster. Suitable for internal and external use the new adhesive is S1 rated, meaning it offers enhanced flexibility and making it

ideal for use with under-floor heating and other applications where there may be some movement and vibration.

01785 272727 [www.bostik.co.uk](http://www.bostik.co.uk)

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 to discuss your specific project requirements.



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## Crittall to provide specialist glazing solutions



Crittall Holdings Group, parent company of **Crittall Windows**, has announced the launch of a new fabrications division that will create and supply an impressive range of specialist steel and stainless steel glazing systems, screens and doorsets for both external and internal use. This will provide architects and designers with bespoke, factory finished solutions to meet the most exacting client requirements. Crittall Fabrications will typically be dealing with customers in the UK and abroad on a supply only basis, direct to trade, but a full design and installation service can be provided via Crittall Windows, or one of the company's registered partners.

01462 630730 [www.crittall-fabrications.co.uk](http://www.crittall-fabrications.co.uk)

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## Glazing Vision at Le Petit Fort, Jersey



Glazing Vision's Flushglaze fixed and circular rooflights were installed within a fortress-like home, located on the shore of St Ouen's Bay. The austere, somewhat secretive looking castellated exterior walls hide the two spacious, modern interior

wings of the property. These wings flank a central hinge, which houses the three-storey granite entrance block or 'keep' and the main staircase. It is above this stairwell that Glazing Vision's Flushglaze Circular rooflight was key to both maximising the amount of daylight falling into this pivotal central area as well as adding a modern aesthetic to the historical overtones of the 'keep'.

01379 353 741 [www.glazing-vision.co.uk](http://www.glazing-vision.co.uk)

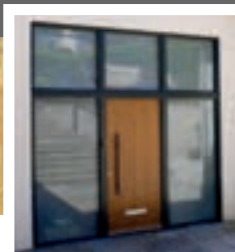
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# LET THE LIGHT SHINE IN

Steve Bromberg of Express Bi-folding Doors explains the options available when looking at specifying “expansive” glazed doors to open up homes.

**O**pen-plan living has risen drastically in popularity over recent years, with homeowners choosing light and bright designs that maximise space, as well as increasing social functionality within the home.

Homes that open up effortlessly to the outdoors are highly sought-after and as a result developers planning layouts and room flow need to carefully consider this.

## BI-FOLDING OR SLIDING?

There are two main types of expansive glazed doors currently available on the market – sliding and bi-folding. So, beyond the obvious, what exactly are the differences between the two?

Bi-folding doors are made up of panels connected by an aluminium framework, able to fold together in a zig-zag when fully

open, revealing a completely open space and full access to the outdoors.

## WHAT'S BEST FOR THE PROJECT?

First, consider the amount of space you have to work with. Are you planning a wall made entirely out of glazed doors, or are you just incorporating glazed doors within a smaller section of the wall? If the space you have is less than four metres wide, bi-folds might be the best option.

With spaces of this size, bi-folds look much more impressive than sliding doors when open, creating a real wow-factor and transforming the space completely. They help to open up the indoors to a garden or outdoor space, but it's important to remember, however, that with bi-folding doors comes additional framework, which may detract from a seamless view.

Sliding doors often look better when they are closed, as the large panels and minimal framework facilitate virtually uninterrupted views. If the space you have for installing glazed doors is over four metres wide, sliding doors could be the best choice. Ultimately, if you have space for either, it often comes down to personal aesthetic preferences. Think of it as the wider the door, the wider the clear opening.

For a wall of windows, especially when including a corner, sliding designs will be best suited. Sliding doors can be placed at a right angle without needing a corner post, so the ceiling will look like it is floating, making it perfect for an extension with more than one wall facing a garden or outdoor space.

However, conventional sliding doors will usually block part of the aperture, so you're not able to open the entire run. You could opt for a triple track system, which gives you a 66 per cent clear opening. Some of the latest designs even allow four panels to stack behind one another, leaving you with a 75 per cent clear opening.

Steve Bromberg is general manager at Express Bi-folding Doors

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## Clearstone permeable driveway for trees

**Clearstone** installed resin bound at Anthea Harrison Garden Design's award-winning project to preserve ancient trees. The driveway had several trees subject to preservation orders, with root protection zones within the driveway. To comply with regulations from local planning authorities, Anthea needed porous paving and an installation process that would not harm the roots of the Cedar trees. Anthea Harrison was tasked with transforming a development site in Wheathampstead into a garden with swimming pool fit for a couple who are passionate gardeners. The solution for the driveway and preservation of the trees was 492m<sup>2</sup> of Clearstone's resin bound paving in Flaxen Pea. Approved by local planning authorities, resin bound is flexible enough to be laid around tree roots and allows air and water to circulate. Anthea received a BALI Design Excellence Award for the garden. For more information please visit the company's website.

01273 358177 [www.clearstonepaving.co.uk](http://www.clearstonepaving.co.uk)

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## Interpave at FLOODDEX

The trade association **Interpave** is exhibiting at FLOODDEX at the Peterborough Arena on 17 and 18 May, and hosting an important presentation by SuDS guru Bob Bray. As the driving force behind concrete block permeable paving, Interpave will be promoting the latest innovations with this important SuDS technique. FLOODDEX is the trade event for the water level management (WLM) sector looking at flood defence, prevention, mitigation and drainage. The event is run as an exclusive cooperation with the Association of Drainage Authorities, whose members include the UK's Internal Drainage Boards – at the coalface of water level management and flood prevention – and local authorities. Interpave will be promoting a fresh approach to permeable paving using straightforward orifice flow control chambers to provide and demonstrate water storage deployed around developments without dedicated storage features occupying valuable land.

0116 232 5170 [www.paving.org.uk](http://www.paving.org.uk)

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## Barrier forms secure bond



Protection against groundwater ingress as well as gases and chemicals is offered by DualProof – a brand new two-layer durable watertight solution for below ground structures from **Delta Membrane Systems**. This is a fully and permanently bonded, pre-applied membrane which is fitted prior to the fixing of steel reinforcement, and the concrete pour. It comprises a sealed two-layer flexible pvc membrane laminated with a non-woven polypropylene fleece. This fleece makes use of FiberTex technology which gives the necessary bond to the concrete, as it integrates into the concrete when poured giving a strong mechanical bond once cured.

01992 523523 [www.deltamembranes.com](http://www.deltamembranes.com)

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## Flexible cover design provides options



Access cover and drainage product leader **Clark-Drain** has launched a B125 circular (CD 1649 KMB) and square to round ductile iron cover (CD 1649 KMB/SR) to locate on top of its 300mm diameter clear opening polypropylene inspection chambers. Ideally suited to

driveways, cycling areas, residential pedestrian areas and pavements the new designs combine a ductile iron cover with a polypropylene frame, to provide 12.5 tonne loading performance which is BSI Kitemark Certified to BS EN124. With exceptional strength to weight performance and providing long-lasting value to customers, the products provide a more robust alternative to installing 35kN polypropylene covers and frames.

01733 765317 [www.clark-drain.com](http://www.clark-drain.com)

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## Tectite receives BSI Kitemark standard



**Pegler Yorkshire** has raised the bar by being the first manufacturer to achieve the prestigious BSI Kitemark across its range of push-fit fittings. Received for its Tectite Classic, Pro and Sprint ranges from 15 to 54mm the BS EN 1254-6:2012 certification assures plumbing and heating professionals of the quality and value of this product range. The range will now boast the

esteemed Kitemark which demonstrates regular independent batch testing and auditing to assure the integrity of the products. The Tectite range of fittings stretches across a global market and is used by plumbing and heating professionals operating within the domestic and commercial sectors.

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## Schiedel celebrates 50 years



**Schiedel Chimney Systems**, one of the UK's leading manufacturer of energy-efficient chimneys, connecting flue pipes and flue liners, is celebrating 50 years of expertise and innovation at the Hearth & Home exhibition, taking place from 11th – 13th June at Harrogate International Centre. Since entering the market in 1967 with its B Vent product, Schiedel Chimney Systems

has expanded over the last half century to offer contemporary, high-performance solutions, approved for use in eco-design houses, such as timber-framed and Passivhaus buildings.

0191 4161150 [www.schiedel.com/uk](http://www.schiedel.com/uk)

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# TACKLING THE IMPACT OF THERMAL BRIDGING

With the drive towards improved energy efficiency, thermal bridging has become a 'hot topic' for housebuilders. Insulation manufacturer Marmox explains why, and describes some solutions to the problem.

It has been calculated by The Energy Saving Trust that in a typical detached property, an unaddressed thermal bridge can account for 30 per cent of a building's heat loss.

One of the worst areas of heat loss through a thermal bridge is where the floor meets the wall, allowing heat to be transmitted to the outside. In this area, up to 50 per cent of heat in an otherwise well-insulated room can be lost.

The BRE defines a thermal bridge as follows: 'A thermal bridge, also called a cold bridge, is an area of a building construction which has a significantly higher heat transfer than the surrounding materials. This is typically where there is either a break in the insulation, less insulation, or the insulation is penetrated by an element with a higher thermal conductivity. Where the building is situated in a cold climate (such as the UK) this can result in additional heat loss at these points.'

All Building Regulations in the UK and Ireland now say: "The building fabric

should be continuous over the whole building envelope and constructed so that there are no reasonably avoidable thermal bridges in the insulation layers caused by gaps in the various elements."

## BUILDING REGULATIONS

The non-dwelling and dwelling versions of the Building Regulations and Energy Conservation Part L (England, Wales, R.o.I), Section 6, Part D (Northern Ireland) require continuity of insulation at the wall-floor junction. Building regulations now require that heat loss due to thermal bridging should be taken into account in SAP calculations (for dwellings) and SBEM calculations (for buildings other than dwellings) at the design stage.

The heat loss through the wall/floor junction is expressed as a  $\psi$  value, which is the linear thermal transmittance, and the cumulative heat loss as a Y-value. The design of the junctions should be based on Accredited Construction Details (ACDs) or Enhanced Construction Details (ECDs).

SAP, SBEM or other approved software then allocate a specific default Y-value for each type of junction.

## STOPPING HEAT LOSS AT THE THERMAL BRIDGE

One of the latest solutions to addressing and stopping heat loss at the wall-floor junction is the use of high insulating, load-bearing building blocks, designed to replace the course of brick or block at the bottom of a wall.

The heat loss for a thermal bridge is determined by its linear thermal transmittance. This is measured in Watts for every metre of the thermal bridge – for every degree difference in the temperature between the inside and the outside of a room. The UK maximum allowable heat loss at a thermal bridge (wall/floor junction) is 0.16 W/m.K. Using Accredited Construction Details (ACD) can reduce this figure to 0.08 W/m.K. An Enhanced Construction Design (ECD) with additional interleaf insulation and edge insulation will be 0.04 W/m.K.





Y-values (heat loss across the length of the cold bridge) are calculated from the  $\psi$  values, and are used by the designers in the SAP/SBEM calculation of the building. In the absence of knowing the true Y-values, Building Regulations require a 'default Y-value' to be used which makes it harder to achieve a good energy rating, and in turn could result in non-compliance with Part L/Section 6.

These default Y-values add an approximated additional heat loss to the whole property, which is less accurate than calculating it using the approved data provided by a product manufacturer.

### MOVING TOWARDS THE 2019 ZERO CARBON STANDARD

English Building Regulations for dwellings (Part L1A: 2013) now include another measurement of heat loss: Fabric Energy Efficiency. This standard is based on the Ene2 points calculation used in the Code for Sustainable Homes. This requirement is met by ensuring continuity of the insulation on the fabric of the building. It is measured in terms of kilowatt-hours of energy lost for every square metre.

The 2019 regulations for zero carbon buildings (non-domestic) will demand a 100 per cent improvement in the overall

heat loss (the Building Emissions/Energy Rate) compared with the previous standard.

### OFFSETTING THE COST

Using high insulating, load-bearing building blocks can even allow the level of insulation required elsewhere to be reduced. Incorporating such products into a design will reduce the Y-value used in SAP or SBEM. Because SAP/SBEM are concerned with the overall heat loss, if the Y-value is reduced (meaning the heat loss at the thermal bridge is reduced), the U-value of the wall or floor insulation could possibly be slightly compromised, yet still the overall heat loss or DER (Dwelling Efficiency Rate) would be the same.

With the need to improve energy efficiency and move closer towards the target of zero carbon homes, housebuilders and developers will continue to face the challenge of controlling heat losses due to thermal bridging. Using high insulating building blocks to reduce heat loss at the wall-floor junction is estimated to be able to reduce the stated research levels of 30 per cent to approximately two per cent, and reduce the daily CO<sub>2</sub> emissions associated with this wasted heat from 1.5 kg to 0.1 kg.

Article from Marmox Specialist Building Products

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## Island Living in the Heart of the City

**E**vinox Energy are delighted to be working with EcoWorld Ballymore and Clarion Housing Group on the London City Island development, which was recently awarded Best New Place to Live at the London Planning Awards 2017. This new neighbourhood on the Leamouth Peninsula by Canary Wharf is designed to be a 'mini Manhattan' and is home to 1,700 new apartments, stunning alfresco spaces, vibrant new bars and restaurants, boutique shops and waterside parks. Phase one has been completed by Ballymore and phase two will be delivered by EcoWorld Ballymore.

With a focus on energy efficiency and aiming to reduce the environmental impact of the development, City Island features a district heating system, which supplies residents with thermal energy for heating and production of domestic hot water.

Evinox Energy are supplying heat interface units, and ENE3 room controllers for the apartments connected to the district heating network, and also metering & billing services for the social housing apartments.

### Pre-Payment for Heating & Hot Water

The 104 social housing apartments at London City Island are managed by Clarion Housing



Group, and all are taking advantage of the Evinox PaySmart® Pre-payment system. Residents can purchase their energy online using our Residents Website 24hrs a day, at a local Payzone outlet, by monthly Direct Debit or Standing Order, using our Web App on a smart phone or tablet any time or over the telephone.

### Metering and Billing Regulations

Our PaySmart® pre-payment system provides a simple solution to meet with the requirements

of the Heat Network (Metering & Billing) Regulations at London City Island. The metering and billing technology is inbuilt in each ModuSat® Heat interface unit. Not only is the technology integrated, it can also be activated remotely at any time, providing a flexible billing approach for the social housing apartments.

### Credit towards Code for Sustainable Homes

Each home at City Island also features an Evinox ViewSmart ENE3 controller, which can display all the information required to gain credits for the Code for Sustainable Homes. This includes historical consumption data in a graphical format to enable residents to view information about their usage and compare different periods. This provides several benefits to social housing providers and developers, primarily it removes the requirement to install a separate energy display device to gain credits towards the Code for Sustainable Homes.

For further information about our integrated communal & district heating solutions, please contact us by email or visit the website.

01372 722277  
[www.evinoxenergy.co.uk](http://www.evinoxenergy.co.uk)

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Image of Steel Farm Passivhaus ([www.leap4.it/Steel-Farm-Northumberland-Passivhaus](http://www.leap4.it/Steel-Farm-Northumberland-Passivhaus)).  
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## H+H and SIG Offsite collaboration



In a unique collaboration, H+H UK Ltd and SIG Offsite have worked together to create the SIG I-House – an innovative housebuilding system incorporating Celcon Elements from H+H. The SIG I-House provides all the speed of offsite construction with the familiarity of a traditional build, from foundations to roof in just five days. The system can encompass the inner leaves of external cavity walls, floors, lintel, cavity closers, insulation and roof trusses. With the inclusion of soffit and fascia, the

system delivers the internal skin of a property, fully wrapped and ready for follow-on trades.

01732 880520 [www.hhcelcon.co.uk](http://www.hhcelcon.co.uk)

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## Showing the potential of Passivhaus



The Kingspan TEK Building System of Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) has been used to create a contemporary show home that blends ambitious architectural design with the meticulous energy efficiency requirements of the Passivhaus Standard, at the Potton Show Centre in St Neots.

142mm Kingspan TEK Building System panels were used to form the walls, with an additional external layer of 100mm Kingspan Kooltherm K12 Framing Board to ensure a 'thermal-bridge free construction' and to achieve a U-value of just 0.10 W/m<sup>2</sup>·K. The roof was constructed with 172mm Kingspan TEK Building System panels as the increased thickness allows the panel to span further without additional support.

01544 387 384 [www.kingspantek.co.uk](http://www.kingspantek.co.uk)

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## Kingspan Kooltherm K100 range expands



Kingspan Insulation has announced the launch of two new products to join their innovative new Kooltherm K100 Range, designed to deliver lower U-values with a minimal construction thickness. Kingspan Kooltherm K112 Framing Board and K107 Pitched Roof Board are the latest products in the range, which was launched last year. Their advanced, fibre-free insulation core has a thermal

conductivity of just 0.018 W/m·K across all available board thicknesses, the lowest for any rigid phenolic insulation board. This revolutionary composition offer the freedom to design and construct buildings with inherently outstanding fabric performance.

01544 387 384 [www.kingspaninsulation.co.uk](http://www.kingspaninsulation.co.uk)

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## Abode Dune sinks



The Dune range of sinks from Abode have strong geometric designs, rounded corners and ripple effect drainer patterns – these creative features are the back-bone to the design and certainly 'on trend' with current kitchen design themes. There are four sinks within the range which are suitable for both modern and traditional style homes. Manufactured from advanced acrylic materials and available in

Black and Frost White Granite in popular 1.0 and 1.5 bowls with single drainers, these sinks come complete with the unique Orbit waste, overflow pipework and clips, ready for installation. Featured is the Frost White Granite 1.0 bowl Dune sink with the Abode Virtue tap.

01226 283434 [www.abode.eu](http://www.abode.eu)

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## Charcon supplies to Gateshead BIG



**Charcon**, the commercial hard landscaping division of Aggregate Industries, has supplied a complimentary range of precast concrete flags, blocks and kerbs to Evolution Gateshead for its renowned multi-million regeneration project: Gateshead BIG. Gateshead BIG is the UK's largest residential regeneration programme outside of London. Drawing from its extensive range of flag and block paving, Charcon was able to recommend an appropriate and cost-effective palette of over 10,600m<sup>2</sup> of hard landscaping materials.

5,880m<sup>2</sup> of Moordale® Textured flag paving in Grey was installed, offering a premium yet cost-effective solution for the pedestrian areas.

01335 372222 [www.charcon.com](http://www.charcon.com)

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## Cavity Barriers protect against fire spread



According to Document B of the UK Building Regulations fire barriers must be installed in cavity areas that are vulnerable to the spread of fire. Using the correct passive fire cavity protection system within a building is crucial, in the event of a fire, intumescent fire barriers

activate and seal holes, penetrations and cavities, preventing the spread of fire and smoke, thereby fulfilling UK regulations. Standards and Regulations also stipulate that two storey buildings and above require cavity barriers to stop fire from spreading through walls, floors and cavities. The **Envirograf®** Cavity Barrier range fully satisfies the requirements stated in Document B of the Building Regulations.

01304 842555 [www.envirograf.com](http://www.envirograf.com)

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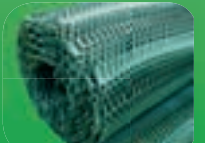
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**M**odern home security measures are an increasingly indispensable feature for all properties. Unlike many other household furnishings, which need to be aesthetically pleasing (sometimes to the cost of functionality), home security's primary focus is to offer a much more practical purpose – i.e. to protect the property and keep its occupants safe from harm.

Over the past 20 years, the number of burglaries in the UK has fallen – incidents in 2016 were down 23 per cent for the same period five years earlier, and 38 per cent lower than 10 years ago.

However, between October 2015 and September 2016, there were still over 400,000 police-reported burglaries, giving a burglary rate of seven offences per 1,000 people.

Given these statistics, it is understandable that prospective homeowners are as concerned as ever about home security provision. It is imperative therefore that developers address these concerns when building or renovating a property by taking advantage of the rapidly developing technologies and hardware that are now available.

#### SMART LOCKS & ALARMS

Traditional 'lock and key' methods have been the basic foundation of security for centuries. However, the introduction of keyless smart locks has marked an important development in home security for specifiers of housing developments.

A keyless lock is still as simple to use as its traditional counterpart, but provides greater flexibility. It can be unlocked with a PIN code, key card, key tag, remote fob and even your smartphone, meaning there are a variety of secure ways with which to lock and unlock the door.

Some manufacturers offer additional security features, including a tamper alarm and incorrect PIN code immobiliser included as standard. Many smart locks are also interactive, with smart alarms and CCTV systems.

Alarm systems are another security feature that have evolved to maximise capabilities and become more user-friendly.

**WITH SMARTPHONE CONNECTIVITY, USERS ARE NOW ABLE TO ARM OR DISARM, AND CONFIGURE THEIR ALARMS ANYTIME, ANYWHERE AND REMOTE VIEWING IS NOW POSSIBLE**

# SAFE AS HOUSES

With security remaining high on a homeowner's list of priorities, and with the threat of burglary ever-present, Martin Smith of IronmongeryDirect.co.uk takes a look at the different options available.



With smartphone connectivity, users are now able to arm/disarm and configure their alarms anytime, anywhere. With PIR image cameras, remote viewing is now possible, with images and displays sent directly to a smartphone.

It is also now commonplace to be able to 'part arm' a home – meaning a solution where an alarm can be set, securing a

ground floor, while still being able to move freely upstairs.

#### LIGHTING

Indoor lights on a timer and external motion sensor lights may seem like an age-old trick to deter burglars but they remain effective.

Combined with window and double

door locks, these simple yet effective light installations were found to make a home almost 50 times safer than a home without these security measures.

It is also important to make sure that all doors and pathways, both front and back, have a proper spread of lighting and to think about potential blind spots. Many dimmer lights can do a much more effective job than a single bright one and there are a huge amount of LED security lighting options on the market.

### CCTV

Research shows that areas with installed CCTV see a reduction in recorded offences for burglary and vehicle crime, but just five per cent of homeowners have home systems installed.

This is perhaps not entirely surprising as CCTV is still relatively expensive compared to a number of other security options.

However, although you can still spend thousands on a top-of-the-range system, it is feasible to find more cost-effective solutions. When this reduction in price is considered alongside new, additional technologies, including HD recordings, enhanced night vision and remote viewing, the installation of CCTV becomes a more realistic prospect.



It is important to remember that these individual measures should not be seen as an 'either or' solution. Many smart locks, alarms, lighting and CCTV can work best when used in conjunction with each other as part of an integrated network. With a range of affordable measures to choose

from, it has never been easier for a developer to ensure a property's protection, making it more attractive to potential buyers and securing its value.

Martin Smith is category manager at [IronmongeryDirect.co.uk](http://IronmongeryDirect.co.uk)

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## SterlingOSB the new darling of TV makeovers



The ever popular BBC Two makeover show, *The Great Interior Design Challenge*, tasks contestants to devise interiors for rooms in unusual premises. Holly Village, a collection of Grade II listed Gothic properties in North London, was the setting for a recent episode

and the brief given to one amateur designer, Richard Yeomans, was to create a bedroom in a global hotel chic style. Richard turned to his material of choice, SterlingOSB from **Norbord**, to create a facade to cover the existing 150-year-old wardrobes. Richard was brought back in the semi-final of the competition where he used SterlingOSB once again to transform two rooms in a modern Bristol townhouse by creating a second headboard, a triangular ceiling light and useful shoe storage.

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## Waterproofing Simplified with Multi-Tight 2K



Multi-Tight 2K from **Remmers** is a new, flexible, mineral based waterproofing product which has all the performance properties of older technology polymer-modified thick bitumen emulsions, whilst being "bitumen free". Using unique rubber granulate filler technology Multi-Tight 2K has a crack-bridging capacity which is five

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## Fire Design Solutions king of the urban jungle

Award-winning smoke ventilation contractor **Fire Design Solutions (FDS)** has been appointed to provide its systems and expertise for a distinctive new London residential development, from Redrow Homes. Once complete, Harrow's Lyon Square will feature over 300 one, two and three-bedroom luxury apartments with direct access to the City, plus a courtyard, underground parking and cycle store. The appointment will see FDS supply, install and commission Mechanical Smoke Ventilation Systems (MSVS) in eight of the development's blocks, ensuring that smoke can be quickly extracted from common areas in the event of a fire, providing a means of escape for occupants while also improving access for attending fire fighters. The whole system will be monitored via an addressable Corridor Smoke Detection System, including optical smoke detectors, a central concierge panel and sprinkler monitoring, which will feature in two of the development's blocks.

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