



Patrick Mooney:
We need to ensure
that lessons are
learned from the
Grenfell Tower fire



Bjorn Conway, ilke
Homes CEO, tells
Jack Wooler about
the firm's latest
London project



Show Preview:
CIH's Housing
conference and
exhibition focuses on
offsite for 2018

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PREVIEW



James Parker

FROM THE EDITOR

Labour's new housing Green Paper, somewhat predictably you might say, places a tight focus on the affordable sector of the market, when arguably there are a range of other big issues to tackle. However in doing so, it does produce some strong ideas which might find fans across the industry, if our increasingly binary politics is allowed to take a back seat for a second.

The party is putting its weight behind the social rented sector, obviously in an attempt to appeal to its core electorate, but also, one assumes, as a genuine move to address the fact that 150,000 council rented homes have been sold by councils in the last five years alone. Labour says it will suspend the Right to Buy as one of its first moves to stop this.

In addition however, Labour would introduce the idea of low-cost FirstBuy homes – discounted to the point that mortgages are “no more than a third of average local household incomes,” and with the discount “locked into the home so future generations of first time buyers benefit too”. They will be aimed at low to middle income working families, as well as key workers and young people priced out of the homebuying market. There will also be ‘Living Rent Homes’ with rents fixed at the same rate, however there’s little indication of how the discount will be funded, and by whom.

The Green Paper promises to replace section 106 with a new “duty to deliver affordable homes, linked to a better measure of local need for affordable housing”. The party says it will “consult on new accountability mechanisms to support councils, including an increase in the New Homes Bonus affordable homes premium”. The bottom line is that there will be a “presumption that there is no development without affordable housing,” and avoiding obligations using permitted development will be stopped.

Apparently, Labour will “fast-track” reforms to planning – while keeping the Land Registry in public hands, it will create a register “so local communities know who owns, controls and has an interest in land, including ‘option agreements’ between landowners and developers”. However just how it will do this, and how it will help to free up land for development, is unclear.

On housing delivery itself, Labour's key measure seems to be a housing revenue account to be set up for councils to build with (with the caveat that they have transferred all stock to a housing association). They will also “consider an enabling grant to allow councils with no or limited current capacity to build”.

Lastly, Labour proposes to launch a “new definition” of affordability, which is linked to local incomes rather than market prices, theoretically to offer better value to prospective buyers in their locality.

By contrast, pushing yet another Housing Minister through the revolving door, the Government seems fairly content to continue to trying to address the housing crisis largely by stoking the demand with measures like Help to Buy. Labour may be taking a pragmatic if limited approach to unlocking delivery as well.

James Parker

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ON THE COVER



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HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



READING'S GREEN PARK VILLAGE GETS THE GREEN LIGHT

Seven lakeside buildings to be created providing 459 apartments, in scheme from St Edward Homes, part of the Berkeley Group

Green Park Village, Reading
© Broadway Malyan
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Brokenshire promoted from Northern Ireland office to Housing



James Brokenshire, the former Northern Ireland Secretary, has returned to the Cabinet as the Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary.

The news came after Amber Rudd resigned from her role as Home Secretary following the Windrush scandal, with PM Theresa May promoting Communities Secretary Sajid Javid to her old role.

Commenting on Twitter, Brokenshire wrote: "Honoured to have been asked by the Prime Minister to serve as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government. Looking forward to taking the Government's agenda forward especially on building the homes our country needs."

There has been criticism of the amount of churn among senior DCLG roles following the announcement, given the scale of the housing crisis facing the UK. While Javid has been in the job for 18 months, in January Dominic Raab became the fifteenth Housing Minister in 17 years.

SMEs and Unite agree to 3.1 per cent pay rise

A one year deal involving a 3.1 per cent pay rise has been agreed by The Building and Allied Trades Joint Industrial Council (BATJIC), to come into effect in June 2018.

This follows the successful conclusion

of pay negotiations between the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), on behalf of SME construction employers and union Unite, on behalf of operatives.

All apprentices and trainees will also benefit from the same pay increase, with adult general operatives' rates increased by 29p per hour to £9.52, and NVQ3 'advanced craft' rate by 37p per hour to £12.45.

Jerry Swain, national officer for construction at Unite the Union, commented: "It is only right that workers see the benefits of growth in the construction sector with this significant pay rise which demonstrates the importance of a strong collective union voice for construction workers."

Labour focuses on affordable homes in Green Paper

A Green Paper entitled 'Housing for the Many' has been published by Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party.

Setting out the Labour Party's strategy to fix the housing crisis, and focusing largely on social housing, the Green Paper sets out a plan to deliver one million 'genuinely affordable' homes over 10 years, the majority of which would be earmarked for social rent.

The wide-ranging paper covers areas including affordable housing, the role of Government, housing benefit, planning, delivery, regeneration, empty homes, design and safety.

The National Federation of Builders (NFB) praised the document's ambition to increase housebuilding numbers, and agreed that social housing is a 'vital tool' for councils to deliver more affordable housing, but argued that the language used by the paper does little to recognise the current barriers to the development process.

Critiquing the paper's lack of focus on SME builders, chief executive of the NFB Richard Beresford said: "Construction SMEs train and retain two-thirds of apprentices and employ within 15 miles of their head offices. In 1970, SMEs were seen as imperative partners but, in 2018, their expertise is not being utilised to full potential to increase housing delivery.

"With planning devolved to local authorities, the NFB encourages decision makers to better understand the development and plan-making process. This is the only way to truly build housing for the many."

CPA forecasts industry output will 'flatline' over 2018

Construction output growth for the whole of 2018 will remain flat, before accelerating to 2.7 per cent in 2019 and 1.9 per cent in 2020, according to new forecasts.

After a weak start to the year following the demise of Carillion in January and adverse weather across the country in February and March, the Construction Products Association has released its Spring forecast.

Infrastructure and private housing remain the two bright spots for UK construction activity, said CPA. Infrastructure output is forecast to grow 6.4 per cent this year and 13.1 per cent in 2019, as main civil engineering work commences on large projects such as HS2, the Thames Tideway Tunnel, and Hinkley Point C. In private housing, output is forecast to rise 5.0 per cent, with demand for new build underpinned by Help to Buy through to March 2021.

Noble Francis, economics director at the Construction Products Association commented: "The start of the year was a bad one for construction. Carillion, the UK's second biggest contractor, went into liquidation in January and led to a hiatus on infrastructure and commercial projects.

"The snowy weather badly affected work on site for at least three working days in February and March and, as a result, 2018 Q1 construction is likely to be £1.5bn lower than in 2017 Q4. Fortunes for the industry overall will depend on the extent to which construction activity catches up during the rest of the year."

Francis said that activity will rise by 2.7 per cent next year, "primarily driven by infrastructure and private housebuilding." Despite the sector's strong growth prospects however, "questions remain about poor government delivery of major infrastructure projects." He added: "Private housing starts are expected to rise 2.0 per cent in both 2018 and 2019 in spite of the slowdown in the general housing market as Help to Buy is clearly sustaining demand for new build homes.

"The growth in infrastructure and private housebuilding this year is forecast to offset falls in the hard hit commercial sector, where Brexit uncertainty continues to hit international investment in new office towers in London and high street woes affects the construction of new retail."



New Housing Secretary announces three pilot projects to tackle rough sleeping

The launch of three new pilot projects to support rough sleepers has been announced by new Housing Secretary, James Brokenshire, in one of his first moves.

After funding for the Government's Housing First Pilots was first revealed in the Autumn Budget, the three new pilot projects will be based in Greater Manchester, the Liverpool City Region and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Based on Housing First, an internationally proven approach to supporting rough sleepers into long-term accommodation, the projects will offer individuals support to recover from complex health issues, such as substance abuse and mental health difficulties, and aid them in sustaining their tenancies.

Housing Secretary James Brokenshire said: "The evidence shows Housing First has an incredible rate of success in providing rough sleepers with the support they need to get off the streets and to rebuild their lives."

"We are investing over £1.2bn to break the homelessness cycle, but we know there's more to do to help people off the streets for good. This is why the Government is leading the way in implementing Housing First in England."

HOUSING FIRST: A 'TRIED AND TESTED APPROACH'

Housing First is a 'tried and tested' approach to tackling long-term rough sleeping that puts the emphasis on finding individuals a secure and affordable home to live in, while providing them with expert support. In Europe, Housing First projects have been successful at ending homelessness for at least 8 out of 10 people in the scheme. By contrast 40-60 per cent of users of hostel-based accommodation with complex needs leave or are ejected before their homelessness is resolved.

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Planning and funding issues cited as the key barriers to social housing

Two issues were cited by speakers at a recent industry event in Westminster as the biggest barriers preventing councils from building more homes, namely achieving planning and access to funding.

The Social Policy Forum held at the end of April saw a selection of Peers, lawyers, industry leaders and journalists gather to exchange views on what they think the future of social housing should entail.

“Essentially, planning is the problem,” said panel member Phillip Russell, director at One Oak Development, who believed strongly that as an SME, the current planning system is holding his company, and others, from increasing its housing stock.

Co-chairing the event, Lord Porter of Spalding disagreed. A frequent defender of the current planning process, and one who has publicly criticised PM Theresa May for laying the blame for the country’s lack of homes on councils, he instead put the onus firmly on the treasury.

The seminar, which had the title ‘Next steps for social housing policy in England – Supply, standards and priorities for policy’, covered a wide agenda, from progress and current trends in social housing, to the next steps for standards, safety and stakeholder engagement. Safety was particularly contentious, in the post-Grenfell context.

Held at the Royal Overseas League London Clubhouse, the event saw Lord Porter, chairman of the Local Government Association, continue to raise objections to

voices who sought to blame the planning system for blocking housebuilding.

After Phillip Russell professed that there was “no justice” for small builders in the planning system, Lord Porter intervened and rebuffed this. He self-confessedly “abused his position as chair,” by insisting that nine out of 10 planning applications are approved, and that the issue lies in funding. In his view the Treasury, through “both blue and red” governments, have failed to provide the capital necessary, especially considering housing is an oft-proved successful investment. He reminded the audience that the only time the country has reached the levels of housebuilding necessary to fulfil Government quotas was with a state-funded building programme.

A varied selection of issues were discussed by the speakers, from planning and funding prior to building, to the ecology and safety regulations during, to the post-build care and educational aspects of social housing. MHVR (mechanical ventilation with heat recovery), for example, was cited as a significantly beneficial tool when used correctly, but leaves many residents confused as to its operation, with one speaker calling for increased tenant education.

The perennially topical issue of modular housing inevitably came into focus at the Forum. Many have heralded the speed, efficiency, and ecological benefits of the method, and certain large-scale builders are already gearing up to begin producing homes with this method. Panel member David Cassidy, head of social housing and Barclays, however believed that modular construction needs more time to prove its worth. Lord Porter agreed, indicating again that a Government-led initiative would be the preferred option, paving the way for future builders to utilise offsite construction with confidence. Of course, a familiar adage was voiced: that Britain doesn’t like change.

Later on in the event, after Jamie Ratcliffe of the GLA provided a measured talk on the implementation of the London Housing Strategy, Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe, chair of the National Housing Federation, led the discussion on the next steps for standards and safety.

In light of the Grenfell tragedy, each member of the panel were committed to

the fact that at least a portion of the housing stock (the National Audit Office citing 14 per cent of social homes are not up the current standards) needs to be updated. Money was seen as a major issue preventing momentum, and other perceived causes raised included what were described by one panellist as “overly-esteemed” ecological factors (not agreed across the board) that meant that when building to an extremely tight budget, money could potentially be spent on meeting ecological standards instead of safety.

Throughout the event there were many disagreements as to the causation of the current state of social housing. However it was a loud and clear message to Government that the question of how we build more homes needs answers.

£74m deal completed for Ebbsfleet infrastructure

A £74m deal with the intention of “unlocking” the next phase of development at Ebbsfleet Garden City in Kent has been completed by Homes England, as part of the Home Building Fund.

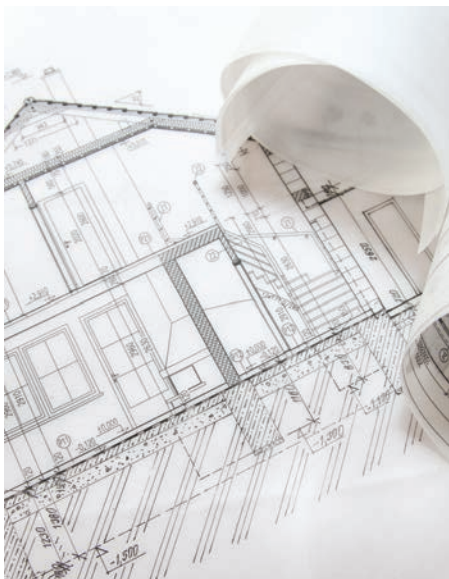
The money will fund a range of infrastructure works, including earthworks to fill in a lake to prepare the land for the development of more than 5,000 new homes.

It is hoped that the infrastructure works will unlock 657 acres of land that will be used to develop up to 5,290 new homes, accounting for around a third of the total Ebbsfleet Garden City housing development, as well as around 180,000ft² of commercial development.

Homes England are supporting enabling works through a loan deal to Henley Camland, including the preparation of land for the development of housing on both the Castle Hill site and the Eastern Quarry at Ebbsfleet.

Henley Camland has simultaneously agreed land deals for 2,900 homes to be developed. 2,600 of these homes will be delivered by Countryside Properties and Clarion Housing Group in a new joint venture, while Barratt Homes will build 300 homes on this part of the wider site as a direct result of the works funded by Homes England.

More than 1,000 of these new homes at Ebbsfleet will be provided by 2021, with the full scheme due to be completed over the next decade.





Material prices continue to soar, FMB report finds

More than half of small building firms say that material prices are squeezing their margins, and have had to pass these price increases onto consumers, according to the latest research by the Federation of Master Builders (FMB).

SME building firms were asked which materials are in shortest supply and have the longest wait times. The average results were as follows (in order of longest to shortest wait times):

- Bricks were in shortest supply with the longest reported wait time being more than one year
- Roof tiles were second with the longest reported wait time being up to six months
- Insulation was third with the longest reported wait time being up to four months
- Slate – fourth with the longest reported wait time being up to six months
- Windows in fifth with the longest reported wait time being more than one year
- Blocks were sixth with the longest reported wait time being up to four months
- Porcelain products were seventh with the longest reported wait time being more than one year
- Plasterboard was eighth with the longest reported wait time being up to two months
- Timber was ninth with the longest reported wait time being up to two months
- Boilers were tenth, with the longest reported wait time being more than one year.

SME building firms were also asked by what percentage different materials have increased over the past 12 months. On average, the following rises were reported:

- Insulation increased by 16 per cent
- Bricks increased by 9 per cent
- Timber increased by 8 per cent

- Roof tiles increased by 8 per cent
- Slate increased by 8 per cent
- Windows increased by 7 per cent
- Blocks increased by 7 per cent
- Plasterboard increased by 7 per cent
- Boilers increased by 7 per cent
- Porcelain products increased by 6 per cent

The impact of these material price increases, according to the report, includes the fact that more than half of construction SMEs (56 per cent) have had their margins squeezed, this has gone up from one third (32 per cent) reporting this in July 2017.

Half of firms (49 per cent) have been forced to pass material price increases onto their clients, making building projects more expensive for consumers, this has gone up from less than one quarter (22 per cent) reporting this in July 2017.

A third of firms (30 per cent) have recommended that clients use alternative materials or products to those originally specified, and this has gone up from one in ten reporting this in July 2017.

Nearly one fifth (17 per cent) of builders report making losses on their building projects due to material price increases, this has gone up from one in 10 reporting this in July 2017.

Brian Berry, chief executive of the FMB, commented: “Material prices have rocketed over the past year. The reason for this could include the impact of the depreciation of sterling following the EU referendum still feeding through. High demand due to buoyant international markets could also be contributing to price increases.

“What’s particularly worrying is that when prices have increased mid-project, almost one fifth of builders have absorbed the increase and therefore made a loss.”

Knight Frank highlights undersupply of retirement housing

The current stock levels of retirement housing and projected demographic changes highlight a critical undersupply of age-appropriate homes, says Knight Frank.

In its latest report, *The Case for Retirement Housing*, the firm assessed the drivers of this ‘imminent crisis’. According to the report, there are currently 11.8 million people in the UK over the age of 65, which is forecast to rise by 20 per cent over the next decade. This means that the time spend in retirement will also lengthen, underpinning the crucial need for retirement housing.

The gap between the potential pool of demand and current supply is reportedly stark. Present stock, from aged-restricted over-55s housing to housing with care, comprises 725,000 homes, which equates to just 2.6 per cent of the total housing stock in the UK.

Some 25 per cent of over-55s would consider downsizing or moving into some sort of retirement accommodation, says Knight Frank. If this is applied to the over-65s, with 25 per cent choosing retirement housing over the next decade, there is potential demand from 582,283 additional individuals.

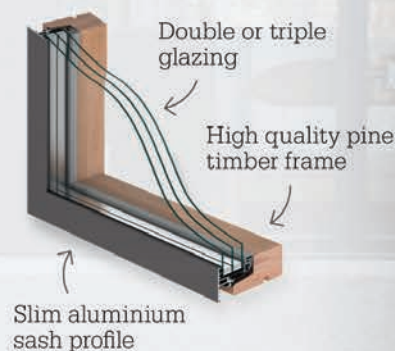
Tom Scaife, head of retirement housing at Knight Frank, commented: “With increased awareness of the benefits of retirement housing, clarity at the planning stage, and some much needed incentives, retirement housing can be delivered at scale and help to tackle the social care and housing crisis in one go.”



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Housebuilders asked to put design and quality first

Industry leaders have called on housebuilders to embrace latest innovations in order to ensure good quality in new homes.

At the recent Design Quality Conference, industry leaders, including local authority planners, developers and design professionals shared their expertise to “ensure how homes look becomes just as important as the number delivered”.

Research has shown that more than seven out of 10 people would support new residential development if buildings are well-designed and in keeping with their local area.

Several courses of action were proposed with the hope of boosting innovative approaches to housing design. One includes a £1bn Government investment through the Home Building Fund, of which to date eight projects across 11 local authorities will use modern methods of construction such as modular. It was also suggested that the industry learn from other countries like Australia, Norway and Sweden, where ‘good design is embedded in decision making’. Embracing new technologies such as virtual reality (VR) was also raised, with the intention of winning community confidence before a home is built by providing visualisations of new housing.

For when things go wrong, the Government has proposed strengthening ways for homebuyers to complain when their homes haven’t been built satisfactorily, with these new measures recently being subject to a consultation.

NFB welcomes ban on late payers

As part of a new package of Government proposals, plans to ban ‘late payers’ from Government contracts have been revealed.

The news has been welcomed by the National Federation of Builders (NFB), with proposals suggested to remove barriers to SMEs winning more Government and public sector contracts.

Government would reportedly like to award 33 per cent of contracts to SMEs by 2022, but late payment is a severe deterrent to SMEs.

In April 2017, the Zurich SME Risk Index estimated that SMEs are owed £44.6bn in late payments. According to the NFB, its members had been reducing their exposure to Carillion and to other main contractors who had a reputation as poor payers, years before its eventual liquidation.

Richard Beresford, chief executive of the NFB, commented: “Taxpayers deserve to see the best value bids build their communities, but there are barriers that prevent capable SMEs and regional contractors from even competing.

“Banning late payers is a common sense proposal that means companies that push their suppliers into administration will no longer be rewarded by the Government with more work.”

Buyers’ wish lists revealed

Home buyers are choosing new builds because of a range of criteria beyond just location, new research has shown.

A report produced by the NHBC Foundation and Savills found that while location remains a key influencer, buyers of new-build homes also placed a high importance on a series of other features, such as design of living space, off-street parking, a home’s warranty, low maintenance and increased energy efficiency.

The report, based on the views of more than 5,400 people who have purchased homes in the last four years, identifies seven core priorities which influence property choice. It found that although the proximity of amenities, such as schools, NHS services and local transport hubs were important considerations, they did not drive a house purchase decision as much as the appeal of key features of the home itself.

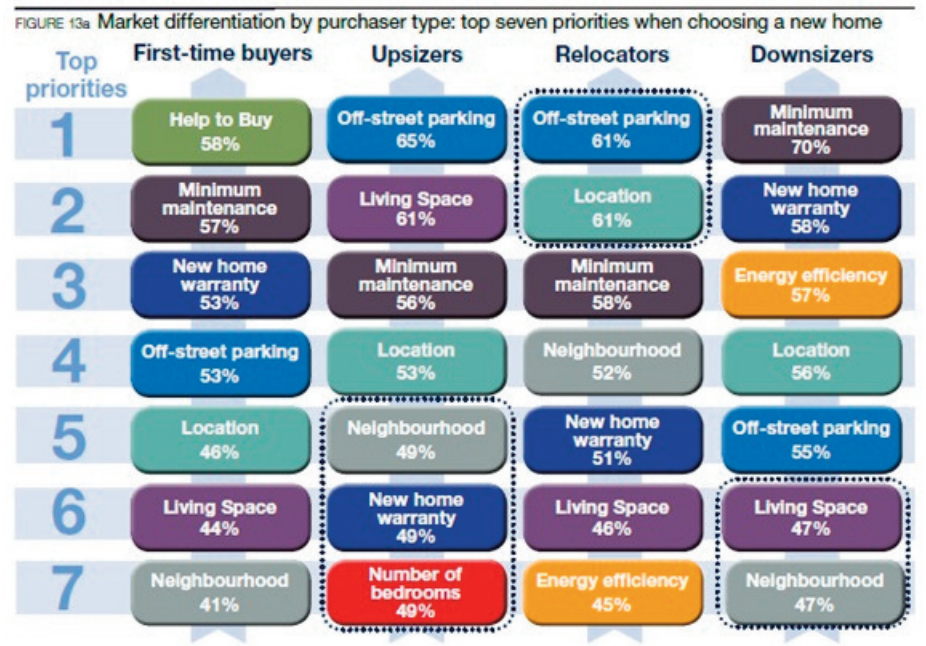
The same top priorities were consistently selected by buyers across the categories.

In order of importance, these were minimum maintenance, off-street parking, location, new home warranty, size and design of living space, quality of the neighbourhood, and energy efficiency.

In total, 58 per cent of first-time buyers surveyed considered Help to Buy very important, and placed a greater emphasis on proximity to amenities like transport and shops. Upsizers rated off-street parking as their most important feature, followed by the size and design of living space, and were more likely to favour a property near a primary school and local NHS service.

Relocators also valued off-street parking, location and neighbourhood quality among their top priorities. This group of buyers is looking for proximity to NHS services and transport links, as are downsizers, who placed low maintenance, a new home warranty and energy efficiency as the most important factors behind their move.

A total of 77 per cent of people in suburban homes had two or more cars and relied less on walking to get to key amenities, as opposed to those in urban locations. First-time buyers in urban settings held the most esteem for the proximity of a train or tube station, with 47 per cent rating it as very important, compared to just over 30 per cent of other respondents. For downsizers, the figure falls to just 17 per cent.



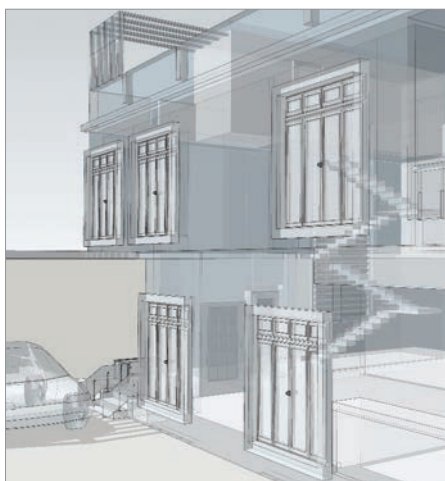
White paper suggests modular could save housing market

If the housing market is to come anywhere near providing the target of 300,000 homes per year there must be a significant shift in the way we produce buildings, according to architectural practice Ackroyd Lowrie.

In its new white paper, the company sets out how this challenge can be met through offsite volumetric construction. The report says that high quality, bespoke housing projects are able to be delivered an estimated 30-60 per cent faster by building them in factories.

Liz Peace CBE, chair of the Old Oak and Park Development Corporation, commented on the research: "The house-building industry is not renowned for being particularly innovative but in offsite, volumetric housing we are confronted with something that could revolutionise the way we build homes and make a significant dent in the housing numbers that we so desperately need.

"As an industry, we cannot let this opportunity pass us by. This is why we need the call to arms the Ackroyd Lowrie White Paper offers – to inspire, to inform and most of all to make things happen."



To ensure that these factory-made buildings arrive on site exactly as intended, Ackroyd Lowrie have introduced a virtual reality (VR) sign off process. This allows the client to walk around different versions of their future home in the latest VR headset. Developers and designers can then make changes to the design long before the 3D model is sent to the factory for production, and even longer before a single brick is laid.

surveyors in their forecasts a year ago.

In the early part of 2018 workloads increased across all subsectors, with both new work and repair and maintenance activity rising steadily. Private housing reported the strongest rise in workloads with 36 per cent more respondents citing an increase rather than a decrease – the most positive since the beginning of 2016. This contrasts with the public sector where the pace of workloads slowed to a net balance of +10 per cent in housing (+19 in Q4 2017).

Higher input costs and a shortage of labour continue to restrict growth in profit margins, and while cost pressures may ease later this year, expectations around profit margins are still well below the three-year average of 40 per cent recorded between 2014 and 2016. Tender prices are expected to rise over the next 12 months, with respondents in both the building and civil engineering sectors envisaging greater price pressures.

Besides the one-off factors related to inclement weather, financial constraints, planning delays and labour shortages remain the key impediments to growth with 76 per cent, 66 per cent and 60 per cent of surveyors reporting difficulties with each, respectively.

The lack of sufficiently skilled workers remains an obstacle for many businesses, particularly with regard to professional services such as quantity surveying. Labour shortages remain at elevated levels after having eased throughout 2016 with 60 per cent of contributors in Q1 citing this as an impediment to growth. Indeed, the share of respondents reporting insufficient availability of quantity surveyors was the highest in 10 years.

Despite the constraints that firms have been facing recently, surveyors remain relatively upbeat. Net balances of 46 per cent and 35 per cent of respondents expect workloads and employment levels, respectively, to continue to rise over the coming 12 months.



ACKROYD LOWRIE'S REPORT EXPLORES THE KEY BENEFITS OF MODERN OFFSITE CONSTRUCTION; THESE INCLUDE:

- Complete construction in days, not months – Offsite construction can save a great deal of time on site, which leads to financial savings for the client. The method can offer 30-60 per cent time saving over traditional methods
- Bespoke, high quality homes – Prefabricated homes gained a reputation for being repetitive and low quality due to those produced in the post-war period. However, modern factories can achieve bespoke designs using high quality materials
- Fewer Defects – Because these homes are built in factory conditions, the quality and consistency of work can be higher
- Collaborations with award winning architects – Advances in 3D computer modelling allow award winning architects to collaborate directly with the factories producing the homes to achieve contemporary, beautifully designed homes

Construction holds steady in Q1 despite bad weather

Construction workloads remained resilient despite bad weather and a weaker near-term economic outlook in the first quarter of 2018, according to the results of the Q1 2018 RICS Construction and Infrastructure Market Survey.

In Q1 2018, 23 per cent more chartered surveyors reported that their workloads had risen as opposed to fallen. While 63 per cent of respondents noted bad weather conditions as a limiting factor, the "Beast from the East" was not enough to slow the pace of growth.

The RICS quarterly series has now indicated "moderate but steady" growth for the past four quarters, something supported by the positive expectations expressed by



Patrick Mooney, managing director at Mooney Thompson Consulting

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

LESSONS FROM THE GRENFELL FIRE NEED TO BE LEARNED

So here we are, 11 months on from the horrors of the Grenfell Tower fire in which 71 innocent people lost their lives, and we are still no closer to having a Government-led solution to the problem of what to do with the high-rise blocks that are clad in flammable materials.

The previous Housing Secretary talked a good talk and made the right noises about resolving things for the benefit of tenants in similar blocks, but so far the Government has been reluctant to provide funding for re-cladding works, or for the installation of water sprinkler systems or any other safety measures. It will be interesting to see if James Brokenshire is better on delivery than his predecessor Sajid Javid, who is now in charge of the Home Office.

Many local authority landlords like Birmingham are proceeding with self-funded schemes, using their own Housing Revenue Accounts to pay for vital safety works. This is no doubt reassuring for thousands of their tenants, but there are a number of problems thrown up by this.

Firstly, this money cannot be spent twice! In most, if not all cases, this cash had been earmarked for other planned repair and maintenance works, which have had to be deferred or postponed. If tenants have been waiting for upgrades or long-standing repairs to be completed then sadly they will just have to wait a bit longer. In other cases it is much-needed new build schemes at risk of being cancelled, as claimed by Plymouth Community Homes.

Secondly, there is the postcode lottery aspect to this as not all councils are in a position where they can divert funds in this way. So their

tenants are nervously waiting in their beds at night hoping and praying that their block does not catch fire, while they wait to hear if the Treasury can be persuaded to find the millions of pounds needed to make their homes safe to live in.

FLAWED TESTS

Remember it was only a few weeks ago that we learnt that hundreds of millions of pounds earmarked for new build schemes that have not progressed, was returned to the Treasury from Homes England and the Housing Ministry. Could this not be made available now for safety works?

Then there is the 64 thousand dollar question about what type of cladding panels are safe to be put on tower blocks? The integrity of Government-ordered tests has been seriously questioned by the Association of British Insurers, whose own tests have produced very different results. There are questions about whether manufacturers have been cheating, or gaming the system in a similar way to how car engine emission tests were manipulated.

The Hackitt Review of Building Regulations should clear up a lot of the confusion, but in the meantime we are not sure how insurers will view the safety and value of existing tower blocks. This could pose a serious problem for housing associations, particularly if their properties are written down in value and they

THE COST-CUTTING CULTURE THAT LED TO A BOTCHED REFURBISHMENT SCHEME AND TURNED SAFE HOMES INTO A TINDERBOX NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED TO HISTORY

are put in breach of loan covenants.

One bright thing to emerge from all this gloom in recent weeks was the Labour Party's Green Paper on social housing. Called 'Housing for the Many' it sets out the opposition's plans to revive affordable housing, and specifically new council housing. The focus on affordability has been particularly warmly received, along with other measures such as suspending the right to buy and ending policies like forcing housing associations to convert social rents to so-called 'affordable rents', which in reality everyone regards as unaffordable rents.

Rents for both private and social housing are increasingly becoming unaffordable to many as welfare reforms and local housing allowance freezes continue to bite into the budgets of those on the lowest incomes in society. With the new and additional responsibilities to the homeless, it's becoming harder for councils to find suitable housing for those on waiting lists.

FRESH COMMITMENT

The headline-grabbing Labour policy was the commitment to build one million new affordable homes for rent over a 10-year period. This looks like a very ambitious figure initially, but many older

professionals in the sector will remember times when this level of construction was commonplace.

Reports from bodies like the Trussell Trust (on the increased use of foodbanks), the Resolution Foundation (on the plight of young adults struggling to find decent and affordable housing) and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (reporting on the death of 78 homeless people on the streets of Britain over the winter) has reminded us all of the huge need for new and affordable houses, accompanied by the necessary caring services.

There was a time when we took such concepts for granted. But in the post-Grenfell age we probably need to be a lot noisier and more demanding about such things. The cost cutting culture that led to a botched refurbishment scheme and turned safe homes into a tinderbox needs to be consigned to history. This is the challenging agenda inherited by the new Housing Secretary.

As the public inquiry into the Grenfell fire resumes, the next few weeks and months could be quite harrowing as we hear evidence from the survivors and various fire safety experts. But we badly need to learn the lessons from it and to ensure that such a tragedy does not happen again. We thought lessons would

be learned after the Lakeland House fire in 2009, we now need to ensure they are after the Grenfell Tower fire.



Image courtesy of Natalie Oxford

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300,000 NEW HOMES A YEAR: AN ACHIEVABLE GOAL?

Steve Mansour, CEO at insurer CRL, explains how to make the homebuilding process more about building homes

Getting tangled up in red tape is every small to medium builder and developer's nightmare. Overly complex policies, unnecessary processes, outdated legacy systems and piles of local government paperwork all cause long, costly delays. This bureaucracy repeatedly threatens to pull the focus from the job at hand – building homes and meeting the challenge of our national housing crisis.

CRL recently surveyed SME builders and developers to gain insight into the challenges and opportunities they face. The results clearly show the feelings and grievances experienced by those who are building the homes of tomorrow, today. One strong theme that emerged is the belief that there is inadequate support from those who set regulatory and legal stipulations and requirements. 53 per cent of those surveyed described the Government as either “unsupportive” or “very unsupportive”. Just 2 per cent thought legislators were ‘very supportive’ of the industry. There's an inbuilt irony here: there is a radical disjuncture between the support expressed by policymakers for the building trade, and the level of practical help that they deliver.

Current legal frameworks are outdated and no longer fit for purpose. Government policy unfairly favours larger homebuilders over small to medium developers. Some of the steps that could be taken to correct this are simple. The Government ought to minimise form-filling to allow contractors to focus on quality builds and workmanship. The Government's recent White Paper, ‘Fixing Our Broken Housing Market’ states that “The fundamentals of the Building Regulations system remain sound and important steps were taken in the last Parliament to rationalise housing standards.” Yet, there is still much progress to be made.

In her foreword to the White Paper, the Prime Minister promises the Government will be “giving councils and developers the tools they need to build more swiftly” in order to “tackle unnecessary delays”. If this sentiment was translated into practical action, our industry would gain great

momentum. Instead, one developer working on a project to construct just over 100 homes was faced with 40 different demands from the council that had to be met before the development could progress any further.

These included: Obtaining approval for roadworks; seeking permission to move any foliage that birds might use for nesting; erecting pre-approved fences around five silver birch trees; reporting on colours and other details of door, window, and garage lintels; submitting detailed drawings showing proposed brick types and design of windows, garage and house doors; taking steps to protect hedgehogs; protecting slow worms by filing an ecologist report; and building 10 bat boxes and 22 bird boxes.

I don't want to trivialise the importance of some of these measures, but others seem excessively onerous. What's even more worrying is that this example is from three years ago and yet 39 per cent of those we recently surveyed said they thought the Government's support had decreased over the years, with 32 per cent claiming that it had stayed the same. In addition, the Government has proposed reducing the time that builders have to work on projects that have gained planning permission to just two years, before permission is removed. Ministers have also proposed that developers which fail to construct homes quickly enough could have their land confiscated by local authorities.

In response, builders were keen to point out that there was a substantial difference between outline permission, where land for housing is approved by planners, and detailed permission, which is required for the builder to actually begin work. If the two-year deadline for work commencement was counted from the time outline permission was granted, many projects would be undeliverable.

We believe it's vital to cut as much red tape as possible, without delay. This doesn't mean cutting corners in terms of building quality, health and safety or building regulations. We are certainly not advocating buildings that are less structurally sound. Instead, we are simply calling for a reduction in the complexity involved



in inspection and certification, to streamline the process. This will be of particular help to small to medium builders who don't have the resources to deal with overly burdensome bureaucratic requirements.

It's important to unshackle the construction industry. From the vantage point of a structural insurer, it's straightforward: developers must be able to quickly and easily receive quotes, enjoy simple flat rate fees through easy payment methods, have reliable inspections with surveyors who cause minimal disruption, and ultimately get their final certificates on time. In short, removing all the administrative headaches normally associated with the process, leaving these SMEs to focus on the job in hand.

There is one clear and optimistic note, though. Those surveyed remain confident about 2018, with 65 per cent saying they are planning to build more homes than they did last year. Can the industry meet the government's target of building 300,000 homes a year? The answer is an emphatic ‘yes’, but only when the barriers to building are removed, and red tape is purposefully pared back. We're doing everything we can, it's time for the Government to do the same.

Innovative 100 per cent funding for professional housebuilders

Chief Operating Officer Jason Tebb reveals how Go Develop's joint venture partnerships are revolutionising SME housebuilding across the country:

TELL US ABOUT THE COMPANY AND WHAT YOU DO...

Go Develop provide 100% full joint venture funding that covers land, build, stamp duty and project costs. That means everything is funded without a penny in from the developer or housebuilder. We know that good developers often have more opportunities than they have funds. That's where we come in.

Working in partnership, we provide a close, aligned relationship with the assurance that once the project is sold, the developer receives the lion's share of the profits. Right now, we have over 1,100 homes being built nationwide with our joint venture partners.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

As we have no shareholders or external board members, we can make decisions flexibly and fast. A decision is made within 48 hours and a deal can be completed in 30 days, cutting through the red tape and delays developers may be used to.

There is no outlay with us, and no debt servicing, as all costs are rolled up until the end of the project. We create an 'SPV' to hold the project until it's build and sold. Then a contract is made to ensure the developer gains the greatest profit share and controls the build. We attend site progress meetings and our monitoring surveyors will deal with monthly valuations and contractor payments.

WHY DO DEVELOPERS LOVE TO WORK WITH YOU?

Obviously, 100% certain funding is music to any developer's ears, but our partners tell us they love that we're the ones burning the midnight oil and doing all the admin, VAT returns, valuations and chasing of solicitors and surveyors saving them a huge amount of time and cost. They get their Sunday evenings back! At Go Develop, there's a whole team of dedicated property experts from marketing to accounting to draw on if you're a developer wanting to focus on the actual build.

One of the many things our returning developer clients tell us is that we're easy to do business with. We are not financiers with a tick box mentality, we are experts in property. Our decisions are made by a proactive and helpful team, with a wealth of build and development experience – we've done it ourselves and understand the challenges and opportunities

our clients are facing. We've a superb track record of going the extra mile and stick to what we say.

WHAT ARE YOUR CRITERIA?

It couldn't be more simple...

- We focus on new build opportunities, apartments and value family housing where homebuyer demand is at its strongest.
- We work nationwide but tend to prefer outside the M25.
- Our developer partners must have full planning permission in place and some property experience is desired.
- The project is up to 24 months duration with a GDV of £2-£15million.
- There needs to be a margin of 25% on GDV pre-finance.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'VE A PROJECT FOR GO DEVELOP?

Please do get in touch either by calling 020 8974 4705 or emailing joinus@go-develop.co.uk The first step is to send us your development appraisal and cash flow for the project, along with the full planning decision notice. We will review and advise, usually within 24 hours, whether the project is suitable. If it is, we will ask you to complete our short application form with supporting information, then we can get the ball rolling and draw up our formal Heads of Terms. On receipt of the signed Heads of Terms, we formally instruct legal, valuations and professional services.

We don't wrap our partners up in complex terms and conditions, we keep it simple and are known to be easy to do business with. It's something we pride ourselves on and our returning partners are testament to that. We love giving references – ask us!



Jason Tebb, Chief Operating Officer, Go Develop

WHAT ARE THE PLANS AHEAD?

To build on what we have achieved and to continue to support all our clients and brokers as we expand our business.

The next 12 months will prove to be an exciting time as we introduce a number of support functions to our existing and future partners, from risk and due diligence to marketing and social media.

This time next year, we will be more than a funding solution, we will be a complete land and build services provider, allowing our partners to concentrate on the things they do best, whilst we help with the things they don't have the time or the expertise to execute on their own. Above all we'll ensure we continue to deliver beyond expectations.

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Agreement signed for £250m development in Sighthill, Glasgow

An agreement between Keepmoat Homes and Glasgow City Council has been signed, which is set to deliver hundreds of new homes in the next phase of the flagship residential development at the Sighthill Transformational Regeneration Area (TRA) in Glasgow.

As part of the 10-year regeneration programme, which is set to inject £250m into the neighbourhood, Keepmoat will be delivering 826 new homes - 628 of which will be available for private sale and 198 for mid-market rent via Glasgow Housing Association.

The regeneration programme is being delivered by Transforming Communities: Glasgow, which is a partnership between Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Housing Association and the Scottish Government, with funding from the Glasgow City Region City Deal.

As well as providing much needed homes, Keepmoat will be working closely with Transforming Communities to deliver long-lasting economic and social outcomes for the people and communities of Sighthill.

A key part of the plans for the development, which is located to the north of the city, is to improve the connectivity of Sighthill to Glasgow. This will include the construction of a road bridge across the Glasgow-Edinburgh railway line, as well as the introduction of a footbridge across the M8 – a “street in the sky” that will connect Sighthill to the neighbouring city centre.

Along with the new homes, retail units, green space and commercial developments also feature on the masterplan for Sighthill’s new sustainable community, which, when complete, will be the biggest project of its kind in the UK outside of London.

As part of Keepmoat’s commitment to delivering wider community benefits the housebuilder is expected to deliver 62 new jobs for modern apprentices, graduates and new entrants, 45 new construction jobs, as well as support for 46 apprenticeships and 82 work placements. The community benefits programme will also extend to education and training support, as well as a commitment of £120,000 to support local engagement initiatives.

Keepmoat is due to start on site late spring/early summer 2019 and will deliver a selection of locally inspired and contemporary styles to create a distinctive mix of one, two, three, four and five-bedroom homes.

James Thomson, CEO of Keepmoat Homes, said: “Sighthill is a flagship development for us. As the largest project of its kind outside London it is a very exciting opportunity to truly transform this area of the city, creating long-term benefits. We are delighted to have been chosen to work with Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Housing Association on this exciting regeneration programme and we will employ the greatest effort and care to ensure that the ambition of Transforming Communities: Glasgow is fulfilled and, as such, create an exciting, rich and desirable place to live, work and play.”

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Major lakeside residential scheme approved by Reading planners

The final residential phase of a major mixed-use development around a new railway station on the outskirts of Reading has been given the green light.

Planners at Reading Borough Council unanimously backed proposals for a series of seven lakeside residential buildings that will create 459 new apartments at Green Park Village. An associated gym and retail units have also been approved.

The latest application on behalf of St Edward Homes, part of the Berkeley Group, is the sixth phase of residential development at the scheme which will eventually provide homes for all aspects of the community. The full variety of housing will range from one bedroom apartments to detached family homes and an extra care home.

Planning for a new school is also due to be submitted and the scheme includes a community hall, market square and local shops.

The development will be connected to Reading by the new Green Park railways station and a public transport interchange.

James Cook, director of architecture at Broadway Malyan and leader of the project said the transport links and proximity to Green Park Business Campus will help create a sustainable residential development.

He commented: "Green Park Village is a highly successful and ambitious project to create a completely new, high quality community in Reading with a lakeside setting and open green spaces at the heart of the design."

Commenting on the design, he said: "For this final phase we have worked hard to create a series of elegant and slender lakeside buildings that offer a high quality environment for residents while providing views of the lakeside and countryside. The buildings are arranged in a crescent and step up from the lakeside to mark the location of the new train station and Station Square."

Broadway Malyan director David Anderson, who leads the company's Reading studio, commented: "This decision reflects the culmination of more than 10 years' work taking a masterplan vision through concept and detailed architectural design to the realisation of the final phases of building a new community."

Discussing the design's progression he said: "Green Park Village is a modern and vibrant development that has evolved and responded to society's changing needs and aspirations, and the demographic shift brought about by Reading's renaissance as the south east's most important satellite town."



"GREEN PARK VILLAGE IS A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AND AMBITIOUS PROJECT TO CREATE A COMPLETELY NEW, HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY IN READING WITH A LAKESIDE SETTING AND OPEN GREEN SPACES AT THE HEART OF THE DESIGN."

James Cook, director of architecture at Broadway Malyan.



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TIMBER SYSTEMS DIVISION

CASE STUDY

Off-site, on target: The benefits of factory-built homes

Located in east London, ilke Homes' Gallions Reach show-homes exhibit examples of its off-site constructions, built using precision engineered, factory-controlled methods.

The show homes are intended to demonstrate how a common modular platform that is efficient to manufacture can be personalised to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the requirements of open sale, with a wide variety of internal layout and external treatment options.

Originally established as a joint venture (JV) between housebuilder Keepmoat Homes and Elliott, offsite construction specialist ilke Homes utilises modular construction methods to provide customisable, high quality homes.

When setting up the JV, both companies recognised the need for a solution to the increasing demand for new homes, especially against a backdrop of insufficient skilled labour, and with the need to deliver these homes on time and within budget.

Incorporated as an independent entity in October 2017, Keepmoat and Elliot have remained as strategic partners, and help out by offering a wealth of experience.

APPROACHING THE PROJECT

The two demonstrator units at Gallions Reach offer an example of the company's affordable rent home and a property for open market sale.

The affordable rented house benefits from full open-plan living on the ground floor, and two double bedrooms with en-suites on the first floor. The home is designed to be compliant with the Nationally Described Space Standards and the London Housing SPG.

The home for open market sale has an open-plan kitchen and dining room, in addition to a separate living room on the ground floor, and three bedrooms and a family bathroom on the first floor, with the

master bedroom also including an en-suite.

Bjorn Conway, CEO of ilke Homes, explained why the site was chosen: "Housing associations will be one of our focus areas and, as the south east is the area most in need of affordable housing, we wanted to make our intentions of addressing the housing crisis clear by building our first units in the region.

"Further, the team at ilke Homes wanted to ensure that the site's location made it easy for both housing associations and local authorities located in the region to visit and experience the houses."

Critics of the modular building process often cite difficulty obtaining planning permission as a reason against it, but ilke Homes have reportedly received "positive engagement from planners in local authorities across the UK."

Bjorn explains: "Our ability to deliver the external facades and roof styles that work in their local context is key.

"We have noticed over the last few years that offsite construction is becoming increasingly familiar to people at all stages of the planning and development process."

Though Bjorn said the company had come across no specific planning boundaries, "questions to do with altering the original designs to accommodate higher pitched roofs did crop up." To mitigate this, this is now something that ilke can provide, building them as separate roof modules in its factory.

OFF-SITE CONSTRUCTION

ilke Homes claims to be one of the UK's few modular homes businesses set up to operate at scale, and has set itself the target of delivering 2,000 homes per year within the next two years.

The company professes a "collaborative" culture. Its product development, design and manufacturing teams are 'hands on', working with the assembly teams in the factory to solve issues and deliver a product



ilke Homes, a new British modular housebuilder, is displaying two show-homes in Gallions Reach, London. CEO Bjorn Conway provides some detail on the properties to Jack Wooller, and explains how offsite can benefit personalisation for homebuyers.

A New Captain Takes the Helm at Evinox Energy

Evinox is thrilled to announce that Terry Mahoney has taken the helm as its new Managing Director. Terry originally joined Evinox in 2010 and through his most recent role as Operations Director has been pivotal to much of the company's recent success.

Terry said of his new position "I'm delighted and flattered to be appointed as Managing Director at Evinox. This is an exciting time for the business, with planning regulations and government policy continuing to support the deployment of district and communal heating, the market continues to thrive and evolve. Evinox has seen a strong growth in sales over the past 12 months, and with product innovation and development at the forefront of the company strategy this is only set to increase".

He continued "As an established, marketing leading heat interface unit manufacturer, Evinox offers innovative products that are built with quality components and assembled to world class manufacturing standards. This has been confirmed by the Impressive efficiency performance achieved by the Evinox ModuSat heat interface unit, which was tested to the UK



standard from BESA."

The Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) UK test standard for heat interface units (HIUs) was recently introduced to enable designers and specifiers to evaluate the performance of a HIU on their network. Currently, only a handful of manufacturers have published results for the HIU test regime, with Evinox being one of the first to undertake the testing process. The results achieved provide a clear, independently verified confirmation that the Evinox ModuSat® XR HIU range delivers outstanding heating and hot water efficiency performance for modern heat networks – something the team at Evinox are very proud of.

The strong growth in sales reported, can be

clearly demonstrated by the calibre of clients and projects that Evinox are working with. Evinox is already in the process of delivering over 1700 heating and cooling interface units for projects in Canary Wharf and over 1000 units for the same client on a prestigious project on the South Bank in central London. At the same time, the company has also been successful in securing orders for over 700 heat interface units on the latest phase of the London City Island development in Greenwich. In addition to this, Evinox's metering and billing services continue to grow, with contracts for hundreds of heat network schemes for both private and social housing across the UK, providing bills for over 10,000 customers each year, with many, many more using the Evinox PaySmart pre-payment system.

Mahoney believes that it is a combination of the comprehensive product range and support services that Evinox offers, with the dedication of the Evinox team and keeping ahead of evolving industry standards that has spurred on the company's recent success.

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that is not only cost-effective, but also “serves the needs of modern living.”

Before the show homes were delivered to the site in Gallions Reach, the foundations, services, drainage and much of the landscaping was already complete, and no scaffolding was required.

Bjorn Conway described the speedy nature of the process: “The crane arrived in the morning, placed the units, and was dismantled on the same day.

“The homes were fully furnished, landscaped, and operational for the launch event less than two weeks later.”

The modules themselves leave the factory virtually complete inside and out, ready to be installed. This stage also includes the incorporation of any individual consumer specifications, such as flooring, tiling, light fittings, appliances, and in some cases, even beds, fixtures and fittings. At this point, onsite preparation works and build manufacturing are undertaken simultaneously.

Once the site has been prepared, the modules are transported by truck. The company plans to build a series of plants around the UK to deal with demand at a regional level.

Exploring the benefits of the offsite method, the CEO said: “Due to the factory build quality control, we guarantee consistent high-quality, energy efficient homes which are typically constructed in less than half the time of traditionally built houses.

“This approach results in a reduction in defect rectification and anticipated maintenance costs.”

As the modules are fully constructed in the factory, by the time properties arrive on site the homes can be fitted in a single day. The firm is currently able to install up to six properties per day, meaning the timeframe from installation of the homes to families moving in can take just two weeks, and provides a reliable and predictable timeline to work with. For a medium-sized site, this could speed up build times considerably, leading to a build programme that is six months faster than a traditional site.

This adds another benefit to local residents. “Ensuring minimum disruption to existing residents and the wider community is a crucial consideration for us,” said Conway. “Our installation is quick and efficient, with vehicles used on site kept to a minimum.”

A recent ilke Homes installation at the Dominion development in Doncaster used only five heavy goods vehicles in total, including the crane. This approach not only results in a much quieter site, but one that is safer and more controlled.

“We have also had comments from the wider community at Gallions Reach that our houses appeared to ‘pop up’ in

one day,” he continued, “as they weren’t there in the morning and were fully installed when people returned from work that evening.”

THE HOMES

The internal and external surfaces of ilke Homes match those commonly used in traditional construction, including plaster-board, skirting boards, tiling and render, brick slip and PVCu.

Precision-cut, high-grade galvanised steel frames and other durable, high performance materials are intended to give the homes the inherent strength and weight to enable them to be transported and lifted into place.

All properties by ilke Homes have a build fabric that exceeds Building Regulations by 20 per cent as standard due to the air tight, super-insulated and thermal bridge-free design.

ilke Homes works with NHBC to gain an NHBC Buildmark Warranty for its homes, and the LABC on building control approval. As part of its BOPAS approval, Building Life Plans (BLP) has also confirmed that the durability and maintenance requirements of ilke Homes are similar to that of traditionally built homes.

Light is maximised thanks to the 2.5m floor to ceiling height, and large windows ensure maximum daylighting and airflow. Noise is also minimised, with acoustic testing showing the properties to be a third quieter than traditionally built homes. The high-performance envelope of the properties, with factory built quality control, also allows the homes to reduce running costs when compared to typical builds.

The homes benefit from a number of energy efficient features, including ‘A’ rated boilers, improved air tightness, and reduced thermal bridging as a result of the company’s warm-frame design.

The base specification for the properties exceed building regulation carbon targets by 12 per cent, and with the addition of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, can be built to the zero-carbon home standard.

The homes at Gallions Reach were fitted with solar PV and battery storage, heat pump ventilation, smart heating controls, as well as an electric vehicle charging point. This means that electrical power within the properties can be generated, stored and used efficiently within the home.

“These features have been incorporated with energy-efficiency in mind,” said Conway, “and will ultimately result in lower energy bills for the families who occupy the homes.”

SUCCESS

Since opening in May last year, Bjorn reports that there has already been “widespread interest” in the homes, with



ILKE HOMES IS CURRENTLY ONE OF THE UK’S ONLY MODULAR HOMES BUSINESSES SET UP TO OPERATE AT SCALE

development and maintenance teams from over 60 organisations visiting the site to understand ilke Homes’ approach to partnering, and to see the quality of the finished houses.

The CEO explained the company’s plans for the future: “Our vision is to build high-quality homes for all, with an emphasis on medium density, low-rise houses and apartments (up to four storeys).

“This means that we will be able to deliver much-needed family housing to local authorities, housing associations and developers.”

He concluded: “The UK is currently in the midst of a housing crisis, which the construction sector has had difficulties addressing for many years, and we’re looking forward to helping people across the UK to enjoy a home of their own.”

Third Queen's Award for Ancon



Ancon has won a 2018 Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category, for the successful introduction and on-going development of its advanced composite, low thermal conductivity, Teplo wall tie range. This is the third time that Ancon has been honoured in this prestigious award scheme. Teplo wall ties are manufactured

from continuous basalt fibres set in a resin matrix; a fibre-reinforced polymer that is 70 times more thermally efficient than steel. When used to join the two leaves of a cavity wall, this material virtually eliminates cold bridging across the insulated cavity.

0114 238 1219 www.ancon.co.uk

Consort Claudgen launches Heat brochure



Consort Claudgen's new Heat brochure is now available in print and online. The full-colour, 48-page product directory provides information and comprehensive explanation of various heating systems including the SL and RX Wireless Control Heating System, Electronic 7-day Timer models and receiver units which can be retrofitted to existing compatible heaters, allowing the heaters to be wirelessly controlled by either an RX or SL wireless

controller. Download a copy of the new brochure from the website or request one by calling.

01646 692172 www.consortepl.com

Ecodan's new brand ambassador



Mitsubishi Electric has announced an association with TV presenter, architect, lecturer and writer, George Clarke, to help promote Ecodan air source heat pumps. George Clarke is

a passionate advocate of design excellence and high levels of quality in the construction industry. "For us, George is a perfect fit with Ecodan because he is such an inspiring pioneer and a real advocate of the need to build quality into the homes that the nation desperately needs," explains Donald Daw, Commercial Director for Mitsubishi Electric Living Environment Systems. Mr Clarke will help promote renewable heating and write a monthly column on the company's blogsite, which covers a diverse range of informative and useful topics around energy use in buildings.

01707 278666 www.ecodan.co.uk

BLM British Lead introduces technical support



BLM British Lead is pleased to announce the launch of its own in-house technical support service with David Pounds joining the company as Technical Advisor. David comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience in the industry, having spent 13 years as Technical Advisor at the Lead Sheet Association. The service aims to fulfil the requirements of architects, specifiers,

surveyors, contractors and property owners working at design, construction or post installation stages. For more information on the level of support you require, please contact BLM's technical team.

0330 333 3535 technical@britishlead.co.uk

FAKRO secures solus roof window deal



FAKRO has agreed a three-year solus contract with Taylor Wimpey to supply its PTP-V PVC roof windows. Nick Dyke, Taylor Wimpey Divisional Head of Procurement and Group Supply Chain commented; "After a full market review and trialling, we are very excited to be working alongside FAKRO as the leading manufacturer of PVC roof windows in the UK. Quality, the company's manufacturing record and a true 'working together' approach were significant factors

in our selection". FAKRO Commercial Director Dave Robertson added, "This is the most significant endorsement of our PVC roof windows' reliability and performance since their introduction a decade ago".

01283 554755 www.fakro.co.uk

Apprenticeships boost from partnership



A new Modern Apprenticeship programme has been created at Norbord, Inverness, to develop skills that are focused on the technical and manufacturing aspects of the process at the mill. The new Technical Manufacturing Modern Apprenticeship is an 18-24 month programme

consisting of a combination of theoretical learning and practical hands-on experience within the production process, and results in an SVQ2 qualification. Emma Eadie, HR Assistant: "We have always supported Modern Apprenticeships and take on two apprentices every two years."

www.norbord.co.uk

Wienerberger bolsters its communications strategy



Wienerberger, a UK leading supplier of roof, wall and paving solutions, has unveiled a new brand campaign video as an added asset to its communications strategy. Aiming to forge meaningful connections with the entire construction supply chain, the new video visually represents the company's overall mission and values. Focusing on the ethos of Wienerberger working to positively impact people's lives, the video promotes an emotional connection with its audience as it brings the company's four cornerstones to life; quality and expertise, value, innovation and sustainability. By staying true to the pillar messaging of Wienerberger, and focusing on the key concept of 'building materials for a better quality of life', the video highlights the depth and quality of product ranges and service offerings that are available, whilst reflecting on the range of inspirational projects that Wienerberger has contributed to. Furthermore, the video also showcases Wienerberger's stance as pioneers within digital construction, as well as its increased focus on sustainability. Annette Forster, Marketing Director at Wienerberger, commented: "We believe that in such a fast-paced, digital world, it's essential that we offer a visual snapshot of our mission to all of our stakeholders, and our new brand campaign does exactly that."

0161 491 8200 www.wienerberger.co.uk

SHOW PREVIEW



EXPLORING OFFSITE POTENTIAL

CIH's Housing conference and exhibition returns to Manchester Central from 26 – 28 June, with a focus on the potential of offsite construction

The Chartered Institute of Housing's annual Housing show is Europe's largest gathering of housing professionals, offering the perfect opportunity for networking. A range of seminars and conferences featuring industry experts will provide you with the latest information on all aspects of housing.

The show's 'alternative' theatre The Fringe will play host to sessions that ask the difficult questions, while new event TECH@Housing will run alongside the show where you can discover the latest in technologies. Over 300 exhibitors will also be on display.

In partnership with NHBC and Trowers & Hamlin, Housing 2018 will be showcasing offsite over the three days, with live offsite builds on display with ilke Homes, CHIC and Premier Modular. Housing 2018's Sarah Payling, Homes England's Stephen Kinsella and the MHCLG's Andy von Bradsky explain why "the time for offsite is now".

Event director Sarah Payling comments: "We are on a journey which some say we have been on before. I did eight years in offsite media from 2000 to 2008 and I spent a lot of my time on John Prescott's £60k house project – and here we are again. Some of you may remember in 2005 there was a sustainable communities summit that took place at the GMEX, now Manchester Central. For all those that came along we witnessed Blair, Brown, Prescott and about five modular house builds. Now, 13 years on, these homes have changed but we still have a housing crisis. I think we can all agree the time is now for offsite construction."

"On only my second day in this job, I hosted an offsite walking tour around the exhibition hall of Housing 2017 in Manchester. The microphone wasn't working properly so I had to shout to be heard, which perhaps symbolises where we were at that time and how quickly things seem to be changing.

Stephen Kinsella, executive director of land at Homes England says: "In the last few months, there have been several notable offsite developments. As part of the Autumn Budget, the Government gave a massive boost to offsite by

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NHBC AND TROWERS & HAMLINS, THE HOUSING 2018 EVENT WILL BE SHOWCASING OFFSITE OVER THE THREE DAYS, WITH LIVE OFFSITE BUILDS ON DISPLAY

stating that modern methods of construction (MMC) would be favoured for public infrastructure schemes from 2019. Closer to home, our deal to sell land to the Berkeley Group to build an offsite factory in Ebbsfleet made the national news and there have been similar announcements from the housing sector from the likes of Accord and Swan.

"It certainly feels like momentum is building. At Homes England, we see the expansion of offsite construction as absolutely crucial in getting the increase in numbers we need to build 300,000 homes a year. Simply put, there isn't the capacity in the industry to build 300,000 homes through traditional methods. So, we intend to be much more actively involved in offsite and we will use our land and finance to help scale it up. You will see us doing further land deals with MMC included in schemes. But we need our housebuilder partners to work with us and they're telling us they cannot easily shift their businesses from traditional to offsite construction – even those who are convinced of the benefits."

Andy von Bradsky, design and quality consultant for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government says: "The Government recognises that in order to meet its commitment to increase the supply of new homes we need a modern construction industry with the techniques to build to scale, volume and speed of supply. Building more homes using MMC, including offsite and smart techniques, is

a key part of this. The Secretary of State has made it clear that quality is as important as the quantity of new homes. Manufacturing homes in closely monitored factory conditions can deliver improved quality to a consistent standard. Greater investment in time earlier in the design, manufacture and assembly process can lead to faster delivery onsite.

“We know use of MMC across the housing market is increasing, particularly where pace of delivery and investment over the long term are key factors in the business model. Other sectors are making greater use of pre-assembled components. Some are embracing the opportunities offered by digital technology to customise layouts, fittings and finishes.

“There are challenges such as ensuring certainty of supply proportionate to the scale of investment, reducing costs compared to traditional methods, ensuring we deliver well designed, attractive places, securing mortgage finance and training a new diverse workforce with the necessary skills.

“The Government is putting measures in place that are aimed at transforming a developing market into one that contributes positively to mainstream supply.”



For more information and to register visit

WWW.CIHHOUSING.COM

and follow CIH Housing on Twitter for the latest news

@CIH_HOUSING #CIHHOUSING2018

Stelrad shows why it's Europe's favourite



Stelrad Radiators, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of radiators will once again be attending CIH this year – the annual showcase of the Chartered Institute of Housing. This year's event is taking place at Manchester Central between 26-28 June 2018. 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 for use in rooms with high humidity. For more information, visit Stelrad on stand G50 and talk to the knowledgeable Stelrad team.

0844 543 6200 www.stelrad.com

CIH Housing stand no G50

Excellent indoor air quality for Avery



Indoor air quality is such an important feature in any home and for Avery Healthcare, it was important that their newest 78 bed retirement village had the very best ventilation installed. They appointed Harniss Ltd to install a selection of ventilation fans by Burton upon

Trent-based Vortice, whose expertise in the area is second to none. **Vortice** Specification Manager Tony Green-Hurst said: “We were delighted to be able to work with Harniss to provide their client with precisely the right ventilation. The CBZ and Hexamotion products we used for the project were selected as a bespoke solution. Our technical team carefully considered all the requirements before coming up with recommendations.”

01283 492949 www.vortice.ltd.uk

New Linear Screed Line Drain



CCL Wetrooms, one of the UK's leading wetroom specialists, has launched a new drainage solution for use on solid floors – the new Linear Screed Line – a linear drain with a 50mm waterseal trap that offers an alternative to a waterless trap.

The new drain is available with a single,

double or triple trap to cope with high flow rates, and has a horizontal or vertical outlet option to suit the floor configuration of the wetroom. The drain has been designed to be used with the full range of linear grills from CCL Wetrooms, including the Stone-Infill Grill and the new Frameless Grill. Available in a floor or wall option.

0844 327 6002 www.ccl-wetrooms.co.uk

Kaldewei NexSys opens new chapter



Kaldewei NexSys is a real shower surface revolution. The innovative 4-in-1 system consists of a waste channel, sloping support, sealing system and an enamelled shower surface enabling ultra simple and fast installation. The 4-in-1 system eliminates multiple installation steps. NexSys takes a completely new approach

to floor-level showers, perfectly combining two worlds: a seamless shower surface made of superior steel enamel with the design of a tiled shower area with a shower channel. The elegant design of the narrow waste channel, with a high-end designer cover made of brushed stainless steel, fits seamlessly into the shower surface's overall minimalist look.

01480 498053 www.kaldewei.co.uk

The bare Essentials from Abacus Bathrooms



The launch of the Abacus Essentials range, by bathroom expert, **Abacus Bathrooms** is encapsulated in a new easy-to-navigate 70-page brochure. The Essentials range offers everyday innovative products at highly competitive prices, all of which are in stock and can be delivered on a next day basis. Manufactured to the highest quality, the Essentials range includes products used in every bathroom installation including taps, showers, sanitaryware, furniture, fixing frames,

heating, tiles, as well as assisted living innovations. For more information please visit Abacus Bathrooms' website.

www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk

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From planning and logistics to stock availability and aftersales, **Twyford** exceeds expectations to offer a wide range of bathroom solutions for any development. Twyford's dedicated project planning team ensures smooth and efficient running of your project from start to finish. From classic to contemporary styles, Twyford offers a broad range of

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www.twyfordbathrooms.com



Tile care made easy with FILA KIT CERAMICA

FILA's new KIT CERAMICA provides a complete maintenance solution for ceramic and porcelain tiles. Contained within a sturdy recyclable carry box, the kit includes three treatments for cleaning after laying, grout stain protection and ongoing maintenance. Special kit promotions will run during the spring and summer, including discounts, a complimentary point-of-sale podium and voucher incentive programme. KIT CERAMICA contains three best-selling FILA solutions - DETERDEK, FUGAPROOF - in a new pump-spray format - and FILACLEANER. Designed for the initial 'builder's clean', DETERDEK is a safe, concentrated acid cleaner that removes grout and polymer residues. After the initial clean, and once tiles have been rinsed, FUGAPROOF is applied to joints to sanitise the grout and protect it from water and stains. The third kit product, FILACLEANER is a concentrated, pH-neutral detergent suitable for manual cleaning and for use with scrubber-dryer machines.

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CHOICES IN THE BATHROOM

Making the right choices when designing a bathroom can make all the difference in a successful development. With more options available than ever before, Lisa Ward of Bristan looks at how housebuilders can best meet consumers' rapidly evolving needs.

Like all interior design trends, consumer preferences in the bathroom are constantly changing to fit with modern lifestyles. It is up to housebuilders to adapt to these changes with new ideas that are attractive to consumers, fast and efficient to install, and which maximise the space available.

Market reports consistently show that choice is increasingly important when it comes to specifying bathroom products, and having a variety of bathroom set-ups available within a large-scale development can be a highly beneficial sales tool for housebuilders. From innovative wetroom layouts that offer convenience, to new shower technology that caters for multiple-generation households, bathroom design can be a make or break factor in a buyer's decision-making process.

With this in mind, it's important for housebuilders to be aware of the rapid advances in bathroom technology that the sector has experienced in recent years, and how these impact different buyer demographics.

WETROOM OPTIONS

Demand for wetrooms has increased significantly in recent years, and they continue to grow in popularity. They are no longer the preserve of upmarket homes with several bathrooms, but in fact can provide a stylish and practical option at almost any market level.

To put it into context, in value terms the wetroom market is predicted to grow between three and five per cent per annum to 2021, representing an increase of 18 per cent when compared to the market size in 2017.

As an open-plan alternative to the traditional bathroom, wetrooms provide a space-saving and design-led solution that is regarded as a luxurious and accessible feature in the home. This makes the wetroom an ideal option for aspirational design-led buyers, and also for those with reduced mobility, capturing two markets in one.



SPACE-SAVING SHOWERS

Another bathroom trend that is proving popular in modern housing developments is concealed showers. The minimal, modern look of a concealed valve adds a sense of sophistication to the bathroom, which is bound to appeal to house hunters looking for an emphasis on style.

In the past, developers were faced with a number of challenges around the installation of these units. When fitting a concealed shower valve into a solid wall, the brickwork needed to be chased out to allow the valve to sit at the correct depth, receive the water supply pipes and allow connection to the water outlet –

for example a shower arm and fixed shower head, or a wall outlet and flexible shower hose.

However, new innovative slimline valves are available that can be fitted into a cavity as small as 35 mm, making it easier for housebuilders to specify the most stylish possible bathroom, without traditional concerns about installation.

This makes these the perfect option for builds which are tight on space, offering style, without compromising on ease of fit.

ELECTRIC SHOWERS

Deciding on what type of shower to fit in a development can depend on a range of factors, including cost, ease of installation and the standard of shower experience for the end user.

For the most powerful showering experience, mixer showers are typically recommended. However, advances in electric shower technology mean they are increasingly seen as a good option.

Convenient for families and large households, electric showers heat cold water instantly, so users don't need to worry about running out of hot water or waiting for the flow to heat up.

Limescale has historically been an issue that has plagued electric units, as residue build-up can have a significant impact on

LIKE ALL INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS, CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN THE BATHROOM ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING TO FIT WITH MODERN LIFESTYLES

the heating element of a shower. This can have a major effect on performance, with limescale coated heating elements taking more time and more energy to heat water, increasing bills for users, and eventually shortening the lifespan of the product.

In response, manufacturers have developed models with anti-limescale mechanisms. One such feature is phased shutdown technology, which ensures that once the shower is turned off, cold water is drawn in to cool the heating elements and prevent limescale adhesion.

Advances in design have also contributed to the rising popularity of electric showers. Customers once viewed the electric shower very much as the 'kettle' of the bathroom –

all function, no flair. However, in today's market, you don't have to look far to find a sleek, slimline electric shower which bears no resemblance at all to the drab boxes of the past.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL LIVING


The UK's ageing population has led to a boom in the building of retirement communities and homes that need to cater for multiple generations through improved accessibility. Increasingly, new technologies are coming onto the market which reflect these trends in every area of the home, including the bathroom.

Specifically taking into account the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, leading products often incorporate features such as large, easy to move dials for ease of use, raised markings, and an audible click when settings are adjusted.

Additionally, an illuminated stop/start button, an LED digital setting display and a grey contrasting back box can make units easier to use for those with impaired sight.

Bathroom trends are changing rapidly along with user needs. With more choice than ever, housebuilders that stay on top of these trends, and give consumers what they want, will be the ones that succeed.

Lisa Ward is senior product manager at Bristan




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The UK's largest British designer and manufacturer of premium radiators and towel warmers, **Vogue (UK)**, proudly highlight diversity through its MODE Designer Radiator: available in standard and non-standard sizes with a host of supporting accessories.

A customisable design concept, Vogue (UK)'s MODE and MODE Bespoke is a highly flexible heating solution with the option of a rich colour palette. Available in standard and non-standard sizes, this radiator design allows for under-window and full height installation, or even an amalgamation of contrasting models/colours/sizes for interior impact and all important 'wow-factor'. To suit any space and heat output, Vogue (UK) have a standard range of over 40 radiators. Additionally, non-standard options for MODE Bespoke are available for the two, three, four, five and six column designs. With heights from 300mm up to 2000mm, excluding feet: (standard height up to 1800mm) and two to six column widths the choice is exceptional.

Offering a practical wall or floor mounted heating solution, the MODE Radiator Collection by Vogue (UK), is designed to work around you and your home, with a high capacity for heating your entire home.

01902 387000 www.vogueuk.co.uk



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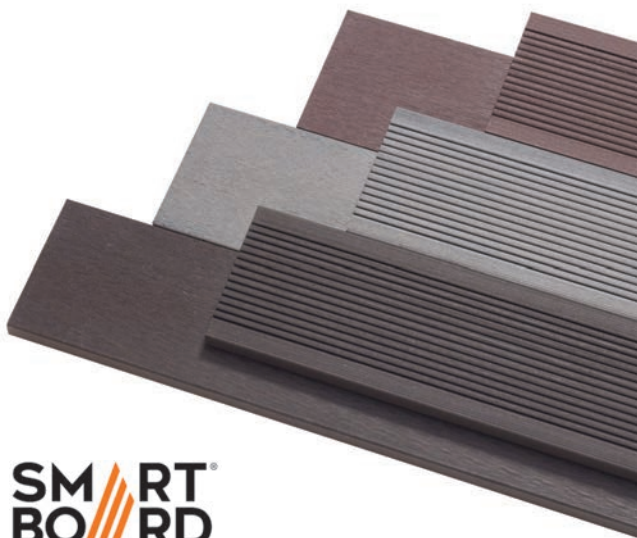
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Building materials suppliers: surviving the housing shortage

With the continued chronic shortage of housing, Jeremy Lee, Sales Director at Aggregate Industries' Building Products Division, looks at where the problems lie; the impact this is having on suppliers; and how they need to adapt

The chronic shortage of homes in the UK is a well-documented issue. Currently Government believe that house builders should be building between approximately 250,000 to 300,000 new homes a year – in England – just to make up the deficit. In the first three months of 2017, 43,170 homes were started and 39,520 were completed, according to figures from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

There are many reasons for the slow rate of housing. The bureaucracy of the planning process has also been blamed, made worse by the lack of resources in local councils to speed the process up. When new homes are eventually given the green light, developers then have

to deal with the shortage of skilled workers in the industry. So, what does this mean for building materials suppliers, who rely on the success of this industry to survive? Given the need for new homes, and the spotlight the government has placed on closing the deficit, you would think it means big business. However, the uncertainty on building levels has provided its own headaches for the industry. It has been particularly hard for building materials suppliers to forecast the supply and demand of their products. This has only become more difficult with Brexit negotiations leading to a cautious market. Without having a clear idea of how many homes will be built in any one quarter, how do you ensure you create enough product? By creating a surplus, you risk it lying idle. You only need to look at the example, a couple of years ago, when an unexpected surge in house building led to a delay and shortage in the supply of bricks. This was compounded by the decommissioning of kilns after the recession. This delay in supply was then used by some to unfairly blame the suppliers for the slow build rate.

So, what can building material suppliers do whilst they wait for levels to rise? One option is to look at ways to innovate your business and products.

We are seeing self-build modular or pre-fabricated homes touted as the saviour



to the housing shortage, particularly the affordable housing sector. It seems most of Europe is already ahead of the UK when it comes to this model, using Holland as an example, where approximately 16 per cent of all new homes built are self or custom-built, compared to just 8 per cent of homes in the UK. Could suppliers adjust their business model to take advantage of this growing market?

It's fair to say that the government is looking at ways to kick start house building and tackle under-supply of housing with a commitment of circa £9 billion to stimulate an increase in annual housing volumes over the next three years. £1 billion has also been set aside for councils, to help them build new affordable homes.

To ensure this investment is well targeted, the government will support more strategic and zonal planning approaches through housing deals.

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info@snickersworkwear.co.uk

Housebuilder & Developer website



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Housing development balances airtightness



A brand new housing development in County Cork Ireland is to maximise airtightness and energy efficiency of the homes whilst ensuring the protection of the building fabric with the introduction of a high performance variable-permeability vapour control layer from the **A. Proctor Group**. Procheck Adapt has been specifically designed to protect the building fabric from the potential risks

of condensation, whilst serving as a highly effective airtight barrier. Thanks to its unique design the membrane offers variable permeability which adapts to changes in humidity levels and allows the structure to dry out in the summer and while protecting it from moisture overload in the winter.

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com

Visqueen builds trade relationships



Visqueen, a market leader in the manufacture and supply of structural waterproofing and gas protection systems has developed an initiative to develop a more prosperous and structured working relationship with the trade. The new Visqueen Specialist Centres enable builder's merchants to become recognised specialists in Visqueen's

product solutions across four key areas – masonry, structural waterproofing, gas and damp protection. Merchants will be recognised as an official Specialist Centre in partnership with Visqueen and will gain access to its products at the best available market rates.

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Off site success

The 2018 Ideal Home exhibition showcases **Freefoam** X-Wood Cladding as the ideal solution for off-site construction. This year's 'Innovation Home' features Freefoam X-Wood Urban Cladding, prior to its release later in the year, to create a stunning exterior finish. The whole house was built prior to the exhibition by Off Site Factory Homes in four separate 'modules', which were then transported to the show and constructed to form one house. Tony Fox, Director Off Site Factory Homes, explained how the process worked: "To create a durable and stable modular construction we need materials to be light, easy to handle and to withstand the rigors of transportation. Whilst this project was for a temporary building we apply the same criteria to permanent projects. We used Freefoam cladding last year and found it met all of our criteria and made perfect sense to use the new X-Wood Urban product for this year's house. We found it really easy to work with and were very pleased with the finished results."

01604 591110 www.freefoam.com



Cladding: for Coast, Country and City

Freefoam, a leading manufacturer of a wide range of innovative products for the building industry in Ireland, the UK and Mainland Europe, has responded to market demand and feedback from customers launching a new colour to its popular Weatherboard style cladding range - Sage Green. A natural, soft shade with grey undertones, subtle yet stylish, making it suitable for any location, from rural countryside, coastal situations and urban city environments. The new colour is available in the 170mm wide Weatherboard embossed textured cladding board and comes with a range of matching fitting trims to create a neat professional co-ordinated finish. Freefoam offer a wide range of colours including contemporary shades of grey and blue, more traditional cream and brown and now green, taking the total to an impressive eleven. PVC-U cladding requires minimal maintenance once installed, a major benefit for property owners and a compelling feature for any property developer.

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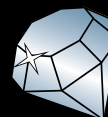
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GETTING A HANDLE ON ALUMINIUM DOORS

Will Jones of Senior Architectural Systems looks at how aluminium doors can open up new opportunities to create homes that offer the highest standards of style, security and sustainability.

The term 'patio door' is often used to refer to a wide range of differing door types, but the most appropriate style to choose will depend on the budget and space available.

Commonly known as French doors, these simple and elegant double or single doors, opening in or out, are perfect for smaller properties that require quick and easy access to the garden. Although a popular choice for traditional homes, the new generation of aluminium doors are well suited to contemporary properties. The slim frame offered by aluminium can also improve the flow of light, despite the smaller dimensions of this style.

Perhaps the most popular choice is the bi-folding or folding sliding door. The advantage of this style is that it enables a whole wall of glass to be completely opened up to create a dramatic focal point and a seamless link with the outside space. Aluminium doors also offer the additional benefits of being strong enough to support large expanses of glazing within a slim frame, maximising the sense of light and space.

Whereas bi-folds are well-suited to houses, particularly those with large gardens or patio areas that can accommodate the 'fold back' of this style, sliding doors are the ideal choice for smaller properties or high-rise apartments with balconies. Sliding doors can also make an exciting feature in new build properties as they can be designed as 'pocket doors' so that they slide into the wall cavity and provide an even wider and visually cleaner opening.

With the ability to create the full range of standard RAL colours or specific colours for a more bespoke solution, powder coated aluminium frames can also make a real design statement and boost the 'kerb appeal' of a development.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

All buildings lose heat through windows and doors, but the amount of energy that is lost can vary significantly depending on the type of system used. Here, aluminium



systems can really have the edge. Specifying doors with double or even triple glazing is an obvious starting point, but choosing a system that contains a thermal barrier is where the real energy savings can be made. One of the major benefits of aluminium doors is the enhanced thermal performance and low U-values that they

offer. Traditionally the material of choice for thermal barriers has been the low thermal conductor polyamide, but new product innovations have been developed to offer even greater energy efficiency. As well as helping to create an interior environment that is both comfortable and more affordable to heat, the specification of

aluminium can have wider benefits, specifically to a scheme's overall carbon footprint. By reducing carbon calculations through the specification of low U-value doors, the project team potentially have the flexibility to make savings in the overall build cost by reducing the need for other, often more expensive, sustainable features, such as photovoltaic roof panels or under floor insulation. Aluminium can also be recycled endlessly, making it the ideal choice for projects where sustainable construction targets are paramount.

SAFE AND SOUND

As well as its aesthetic and thermal appeal, aluminium significantly outperforms other types of framing material in terms of its durability. Hard wearing and robust, aluminium systems can help to reduce cyclical maintenance costs, and with many products offering guarantees of 30+ years, can make a positive contribution to managing the overall lifecycle costs of the building. It is also best practice to choose a manufacturer that can provide the aluminium doors alongside any windows or curtain walling that may be used on the scheme. This not only ensures that the glazing package performs together as well as possible, but also



streamlines the supply chain by keeping all guarantees and warranties with the one supplier.

The intrinsic strength of aluminium frame doors also offers increased security, and the very best products are those that are fully compliant with the latest standards, such as PAS 24.

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF ALUMINIUM

Whether a new-build house, high-rise apartment scheme or refurbishment project, patio doors can be used to create aspirational homes that embrace the popular trend of open-plan living, while

ensuring that the traditional requirements of quality, security and efficiency are successfully met.

The range of styles and configurations of aluminium doors available are giving housebuilders and developers the flexibility they need to be able to design homes that not only look good, but that also provide long-term benefits for residents. As one of the most popular choices of building material for the commercial sector, aluminium is now proving its mettle in the residential market.

Will Jones is architectural advisor at Senior Architectural Systems



DRU Fires and Grate Expectations supply fires to prestigious estate

Four DRU luxury gas fires and one Spartherm inset wood fire have been specified by design & build specialists, Ethos Construction Solutions Ltd and DRU London dealer The Original Grate Expectations for Harford Manor. The mansion and estate, which extends to over 40 acres, has been designed for the ultimate in luxury accommodation and is in one of the most sought-after parts of the south east of England. The developers and installers selected the DRU Metro single sided and three-sided gas fires and a Spartherm inset wood burning fire for their high specifications and 'A' energy ratings. In the case of the gas fires, this included the use of the exclusive DRU PowerVent extended flue system, which meant that there was no restriction on where the fires could be located in the building. In addition, the gas fires can be operated using the unique DRU Eco Wave app for tablets and smart-phones. This feature is in keeping with the overall energy rating of the property, which is designed to be centrally controlled using the latest technology. Ethos project manager Niten Mistry said: 'The DRU and Spartherm fires were selected for their impressive performance and ease of installation. They also contribute to the high quality of the property.'

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EGGER's flagship flooring product, EGGER Protect, is helping UK housebuilders tackle current on-site issues that can cause serious delays. EGGER Protect is the only structural flooring product on the market that can be exposed to the elements for up to 60 days. This takes the pressure off builders dealing with poor weather, material shortages and a lack of skilled tradespeople. This innovative product not only provides protection during the build process but also throughout the life of the property. The permanent surface layers can prevent water damage caused by leaking washing machines and burst pipes which are all too common and can mean costly repairs. EGGER offers a lifetime guarantee for every floor fitted using this Advanced System. During installation, EGGER Joint & Joist D4 adhesive must be used. The correct application of this glue creates a fully sealed working deck, and protection against moisture ingress and heavy site traffic. No joint sealing tape is required. CE and FSC certified, EGGER Protect boards are produced from sustainable raw materials on one of the most sophisticated production lines in Europe. During 2017 EGGER has invested over £10 million within its building products division at its UK headquarters in the North East of England.


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Designer contracts launches new ranges



Designer Contracts – the UK’s largest flooring contractor – has added two new soft carpet ranges to its extensive product portfolio. Valencia is a 100 per cent polypropylene, two ply soft twist range available in eight stylish colours, including of-the-season grey and neutral shades. It comes in four and five metre widths, and is both luxurious and practical, mixing a soft deep pile with hard wearing, stain resistant properties. Magnificence is a luxury, deep pile Saxony carpet, with the same hard wearing properties as Valencia, Magnificence is available in 10 colours, in four and five metre widths, meaning no seams in rooms under five metres wide.

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

Pitchglaze roof window with frameless design



A new, pitched roof extension to a private residence in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex now incorporates a stylish, modern kitchen and a family dining area complete with a lovely garden aspect. The installation of an impactful and contemporary Pitchglaze roof window from Glazing Vision, has enhanced the quality of light in the kitchen and provided for spectacular sky-only views. Access to the kitchen area from the home office and downstairs cloakroom is via a narrow passageway. To prevent this becoming a “dead zone” two traditional roof windows have been installed.

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GOING OFF-GRID

Ian Digby of Calor discusses looks at how alterations to standard housing designs resulting from fuel choice can be reduced for off-grid properties, and the part played by Part L1A of the Building Regulations.

Complying with Part L1A of the Building Regulations ('conservation of fuel and power in new dwellings') is one of the more challenging aspects of modern housebuilding. Because of these challenges, developers have spent a large amount of time and effort in recent years perfecting their standard house type range to deliver compliance in the most cost-effective fashion.

It is estimated that five per cent of new dwellings built each year are unable to connect to the mains gas supply. There are a range of alternative fuel options available to housebuilders – including liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and oil and air source heat pumps (ASHPs). However, the choice of fuel source can have a significant impact on house designs.

OPTING FOR OIL

Traditionally, rural housebuilders would have considered oil heating as the default option for developments beyond the mains gas grid. However, in recent years the number of modifications required to a property heated by oil for it to pass Part L1A have made this an expensive option.

Firstly, because of the high CO₂ emissions of oil in comparison to mains gas, the required changes in the fabric of the building (to reduce the amount of fuel used) means it is very difficult to achieve compliance without installing a significant amount of solar PV panels. The available roof space on smaller properties is often an issue, and in addition, the need to make these roofs south-facing to generate the required amount of electricity makes matters more complex.

This, coupled with the higher price of the oil boiler itself and the need to modify standard internal layouts to accommodate the larger floor-mounted or external boiler, have led to the majority of housebuilders discounting oil as an option.

HIDDEN COSTS

In more recent years, rural housebuilders have moved to air source heat pumps (ASHPs) as an alternative. However, while

there is usually no need to alter the base fabric specification of a property with an ASHP, there are a range of additional operational costs to take into account.

To deliver the best efficiency levels, ASHPs work best at low temperatures, delivering hot water at 35 degrees. To compensate for these low flow temperatures, most installations will require underfloor heating or larger-than-standard radiators to heat the property, which again, is a major, costly deviation from the standard housing design layout.

An ASHP is unable to deliver instantaneous hot water in the same way that a gas combination boiler can for properties of up to four bedrooms, and as such, will always

require a hot water cylinder to be installed into the property. This will likely impact on bedroom space, as an associated cylinder cupboard needs to be fitted.

An ASHP will also require a large external pump, in the style of an air conditioning unit, to be located near the home – almost always attached to the property in the rear garden, detracting from the overall site aesthetics.

It is important for developers to remember that an ASHP uses technology that new home buyers may not be familiar with, and that there are significant operational differences over a gas boiler. An ASHP is designed to maintain house temperature at a constant level, as opposed to a gas boiler, which will quickly bring a house up to temperature on request.

This means new occupiers may struggle to operate the heating system as efficiently as possible, leading to after-sales issues for housebuilders and buyer dissatisfaction.

In addition, due to the significant electricity requirements of a new estate built with ASHPs, it may be a requirement for the developer to cover the cost of upgrading the electric supply to the site, which could include the requirement for a new sub-station.

However, the major drawback to housebuilders of ASHPs is the equipment costs – with a heat pump costing around £3,500 - £4,000 per house. Coupled with the factors



already discussed, this means house-builders could be looking at build cost increases of between £5,000 - £8,000 per property as opposed to mains gas.

PRICE IS RIGHT WITH LPG

In comparison, LPG is the closest alternative to mains gas, and offers the lowest CO₂ emissions of any rural fossil fuel. Fewer modifications are required to pass Part L1A than oil or electric heating, and a developer can save significant build costs by taking a 'fabric first' approach and looking to reduce the CO₂ emitted by the house.

Indeed, low cost energy saving 'bolt ons' such as waste water heat recovery or hi-therm lintels, which typically cost less than £500 per plot, are a far more cost-effective alternative to the costs of Solar PV, and produce the required uplift in SAP to meet Part L1A.

LPG boilers have the added benefit of being exactly the same size and flue clearance of standard mains gas boilers, and therefore, standard housing design layouts can be maintained, with the use of combination boilers on smaller properties.

Major boiler manufacturers also produce LPG-compatible versions of their standard boilers, meaning a housing developer is able to utilise any existing group purchase deals which are available.



COMPLYING WITH PART L1A OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS ('CONSERVATION OF FUEL AND POWER IN NEW DWELLINGS') IS ONE OF THE MORE CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF MODERN HOUSEBUILDING

Typical installation costs on a 30-home development are £500 per plot, which covers the LPG tank, installation, connections, pipework and meters all being fitted onsite. Housebuilders should also allow a budget figure of around £800-£1,000 per property for modification and connection costs when using LPG as opposed to

mains gas, which is a greatly reduced figure in comparison to either oil heating or ASHP.

As the closest alternative to mains gas, it is clear that LPG offers larger cost savings than other non-mains gas fuel options.

Ian Digby is specification manager at Calor

Aquair, a heater for almost every application



Installers or homeowners looking to replace old warm air heating systems with the latest highly energy efficient technology should consider the advantages of the **Johnson & Starley's Aquair Heat** interface unit. An Aquair can replace any warm air heater in a home, fully utilise the existing warm air ducting and be integrated in to almost any centralised heating source. It can be run in conjunction with an existing

wet system and also has the option of supplying unheated air for cooling purposes during the warmer months.

01604 762881 www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk

Electric radiators to new heights



In addition to updating and expanding its Vanguard range of aluminium electric radiators, **Electrorad** has launched a new state-of-the-art Vanguard WiFi range that is one of the first to have voice control compatibility with Amazon Alexa. Vanguard and

Vanguard WiFi offer a wide choice of outputs in 750w, 1200w, 1500w and 2000, and being fully Lot 20 compliant, they feature a number of energy saving controls. These include Virtual Open Window Sensors - to ensure that radiators stop heating when they sense a draft and restart when the window has been closed - and Adaptive Start Control that helps radiators learn when to switch on in order to achieve optimum household comfort.

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Wilo-Stratos MAXO launched



The Wilo-Stratos MAXO has been launched in the UK. The successor to the Wilo-Stratos sets new standards in system efficiency and user-friendliness. The Stratos MAXO is one of the world's first true smart-pump. The addition of the green button is a new feature for the Wilo-Stratos MAXO. Its high degree of connectivity makes the Wilo-Stratos MAXO an extremely flexible

solution, when it comes to integration into a wide range of applications. The analogue and digital interfaces, which are still an optional feature only available via IF-Modules for the Stratos, will now come as standard for the Wilo-Stratos MAXO. For more information head to **Wilo's** website.

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Encapsulating innovation with Kingspan



With the ever-increasing pressure to create more future-proofed, energy efficient properties, the demand for high-performance insulation solutions that are thin yet robust enough to stand up to the construction process has never been greater.

To solve this problem, **Kingspan** has developed the Kingspan OPTIM-R E Roofing System, featuring its innovative encapsulated vacuum insulated panel. The market launch of Kingspan OPTIM-R in 2012 marked the advent for next generation insulation. However, Kingspan OPTIM-R E takes this innovation one step further by completely encapsulating a vacuum insulated panel (VIP) in a high performance PIR insulation board.

01544 387 384 www.kingspaninsulation.co.uk/optim-r

Research links insulation to natural light



A new whitepaper from **Kingspan Insulation** has revealed that insulation specification can have a significant impact of daylight levels within a building. The enhanced thermal performance of Kingspan Kooltherm K15 Rainscreen Board allowed each U-value to be achieved with reduced external wall and reveal depths. The research showed this had a significant impact on daylight levels. Kingspan Kooltherm

K15 Rainscreen Board can therefore provide a thin solution which allows buildings to meet or exceed the minimum daylighting requirements in BS 8206-2: 2008 more efficiently than mineral fibre insulation. This can help to create a light and healthy working environment.

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DON'T FORGET YOUR THERMALS

Karen Everitt of Ravatherm UK explains the importance of correct insulation specification in achieving high thermal performance.

Housebuilding is on the rise. Research suggests that by 2050 there could be a 23 per cent increase in UK households, and the Government has established a target of 300,000 new homes per year across the country to meet this demand.

Despite the requirement to increase housebuilding output, achieving carbon savings in buildings will be key to hitting the UK's legally binding target from the 2008 Climate Change Act of an 80 per cent reduction in carbon emissions by 2050. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) states that 18 per cent of UK carbon emissions come from buildings – most of them homes – with a further 15 per cent of emissions coming from electricity consumed in buildings.

It is therefore important for specifiers and housing developers to know the key considerations when specifying insulation, and how to achieve high thermal performance for low-energy homes.

SUSTAINABLE HOMES

At one time, 'eco' homes were often perceived as being against the norm, but with ever-tightening Building Regulations and mounting pressure to reduce carbon emissions, all newly-constructed dwellings must now consume much less energy in comparison with standard homes built as recently as five years ago.

In England alone, the change from Building Regulation Part L 2010 to Part L 2013 was intended to deliver a 6 per cent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions across all new dwellings through more thermally efficient building fabric. Building a sustainable home can include 'bolt-on' renewable technology – but first and foremost it is about achieving high quality fabric construction that will last for the life of the building, without ever losing its efficiency.

A low-energy home means careful and deliberate specification of building materials that will deliver the required performance – and thermal insulation has a significant role to play.

EXTRUDED POLYSTYRENE

Meeting Building Regulations on paper can be very different from accurately achieving performance on site. Extruded polystyrene (XPS) is an increasingly popular insulation option for specifiers seeking confidence in a material that can be used in demanding conditions and applications, and still deliver good thermal performance. XPS insulation is not only thermally-efficient, easy to install and lightweight, but moisture tolerant too.

With moisture absorption as low as 0.6 per cent by volume, XPS products can be installed in conditions where moisture is present, such as below the damp proof course (DPC) level, or against the ground and to the external side of tanking membranes – all with negligible impact on the performance of the product.

Sustainable construction means more than the performance of the finished building; it also means the responsible manufacture of building materials. XPS solutions – manufactured by a reputable company – should be independently assessed under the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Green Guide to Specification, and should be able to demonstrate and achieve a certified Green Guide rating of at least A, as well as zero ozone depletion potential (ODP) and low global warming potential (GWP).

Housebuilders and developers should also look for XPS insulation products that have been manufactured in a factory with an ISO 14001 environmental management system, which accord with BES 6001 sustainable sourcing, offer Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs), and are 100 per cent recyclable at the end of the building's lifespan.

POSITIONING

Considerations for achieving sustainable, low-energy homes do not stop at the design stage. The position and use of insulation is vitally important to ensure correct thermal performance.

Properly insulated domestic floors are an integral part of high performance building fabric and help to increase the overall comfort for the end user significantly, including through using the heat storage capacity of concrete slabs and screeds where appropriate.

Ground-bearing floors can include insulation either below or above the concrete slab – the latter being ideal for intermittent heating, where a homeowner may only turn on the heating twice a day. The XPS insulation should be installed with a vapour control layer over it. Ideally, the insulation should be positioned above the damp proof membrane, although it is not critical given XPS' tolerance to moisture.

U-VALUE CALCULATIONS

Heat loss through ground floors is unique to each property, being dependent on the size and shape of the floor, as well as the soil type. Thermal transmittance (U-value) calculations should follow the methodology in BS EN ISO 13370, which uses the ratio of the exposed floor perimeter to the floor area because more heat is lost at the edges of a floor than in the centre.

The measurement of the perimeter and area should be to the finished inside surfaces of the perimeter walls enclosing the heated space. Unheated spaces such as porches or garages should be excluded.





Extensions to existing buildings can use the floor dimensions of the new build area only, or the complete building including the extension.

The same standard specifies how U-values should be calculated for basement walls and floors, taking into account the same criteria, while also factoring in the depth of the structure below ground. The calculation of heat loss through a basement wall also considers the insulation specification of the basement floor, so it makes

sense to consider any basement design holistically.

BASEMENT DESIGN

Basements are seeing a resurgence in residential developments. This is particularly true of refurbishment projects, as a result of limited available space to construct above-ground extensions. They can however cause problems if not properly designed and built. Insulation plays a key role in basement design, and there are a

few factors to consider during specification.

Some materials will only be suitable for use on the internal side of the tanking membrane, to avoid exposing them to the ground and moisture. XPS insulation with a compressive strength of 200 or 300 kPa (Kilopascals) can be installed outside of the basement structure and tanking, providing a continuous thermal envelope for the below-ground structure and resisting the loads imposed by the ground.

At the high end of the market, XPS is also ideal for use around swimming pool basins, resisting the loads imposed by the volume of water, and hitting the U-value targets specified in Building Regulations.

FUTURE-PROOFING

With tightening regulations and higher energy efficiency targets to meet in the coming years, it's more important than ever to liaise with a trusted XPS insulation manufacturer which will offer a technical and specification advice, ensuring the building performs as per the specification.

Karen Everitt is marketing manager at Ravatherm UK

Construction membrane delivers thermal efficiency and insulation cost savings

Protect Membranes, UK producer of roofing and construction membranes, has introduced Protect TF InterFoil, a CE marked, highly reflective insulating breather membrane designed for use within a timber frame wall panel to enhance its overall thermal performance. Ideally suited to offsite and modular construction, Protect TF InterFoil features a low emissivity, vapour permeable reflective surface, using the tried and tested technology of TF200 Thermo, which can be installed either side of the insulation in conjunction with a 20mm air cavity. This means the building developer and fabricator can move from more expensive, rigid high-density boards to fibrous or EPS insulants without increasing panel sizes, thereby achieving material cost savings.

When Protect TF InterFoil is used with Protect TF200 Thermo insulating breather membrane on the external face of the sheathing board and Protect VC Foil Ultra insulating vapour control layer on the warm side of 100mm 0.032 lambda insulation within a typical 140mm deep timber stud section, the overall wall construction can achieve U-values as low as 0.18W/m²K. This meets the more onerous Fabric

Energy Efficiency requirements detailed in Building Regulations Part L1A.

John Mellor, Product Manager comments, "With the ongoing material supply and price instability of PIR rigid board insulation, using Protect TF InterFoil as part of a timber frame or modular wall system offers opportunities to make meaningful material savings whilst retaining low U-values, without increasing the size of their panels. Our Technical team offers a full U-value calculation service to demonstrate how using Protect TF InterFoil can benefit the overall build."

Available in different roll sizes, including 2.4m and 1.2m widths and 100m lengths, Protect TF InterFoil is installed with the Protect Cavit-E Tray, an insulation spacer designed to create the 20mm low emissivity airspace within the depth of the wall stud on either or both sides of a fibrous insulation.

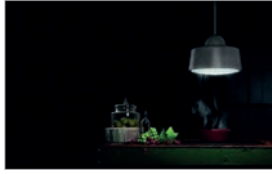
Alternatively, EPS insulation boards from Jablite (JTWS-TF) have integral ribs on both sides which create the required airspaces.

info@protectmembranes.com

www.protectmembranes.com/tfinterfoil



Stunning pendant hoods from BLANCO UK



BLANCO UK has launched the Pendant range of island hoods in answer to today's demands for the ultimate in kitchen focal points. Popular in modern kitchen design, Pendant hoods require no ducting as they are set up to recirculate the air. They also create an impressive focal point in the

kitchen, provide ambient mood lighting, and look particularly effective in pairs over larger cooking areas or just dual sited over a single hob and island worktop. BLANCO's Pendant hood comes in five colours – Pewter, Matt Black, White, Rust and Copper – in an aluminium painted finish and has four speeds, operated manually and by remote control.

www.blanco.co.uk

Brett Martin launches robust lids and frames



Heavy duty, robust and easy-to-fit 50kN! 450mm Lids and Frames have been added to the comprehensive range of Underground, Rainwater and Plumbing systems from **Brett Martin** Plumbing and Drainage. Suitable for residential applications, these hardwearing Lids and Frames offer strength and massive loading capability. Fully compatible with Brett Martin Sfa7 Adoptable and Non-Adoptable Inspection Chambers and manufactured from polypropylene, Brett Martin

Lids and Frames are available in round and square options and feature a webbed rib design for added strength.

028 9084 9999 www.brettmartin.com

Keller Kitchens for the best delivery times



Keller Kitchens not only produces beautiful, smart kitchens, the company also boasts fantastic customer service when it comes to delivery times. Keller Kitchens are manufactured in its own factory in the Netherlands, meaning that the quality of materials and parts are of the highest standard and can be shipped to the customer with ease.

Keller is meeting the market's demand for quality kitchens delivered to customers' homes in record time.

www.kellerkitchens.com

Dry verges to meet and beat BS 8612



Redland, the company that invented dry-fixed roofing systems, has launched two new dry verge products to coincide with the publication of BS 8612: Dry-fixed ridge, hip and verge systems for slating and tiling – the new British Standard which aims to ensure that dry fixed

products are adequately designed and installed to be fit for purpose. Redland's new dry verges – the DryVerge and Rapid DryVerge – are specifically designed to not only meet the requirements of BS 8612, but also to be best in class. Moreover, the dry verges have been designed to be even easier and faster to fix than their predecessors.

01293 666700 www.redland.co.uk/dryverge



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JH Price & Sons achieve classic showcase with Tobermore paving & walling

Laurel Bank is a charming development of distinguished homes nestled in the peace and tranquillity of Moneyreagh village in County Down. Long-standing Northern Ireland housebuilder, JH Price & Sons, designed the 71 homes to the highest specification and having worked with Tobermore on a regular basis over the last two decades, the developer found that Tobermore had the ideal paving and walling products that would create the warm, elegant style desired at Laurel Bank.

Henry Price, Owner at JH Price & Sons, explained more about the project: "Laurel Bank was developed to serve the need for housing in the Moneyreagh area. The location offers the richness of countryside living and the convenience of being just a short drive from the hustle and bustle of Belfast. When it came to sourcing external building products, we wanted to use a combination finish of bricks and blocks to create a unique finish."

JH Price & Sons had traditionally been an advocate of clay bricks but when Henry saw Tobermore's concrete alternatives, this was a game changer as he explained: "I was really impressed with the aesthetics and performance capability of Tobermore's Lansdowne facing



brick and Country Stone Walling and I could see how they would work well together."

Tobermore's Lansdowne facing brick is manufactured with an aged, antique appearance that creates a rich, charming feel. The best iron oxide colour pigments are used to ensure the product colours are strong and rich, and most importantly, that this vibrancy is retained over the years.

Next on the agenda for the external finishes at Laurel Bank was the landscape design, an essential element in creating homes with kerb appeal. Paving was the obvious hard landscap-

ing material for the developer: "I've worked with Tobermore on a number of successful projects over the last 20 years and there have never been any issues. The paving products produced are the best quality in the marketplace. I simply wouldn't go anywhere else for paving.

Penny, a landscape designer at Tobermore, explained the design concept: "With Laurel Bank there was much more freedom and creativity than normally granted with a commercial development due to the trust Henry Price placed in Tobermore. There was a focus on curvature rather than straight lines as the plots on site were not built in straight lines - the use of curved lawns and paving designs helped tie this together."








The four bedroom detached and three bedroom semi-detached homes at Laurel Bank were constructed in a variety of styles. The site is a testament to JH Price & Sons' reputation for attention to detail and superb internal and external finishes and is fantastic showcase for Tobermore paving and walling products.

Keep up to date with Tobermore's latest projects on the new company website.

028 7964 2411 www.tobermore.co.uk

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While cases of theft and robbery have fallen substantially over the last decade, the latest figures show that the number of recorded cases reported to police are, in the short term, on the rise. During the year to September 2017, burglaries were up 8 per cent to 433,110 compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, thefts from a motor vehicle rose 15 per cent to 276,823 in the same period. It is therefore vital that housebuilders and homeowners take steps to improve the security of their properties during the construction phase and beyond.

Building sites are prime targets for thieves, with plenty of expensive tools and materials lying around, so make sure to keep a sharp eye on the security of your site. While checking that gates are fitted with suitable locks may be an obvious step, make sure to check the perimeter of your site on a daily basis as well. Fencing should be fully intact with no bolts, hinges, handles or damaged sections which could work as footholds for entry, or large items such as bins that may have been positioned to provide easy access.

To make sure security isn't being overlooked, introduce a robust security routine, including clear roles and responsibilities. Use chains, bollards, and anchors to secure machinery, and secure storage for power tools when not in use, even during the day. Ensure everything is locked away overnight, and if vehicles are being left on site, make sure to park 'defensively', with doors positioned as close as possible to walls or other vehicles to make access difficult. Consider getting perimeter alarms and site CCTV systems installed.

When it comes to the buildings themselves, be sure to design-in security from the outset and invest in high-quality security hardware that has been independently approved. Ensuring you have the correct locks on windows and doors will not only keep your property safe, it's vital for meeting specified insurance requirements.

A patented lock system that is unique to the property is a worthwhile investment, as keys cannot be copied without proof of ownership. While initial investment in patented or restricted locking systems tends to be higher than 'off-the-shelf' locks, in the long run this could potentially save money.

At the very least, be sure to use products approved by a third party certification agency such as Sold Secure. Their website provides an easy to use tool for checking specific products.

In what is of the most frequently made mistakes, what many people consider to be the most common locks are actually brand names, not types of locks. There is a wide variety of different types of locks on the market all intended for different purposes –

SAFE AS HOUSES

With the number of thefts and burglaries rising, prioritising home security has arguably never been more important. Dr Steffan George of the Master Locksmiths Association offers advice on securing homes during construction and over the long term



so it's vital you check the suitability of specific types. Ideally, seek professional advice from your local Master Locksmiths Association (MLA)-licensed locksmith.

Smart security is growing in popularity, but be careful if you are considering investing in the latest technology. While the UK has for a long time had excellent security standards for mechanical security – including BS 3621, 8621, 10621, BS EN 1303, BS EN 12209 and PAS 24 for complete windows and doors – the first safety standards for smart locks have only just been published. As a result, the smart security industry as it is today has developed without this guidance, and none of the currently available smart locks have yet been tested against the new safety standards. For this reason, the considers smart security to be a secondary security measure and advises against using it as primary security.

Investing in deterrents such as alarms, timer lighting and CCTV is worthwhile. Research has shown that a home without a security system is 300 per cent more likely to be burgled, yet despite this, 70 per cent of homeowners admit they don't have a burglar alarm. A professionally specified and fitted safe is also a great option for keeping unused valuables such as expensive heirlooms and jewellery out of sight.



Security can be a confusing business, and so it is always recommended that you contact your local MLA approved locksmith to give you advice on bespoke security solutions for your property and your requirements, as well as helping with installation. Most importantly, be sure to seek advice from a trusted professional. Unlike other professions, there are no restrictions on who can set themselves up as a locksmith, so quality and expertise can vary significantly.



The MLA is recognised as the only authoritative body for locksmithing by the police, and all of its members undergo strict vetting, including criminal record checks, and undertake regular training, so you can be confident they have the knowledge, experience and integrity to keep your home safe and secure.

Dr Steffan George is managing director of the Master Locksmiths Association



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Helping reduce anti social behaviour



STANLEY Security, one of the UK's leading security providers, has installed new CCTV and intercom systems at a number of residential blocks for property management company Griffin Grays. The result has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour and a more efficient way of working. STANLEY Security has installed new audio intercom systems, featuring

modern vandal proof panels on entrances and new handsets in apartments. It worked closely with Griffin Grays to gain access to apartments with minimal inconvenience or disruption to residents. STANLEY Security has completed work at eight sites to date with a further three underway. Each are under a ten-year contract which includes full service.

www.stanleysecurity.co.uk

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Specialist rooflight designer **Whitesales** has launched the market's first with an internal and external fire rating. Independent testing confirmed that the Em-Glaze FR30's heat transfer is kept below the permissible 180°C for at least 30 minutes. Its elegant, low-profile, flat-glazed design has a fully welded aluminium

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