



The Chancellor's Budget giveaways for housing get a warm industry welcome, with a few caveats



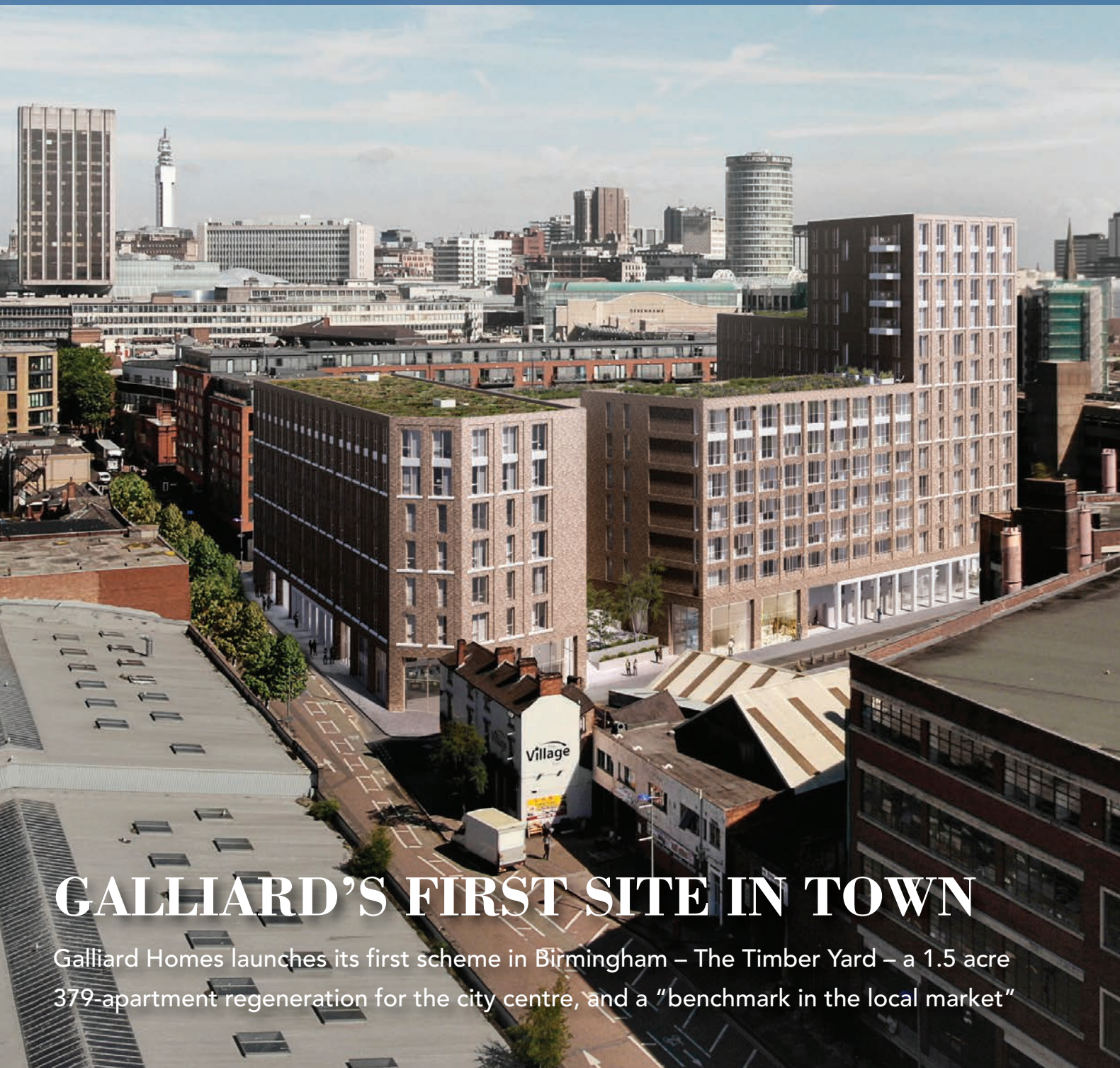
The Social Network: Patrick Mooney says it's time to deliver now the council borrowing cap is gone



Reporting from UK Construction Week on the battle for sites, and the quality agenda, post-Grenfell

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HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



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James Parker

FROM THE EDITOR

At the end of 2017, London Mayor Sadiq Khan announced he was “ripping up planning rules” in order to tackle the housing crisis in the capital. Enshrined in the new London Plan, this included the GLA asking housing developers to build out sites at much higher densities to “substantially increase capacity”.

Small sites would be in focus, and the GLA said it still wished to protect the green belt, while developing more public land. This is despite comments from many corners that building on the green belt is the taboo that needs to be broken in order to develop homes where they are needed.

Together with this, recently Khan announced he would be spending £1bn on 11,000 new council homes for ‘social rent’, no doubt spurred by the Chancellor finally removing the cap on council borrowing, plus 3,750 further homes to help alleviate the crisis for buyers.

The big issue here is what greater density means in practice. While it is laudable, and probably essential to use sites more efficiently, and even in some cases cram on far more homes than would have been seen previously, the results may challenge traditional homeowner expectations of what a home looks like.

Low-rise blocks could become a much more common sight in suburbs traditionally used to serried ranks of semi-detacheds, though if done properly, in the right places (e.g. for transport links), perhaps this could be a far better model in terms of meeting all the goals. Much of western Europe has used this model for recent urban housing, and at the right quality it works well.

London’s famous Georgian town houses created urban blocks that had pretty high density levels, and a good standard of internal quality for residents. However since the 1960s high density developments have suffered from a stigma due to various factors from build quality to the resulting social issues of poorly-planned estates.

There are further challenges on density where people are living much closer together; if the build fabric doesn’t provide adequate quality levels, the issue of noise from neighbouring properties can go beyond nuisance, to a cause of distress.

The question is, and it’s a widespread one in the post-Grenfell world, are Regs robust enough? This is arguably an even bigger issue when it comes to converting houses into flats – which will need to continue if the goal is higher density – and implementing the Future High Street announced in the Budget, turning empty retail units into homes.

The London Plan includes new expectation levels on design quality, particularly on space standards, to avoid the temptation among housebuilders to see ‘higher density’ as ‘smaller’. The GLA “expects councils to refuse any applications that come forward with homes that do not meet his new standards”.

London’s population is growing by 70,000 a year, and as the results of the Letwin Review kick in we could see councils start allocating huge sites in areas of high demand. Will the quality be robustly enforced alongside the push to deliver the sort of homes these people need?

James Parker

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ON THE COVER



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GALLIARD'S FIRST SITE IN TOWN

Galliard Homes launches its first scheme in Birmingham – The Timber Yard – a 1.5 acre 379-apartment regeneration for the city centre, and a “benchmark in the local market”

The Timber Yard - Galliard Homes & Apsley House Capital go to page 22

Hammond's Budget giveaways for housebuilding welcomed, with caveats

Chancellor Phillip Hammond made several announcements of increased funding for housing and construction in a Budget speech that contained more positive news than many had expected.

Key construction sector announcements included a removal of stamp duty for all first-time buyers of shared equity homes of up to £500,000. A further 500K would be put into the Housing Infrastructure Fund, designed to see 650,000 homes built from the total £5.5bn investment.

There was also announcement of a £675m Future High Streets fund to allow councils to turn under-used retail units in town centres into housing and workspace.

Re-announcements included confirming of guarantees of up to £1bn of bank loans for smaller housebuilders, and a removal of the borrowing restriction on local authorities for building homes.

There would also be a "new wave" of strategic partnerships with housing associations in England that would deliver 13,000 homes, said Hammond.

INDUSTRY REACTS

Industry reaction to the Budget announcement was largely favourable, though criticisms and questions remained.

Commenting on the Future High Streets fund, Brian Berry, chief executive of the FMB, said: "It is important that the Chancellor has recognised the importance of investing in our high streets. It is estimated that as many as 300,000 to 400,000 new homes alone could be created by making use of empty spaces above shops on our high streets – spaces just waiting to be turned into residential accommodation. There is a pressing need to re-invent many of our town centres in light of changing patterns of retail and leisure. The Government should be applauded for its ambition to safeguard the life of our high streets."

He added: "Retail will always be an important element of vibrant high streets, but there is plenty we can do on a small scale to help convert unused and under-used space in to attractive residential units. This will both boost the supply of new homes and help breathe new life back into our high streets. What we must avoid is perfectly good space lying empty and achieving nothing in terms of boosting the local economy or housing individuals."

Carl Dyer, head of planning at Irwin Mitchell, was also glad to see the proposals to build above shops, but noted its shortfalls: "At last: a sensible planning proposal, albeit



a modest one. Converting redundant shops to homes is a "win-win" proposition: assets which are no longer used can be converted to address a separate problem without putting pressure on green field land.

"All that said, this alone is not going to make a major difference to the housing supply figures. 2017 was a bad year for retailing, with nearly 6,000 shops closing. Not every vacant shop will be suitable or viable for housing use. Even if as many as half of the 2017 losses were to be converted, that would only be an extra 1 per cent towards the government's 300,000 a year housing target."

Hew Edgar, RICS head of policy, welcomed the "emphasis on the UK high street", but raised concerns over the lack of mention of Brexit and reforms to the Permitted Development Rights (PDR) regime: "It covered many bases, but this Budget did not quite live up to the Chancellor's claim that it would prepare the UK "for every eventuality". The Chancellor opted to look inward and tackle domestic issues, but there was very little mention of Brexit.

"Having undertaken research, RICS has concerns over further reforms to the PDR regime, which has already seen significant extensions. Reforming the planning system has been attractive to policymakers, however, caution must be taken to ensure quality of homes is not sacrificed for quantity and pace of delivery. In short, PDR extensions could ease the UK housing crisis, but bypassing regulations should be carefully considered if we want to keep the quality of new build homes to an acceptable standard. There is no reason why we can't have both quality and quantity when it comes to new homes."

Justin Gaze, head of residential develop-

ment land at Knight Frank, said that the "much needed clarity" on Help to Buy was a positive from the Budget: "No industry should be reliant on government assistance indefinitely," he said, "so the decision by ministers to restrict the scheme to first time buyers with regional purchase price caps is a sensible one. Some 81 per cent of equity loans since 2013 have been taken out by first-time buyers."

"However, added Gaze, "the 'deposit gap' that the Help to Buy equity loan scheme was established to overcome is still very much a problem. U.K. house prices are 37 per cent higher than when the scheme was introduced in 2013 and the mortgage market for those with only a 5 per cent deposit remains very thin. For prospective buyers, finding the funds for a deposit will remain the biggest barrier to home ownership."

Melanie Leech, chief executive of the British Property Federation, welcomed the recommendations of the Letwin Review noted in the Budget, and in particular, "his focus on the need for a more diverse, multi-tenure approach to large sites."

She said: The benefits will be three-fold, both helping to address market absorption rates and deliver homes quicker and help to create more sustainable places for different demographics and socio-economic backgrounds, fostering a greater sense of community. In addition, adding a tenure such as build to rent to a development site brings with it an investor with a long term interest.

"The Review also recognised the skills crisis in which we find ourselves. Time is of the essence, and whilst we applaud the Government's intention to take a few months to consider the response to the wider Review, this is an area in which we need urgent action to sure that we can hit the 300,000 target."

Government proposes restrictions on new leaseholds

Proposals suggest the majority of new build houses should be sold as freehold, with new leases capped at £10.

While leasehold generally applies to flats with shared spaces, a number of developers have increasingly been selling houses on these terms, which places additional financial burdens on buyers through surcharges such as ground rent.

Communities Secretary James Brokenshire has launched a consultation on such plans to improve the leaseholder sector for prospective homeowners.

Brokenshire explained: "Unfair ground rents can turn a homeowner's dream into a nightmare by hitting them in the back pocket, and making their property harder to sell.

He added: "That's why I'm taking concrete action to protect homeowners and end unscrupulous leasehold practices that can cost tenants hundreds of pounds."

Khan funds £10m boost to London's housing and planning teams

A new £10m fund to boost London councils' housing and planning teams has been launched by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

According to the Mayor, over the last eight years central Government cuts have seen council budgets for planning and development fall by 50 per cent in London. He believes this has held back housing growth, and particularly plans to build new council homes.

Sadiq's new Homebuilding Capacity

Fund is professed to allow councils to bid for up to £750,000 each to boost their housing and planning teams. This could include hiring new staff to lead council housebuilding projects and develop new masterplans.

Khan explained: "Despite wanting to do far more, councils have been hamstrung by swingeing cuts from Government for far too long. My new Homebuilding Capacity Fund won't reverse those cuts, but it will help ambitious councils to enhance their capacity to deliver large-scale new-build programmes.

"I am able to do this thanks to the business rates devolution deal between the capital and central Government – giving us more control to spend more money on the things that matter most to Londoners."

The Homebuilding Capacity Fund is being funded through the Business Rates Retention Pilot announced at last year's Autumn Budget. This sees the capital retain 100 per cent of any increase in business rate receipts above the Government's baseline during the financial year 2018/2019.

Funding released to remove high-rise cladding

An estimated £400m to remove and replace unsafe aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding systems on social sector high-rise housing has been released by the Government.

In total, 12 local authorities and 31 housing associations in England have been told that they have been allocated money in order to remove and replace unsafe ACM cladding on social buildings which are 18 metres or higher.

According to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government figures, over 75 per cent of social housing buildings with unsafe ACM cladding have completed remediation, or are currently removing and replacing the cladding, plans are in place for the remaining 25 per cent.

Secretary of State for Communities, James Brokenshire explained: "We are doing the right thing by residents and fully funding the replacement of unsafe ACM cladding in social housing buildings 18 metres or above."

As to the private sector, he praised some housebuilders approach to the removal of

ACM, while criticising schemes that would put costs on residents: "I want to see landlords protect leaseholders from these costs. I am pleased that a number have stepped forward to do so, including Barratt Developments, Legal & General, Taylor Wimpey, Mace and Peabody. However, there are some who are not engaging in this process. If they don't, I have ruled nothing out."

Sector growth predictions downgraded

Growth predictions have been downgraded for the UK's construction sector in 2019, amid concerns around Brexit uncertainty and ongoing delays in the delivery of major infrastructure projects.

The Construction Products Association's (CPA) Autumn Forecasts anticipate growth will remain flat in 2018, and only rise by 0.6 per cent in 2019, a downward revision from its previous estimate of 2.3 per cent.

Despite a 'weakened' market, private housing continues to be a key growth sector for the construction industry, with first-time buyer demand enabled by the Help to Buy scheme. Over the last 12 months, equity loans accounted for almost one-third of all housebuilding sales, in particular sustaining demand for housebuilding in the north and midlands, thereby offsetting falls in London and the South East. The sector's output is forecast to rise 5 per cent in 2018, and 2 per cent in 2019.

The infrastructure sector also remains a primary driver of growth for the whole construction industry, with output forecast to hit a historic high of £23bn by 2020, driven by large projects such as HS2 and Hinkley Point C. However, concerns remain about the Government's ability to deliver major infrastructure projects without the cost overruns and delays seen recently on Crossrail. Caution surrounds the forecast, and growth in the sector has been revised down to 8.7 per cent in 2019, from its previous forecast of 13 per cent.

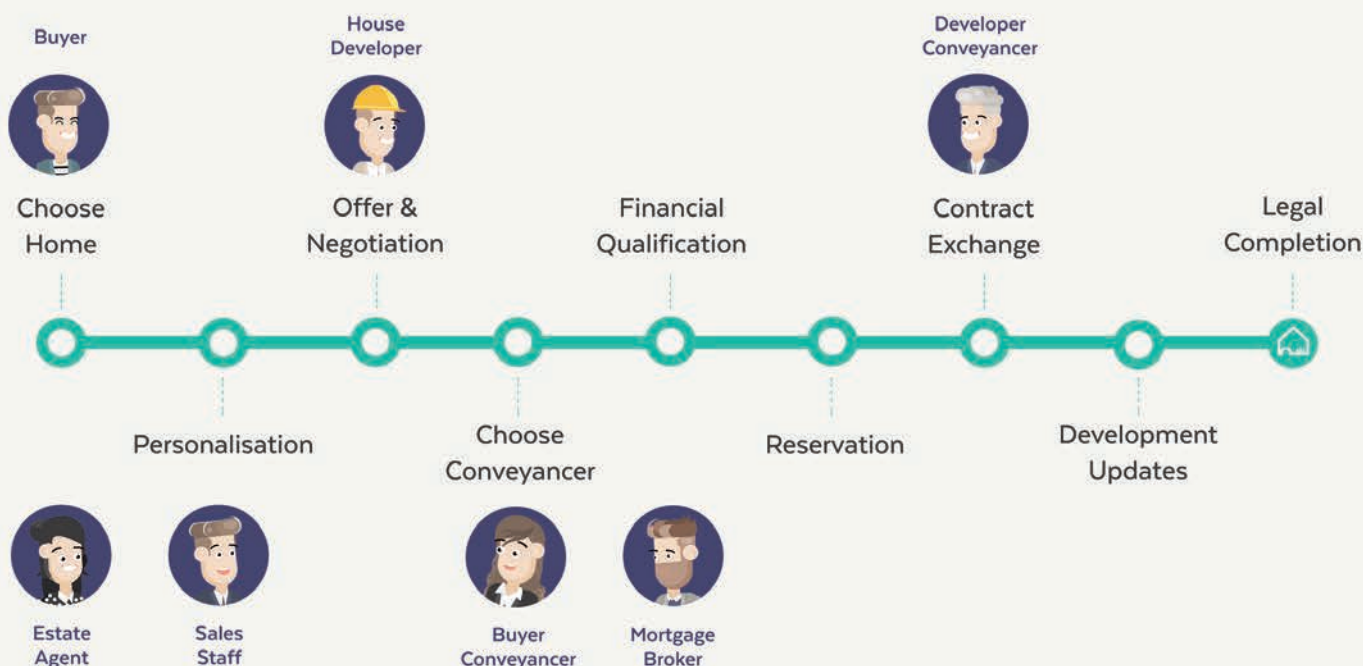
Brexit uncertainty continues to drive expectations of the sharpest construction decline in the commercial sector, particularly expected to be felt in the offices subset. Investors have reportedly signalled the uncertainty is too high to justify significant up-front investment in new floor space for a long-term rate of return, and output is expected to fall 10 per cent in 2018 and a further 20 per cent in 2019.

A Message to House Developers










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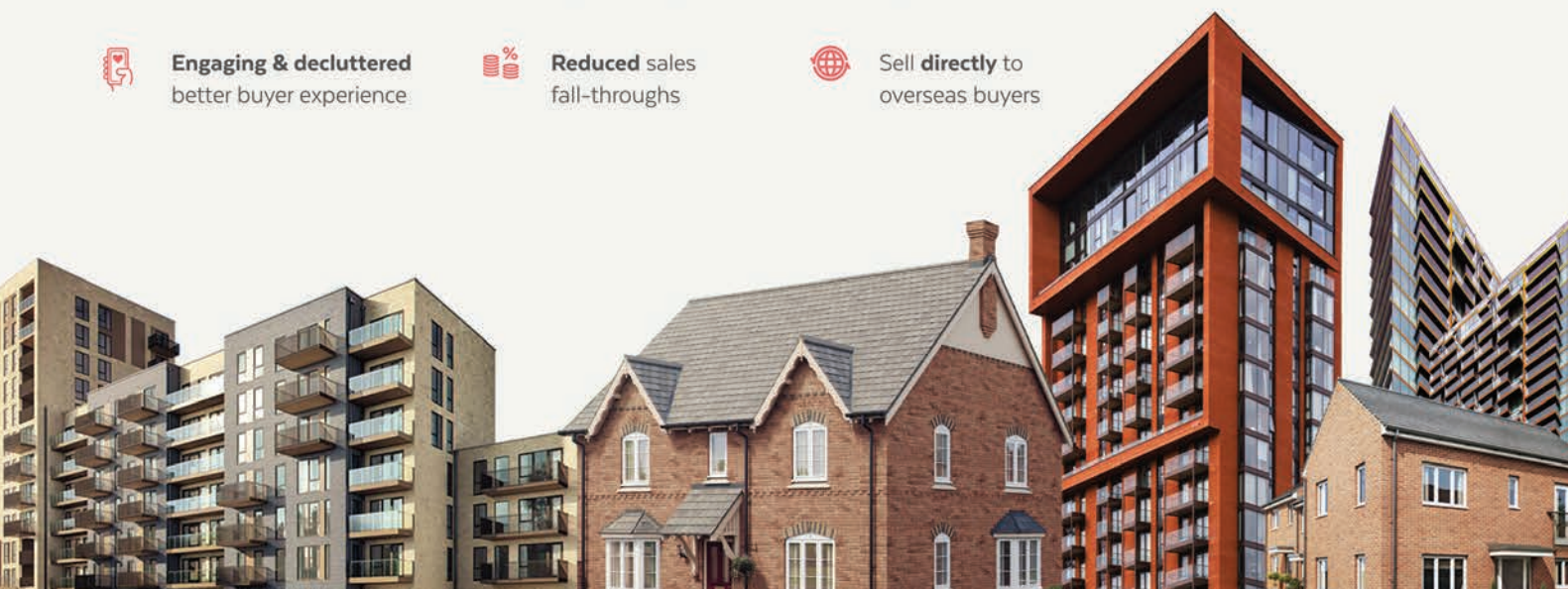
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Structural Timber Awards winners announced

The winners of the 2018 Structural Timber Awards were announced at an awards ceremony at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham, held in October.

Hosted by compere Mark Durden-Smith, the winners were chosen from nearly 250 submissions. The Macallan Distillery was the 'big winner' of the night, awarded the Winner of Winners, as well as triumphing in two other categories.

The head of the judging panel and chief executive of the Structural Timber Association, Andrew Carpenter said of the night: "The depth of expertise across all categories was impressive and the exceptional number of entries clearly demonstrates the upturn in the industry. The Structural Timber Awards is a high-point in the construction industry calendar and it is truly inspiring to see so much activity in the sector."

THE FULL LIST OF TIMBER AWARD WINNERS:

- Architect of the Year: Chadwick Dryer Clarke for The Stephen Perse Foundation Sports & Learning Building
- Client of the Year: Bloomberg LLP for Bloomberg European HQ
- Commercial Project of the Year: Heyne Tillett Steel & Studio RHE for The Import Building
- Contractor of the Year: Balfour Beatty for Abbey Wood
- Custom & Self-Build Project of the Year: STREIF UK for Skyfall
- Education Project of the Year: Eckersley O'Callaghan for Freeman's School
- Engineer of the Year: Arup for The Macallan Distillery
- Installer of the Year: L&S Baucon GmbH for The Macallan Distillery
- Low Energy Project of the Year: Ruth Butler Architects for Hampshire Passivhaus
- Pioneer Award: Urban Splash for HoUse
- Private Housing Project of the Year: Barratt Homes Yorkshire East Division for St Wilfrids Walk Development

- Product Innovation Award: Moduloft for Chippenham Bungalow
- Project of the Year: AKT II & Fosters & Partners for Bloomberg European HQ
- Project or Construction Manager of the Year: Barratt Homes Yorkshire East Division - Mark Greenley, Site Manager
- Retail & Leisure Project of the Year: Metsä Wood for Center Parcs, Elveden Forest
- Social Housing Project of the Year: CCG & Stora Enso for Ellerslie Road Development
- Best Use of SIPs: Innovaré Systems for Glasdir School
- Best Use of Solid Wood: METSÄ WOOD for Center Parcs, Elveden Forest
- Best Use of Timber Frame: Stewart Milne Timber Systems & Barratt Homes Yorkshire East Division for Barratt's St Wilfrids Walk Development
- Winner of Winners: Arup, L&S Baucon GmbH, Robertson, Wiehag GmbH & Rogers Stirk Harbours + Partners for The Macallan Distillery

European Commission backs US trade tariffs concerns

As part of its concerns about the US tariffs on steel and aluminium, the European Commission has expressed support to the European Union of House Builders and Developers (UEPC).

Cecilia Malmström has told that the EU 'strongly backs' the UEPC's call to stop the trade dispute between the United States and EU getting out of control, in order to prevent long-term damage to the EU's construction sector.

EU Commissioner Malmström told Marc Pigeon, president of the UEPC: "I fully agree with you that collaboration between the United States and the European Union is essential for the stability of trade flows and the multilateral trading system...it is clear that an escalation of trade tensions...would have a significant impact on the global trading system and the world economy."

Marc Pigeon said: "UEPC applauds Commissioner Malmström for stressing the role that EU developers and house builders

have to play in supporting the European economy and resolving the affordability crisis in the EU housing market. UEPC and its members will continue to lead the way in finding innovative solutions to support prospective homeowners, through working closely with the EU Institutions."

Homeowners reveal their favourite solutions to the housing crisis

Building more co-living developments and micro-homes in urban areas tops the list of people's preferred solutions to the housing crisis, while building on the greenbelt was rarely favoured, according to new research from the Federation of Master Builders.

The FMB asked 2,000 homeowners across the UK if they believed there is a housing shortage, and if so, how best to address it. The survey found that 66 per cent of respondents believe there is a shortage of housing in the UK.

When asked for views on the most appropriate solutions to the crisis, the most common answers were to build more co-living developments (33 per cent), more micro homes in urban areas (31 per cent), more granny flats (31 per cent), extend permitted development rights (27 per cent), encourage more multi-generational living (24 per cent), excavate or convert more basements underneath existing properties (18 per cent), or the least favoured, build on the green belt (17 per cent).





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'Quality in Construction Post-Grenfell'

Housebuilder & Developer's Jack Wooler reports on the key sessions from the industry's leading event

A group of industry experts met at UK Construction Week in October to discuss how to address quality in construction after the fire at Grenfell Tower.

The panel included Peter Caplehorn, deputy chief executive and policy director at the Construction Products Association (CPA); Geoff Wilkinson, managing director at Wilkinson Construction Consultants Limited; Anne Power, professor of social policy at the London School of Economics (LSE); Claire Curtis-Thomas, CEO at the British Board of Agreement (BBA); and a representative from The Fire Protection Association (Neil Cheyne / Howard Passey? - Jonathan wasn't there, could put 'a representative').

Caplehorn said that while everyone in the industry was "appalled" after the event, up until the incident, the Government were arguing that Building Regulations were just 'red tape'. "We are just about getting to the end of discovering how big the problem is," Caplehorn said, adding: "Now, we need to move forward."

According to Geoff Wilkinson, of Wilkinson Construction Consultants, the issue is that the industry "all need to work together," which he says is why events such as UK Construction Week are "so important." He continued: "This is not just about cladding, it's about the way the industry operates."

LSE professor Anne Power told the audience that in the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower, corners were cut in order to reduce the council's bill, along with unqualified people being hired and elements of fire safety such as emergency landings left unchecked. She believes there needs to be onsite supervision for everything necessary to keep a building safe.

According to Power, the industry has failed to treat multi-storey residential blocks differently to the way we treat houses.

However, BBA CEO Claire Curtis-Thomas asked, "Where is the money going to come from?" She referred not only to buildings with flammable cladding, but the "thousands of buildings at risk" besides those. "You all painted quite a bleak picture," said session chair Steph McGovern, then asking the panel, "where do we go from here?"

In response, Caplehorn said the industry has been in "free-fall" since Grenfell. He believes it's "not right to say nothing's happened;" things are in motion, though perhaps not as quickly as they should be. He cited the need for culture change in the industry and "some sort of outside enforcement," perhaps shifting towards a rating system which would be more akin to that in the food industry.

Curtis-Thomas concluded: "We all want to do the right thing, but it comes down to money." When an audience member asked if perhaps educating tenants on the consequences of the safety hazards so that they may act themselves, Power said that the inhabitants of Grenfell Tower had been speaking out about the dangers of their building for years, but "nobody listened."

Greenspec's Patience, on the impact of modern construction materials

The world is running short of many construction materials we take for granted, and an energy efficient circular economy is vital to a sustainable future, that was the view of Sandy Patience of Greenspec at UK Construction Week.

Speaking at Surface & Materials Hub, Patience told the audience of the many shortages the world is experiencing, from rare earth elements to helium, and water.

Patience spoke of the lack of efficiency in many of the products often used in construction, such as bricks, concrete, steel and aluminium, which all take up a great deal of energy to produce, and are currently reliant on fossil fuels.

Timber however, takes up much less energy, Patience told the audience, and is far more carbon efficient. He listed many low-impact, low power materials that he believes the industry should adopt, including CLT, foam glass insulation, recycled plastic products, recycled cellulose insulation, lime mortar, cork insulation, clay blocks, timber windows, and wood fibre insulation.

Besides the carbon issues, he also discussed the effect of both procuring some of these products, and disposing of them. There are huge levels of landfill in construction waste, and the production and extraction of the materials can cause 'catastrophic' consequences to animal habitats and lives, as well as those of the humans living near or working in these environments.

Along with this, he criticised a lack of care given towards the thousands of new compounds made every year, with very little research into their carcinogenic effects. Frequently, but slowly, he said, we are finding out that these new compounds can come with dire consequences. Compounds such as asbestos, chlorine and formaldehyde have more famously been known to cause issues, but Patience added that even a widely used material such as PVC is a compound of the known human carcinogen vinyl chloride (VC).



'Where Can We Build More Homes?'

From homes above shops, to building over the UK's railway lines, a panel of industry experts met at UK Construction Week to discuss the crucial issue of where the industry can build, in order to meet the Government's 300,000 homes target.

Speaking at the Regeneration Hub were Brian Berry, CEO of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB); Julia Riddle, director at Castle Planning; Bill Price, director at WSP; John Patch, technical consultant at the Association of Specialist Underpinning Contractors (ASUC); Willie Watt, director at Nicoll Russell Studios Architects; and chair Rolf Neilsen, associate partner at C.F. Møller Architects.

Brian Berry was the first to speak, beginning by noting that 1967 was the last time the country was building 300,000 homes a year, citing a complex planning system, tough land acquisition, a fall in SME builders, and the growing skills crisis as some of the reasons behind the industry's current slower pace.

Berry believes that building above shops in UK high streets could provide the space for a significant number of new homes, as evidenced in the FMB report 'Homes On Our High Streets.' While he said that there are many challenges involved, with expenses such as new access, fire control and acoustic insulation, Berry believed that there are 'untapped' opportunities across the country. He also added that town centre homes can fit a wide variety of demographics, including older people needing nearby amenities, and younger residents in terms of the night life. As shops are shutting across the UK, Berry hoped that high streets could be reinvented as living, entertainment and food hubs in market towns.

Bill Price followed Berry, discussing how building over railways could provide a large

amount of space in dense areas such as London. The suggestion didn't come without its caveats, Price listing the dangers of trains running off of tracks, fire, noise and vibrations as issues that must be dealt with to build above rail lines.

The benefits he mentioned however were that there is no extra land required, and the new structures can create an attractive junction across the tracks to join up the city. He mentioned 'overbuild' projects that provide examples of success in this area, including Royal Mint Gardens at the Docklands Light Railway station, a development above Twickenham rail station, and a 50-storey residential block over the rail tracks at Principal Place, Shoreditch, near Liverpool Street Station.

According to John Patch, utilising

brownfield land is the only way to meet the targets. He referred to figures from the CPRE report, 'From Wasted Space to Living Spaces,' which reported that councils have identified the capacity for at least 1 million new homes on brownfield land. He suggested three reasons that may be holding up the development of brownfield land: planning, fiscal issues, and site conditions. Patch reported however that the tools to deal with new foundations have vastly improved over the last 10 years, and have become far more cost-effective.

As a director at a planning consultancy firm, Riddle acknowledged that the challenge of planning was mentioned by each panel member. She said that the Government is clearly pro the delivery of new homes, and planning policy should further indicate this. Riddle argued however that different councils often have different issues with planning, and local pressures will frequently stop building projects in their tracks if they are deemed unsuitable for the area by locals.



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INDUSTRY MOVERS



Mike Huddleston

Edenstone Homes

Edenstone Homes has appointed Mike Huddleston as build director to support its ambitious growth plans. Huddleston has 20 years' experience in the housebuilding sector.

In his new role with the Magor-based housebuilder, he will oversee construction work at developments across south Wales and the south west of England.

Huddleston started as a trainee with Beazer Homes in 1999. The company was acquired by Persimmon in 2001 and he worked his way up the career ladder, progressing to site manager and then contracts manager in 2014. During his time as a site manager he achieved recognition for quality from the LABC, Zurich and the NHBC.

Commenting on his appointment, Huddleston said: "Edenstone is fast gaining a reputation as a forward-thinking homebuilder with a bright future ahead and I was excited at the prospect of being part of the business."

Martin Taylor, managing director for Edenstone Homes, said: "Mike's experience as an award-winning site manager will be an asset to the business and he is a welcome addition to the Edenstone team. Under his supervision I am confident that we will be able to rapidly increase the number of homes we build to help address the housing shortage."



New team members at Duchy Homes North West

Duchy Homes

Luxury housebuilder Duchy Homes has welcomed eight new faces to its north west division as it prepares for its growing number of developments across Cheshire and Lancashire.

Andrew Darbyshire has been appointed as technical manager to oversee a smooth planning and design process. He will work closely with Lorna Ankers who has joined as engineering manager to ensure the most cost-effective engineering solutions are achieved.

Adrian Murphy has been appointed as quantity surveyor, ensuring the procurement and valuations processes are accurately managed. Keith Edwards has joined from Story Homes as construction manager.

Carl Knights and Chris Pickup have joined the team as site managers and will be responsible for delivering houses on-programme and maintaining a high standard of build quality and health and safety. Supporting Knights will be new assistant site manager Samantha Torevell, who has a background in civil engineering and construction, as well as project management experience.

Finally, Shirley Andrews has been appointed to the sales team, bringing with her "significant new build sales experience".

Joseph Homes

Joseph Homes, a developer of residentially led-mixed use schemes in London has appointed Michael Bryn-Jones as managing director.

Bryn-Jones brings over 30 years' experience in residential to the firm.

Commenting on his decision to join Joseph Homes, he said: "The spirit of exploring new ideas, experimenting with new techniques and pushing industry norms is something I really identify with. Property is an entrepreneurial business, and you have to set your standards high, then work to surpass them."

Low Carbon Construction

Offsite construction developer Low Carbon Construction (LCC) has appointed Gary Farquhar as bespoke construction manager, as the implementation of its 'Offsite/Onsite' SIPs Volumetric House Manufacturing methodology approaches.

Farquhar will be overseeing the bespoke SIPs construction projects undertaken by LCC, utilising his valuable set of skills stemming from 27 years' experience with the construction industry, including more than 10 years on site followed by design, project and contract management positions.



Paula Purdy

Octopus Property

Property lender Octopus Property has appointed Paula Purdy as business development manager, North of England.

Purdy brings over 17 years of residential, commercial, buy-to-let and bridging lending experience. She joins Octopus Property from Shawbrook Bank, where she was head of sales, Residential Mortgages. Purdy will be "responsible for deepening existing relationships with introducers".



Stuart Gibbons

Lovell

Stuart Gibbons has been appointed regional managing director for Lovell's London business. He brings with him 35 years of experience.

Lovell managing director Steve Coleby said: "We're delighted to welcome Stuart, who possesses a formidable industry track record, to lead our London team."



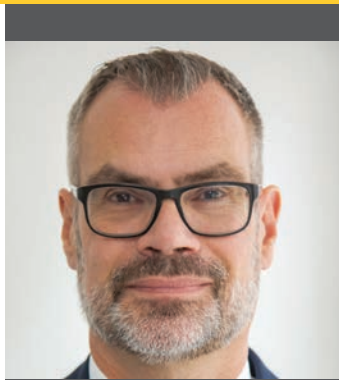
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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

A TOOL THEFT SPIKE

Brian Berry, CEO of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), looks at the worrying rise in tool thefts across the UK, and strategies on how to prevent it happening.

Tradespeople across the UK are losing out on thousands of pounds at the hands of tool thieves. Recent research from the FMB has found that more than half of builders in the UK have been victim of tool theft at least once. Police figures suggest that a van is broken into and tools stolen every 23 minutes in the UK. This problem is reported to be getting worse, with a two-thirds rise in reported cases between 2014/15 and 2016/17.

This latest research from the FMB explores the different ways tool thieves commonly target builders. Tools are being stolen from vans and directly from construction sites, with some builders even being assaulted by the thieves. Nearly half of victims had their van's side panel or door broken or pierced and prised open. A quarter had their van's windows smashed and doors opened from the dashboard; nearly as many had their locks picked.

The impact of this on the nation's smaller building firms and self-employed tradespeople can be seriously disruptive at a time when other pressures are already mounting. The most recent State of Trade Survey from the FMB shows that growth among construction SMEs slowed in most parts of the UK in the third quarter of this year. The cost of doing business continues to shoot up for small builders and they are having to content with an ever-worsening skills crisis too. They could do without criminals specifically targeting them and the tools they need to earn a living. At its most devastating, tool theft can run a tradesperson out of business. Not only is there a high cost in time and money to replace these expensive tools, and to fix the damage caused to their vans, but without the right tools, firms are simply unable to work.

There are some simple steps builders can take to stop these thieves. Ideally, everybody should be taking their tools inside at night, yet according to our research just 20 per cent of builders do this. Many tool thefts happen under the cover of darkness and so the FMB is urging firms whenever they can to move tools from vans, which are much more vulnerable targets, into the safety of their homes or offices. If that's not possible, as it's often not, then the next best thing is to install extra locks or safes in the van, and always try to park against a wall.

However, even when taking these precautions, thefts still regularly occur. That's why it's also important to put measures in place that give the best chance of recovering any stolen tools. Installing an affordable CCTV system is one option, but builders should also, wherever possible, overtly brand their items with company details. A good tip is to brand tools in both an obvious, visible place and one that is more difficult to find. This means that even if thieves sand down the markings, tradespeople can still prove the tools belong to them if they're recovered by the police. They should also register their tool serial numbers on an online database.

The FMB is trying to raise awareness of this issue to help reduce the negative impact this problem can have on many hard-working members of our industry. We are calling on the general public and tradespeople alike to be extra-vigilant about this type of crime and report any suspicious activity to the police. We are also calling on the courts to recognise the negative impact this crime can have and take this into account when cases are brought before it. Together we can help to fight back against the criminals targeting our industry.

POLICE FIGURES SUGGEST THAT A VAN IS BROKEN INTO AND TOOLS STOLEN EVERY 23 MINUTES IN THE UK



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A CHINESE TAKEAWAY FOR THERESA?

According to Riccardo Dawson of new-build sales platform Yourkeys, overseas buyers should be thanked, not taxed, for kick-starting housing developments and boosting the overall number of new-build properties.

In political parlance, the housing market is broken. And the party leaders are vying to show they can fix it. The problems are several – a declining rate of homeownership, rising rents, decreasing affordability for first-time buyers and renters, and growing homelessness.

The fundamental cause is also well known — a long-running under-supply of new build housing. Like its predecessors, this Government has tinkered with the planning system, and most recently (and more successfully) spurred housing output with its Help to Buy programme. However, Theresa May's plan to slap a stamp duty surcharge on foreign buyers – which she announced at her party conference in September – is, in our opinion, playing political poker, and was merely a response to largely uninformed populist demand.

The PM saw Jeremy Corbyn's "Set councils free to borrow and build" and raised his "New tax on wealthy Brits' second homes" with "Up to 3 per cent extra stamp duty on Jonny Foreigner." Lest anyone object at what might be market interference or a xenophobic manoeuvre, the extra revenue (like Labour's) would be earmarked for homelessness.

Conservative Party aides claim their policy shift is evidence-based, citing research by York University using historical HM Land Registry and census data. The study inferred that swathes of new homes and apartments were being left vacant, with foreign buyers, being twice as likely to be 'buy to leave' customers as UK buyers.

This 'evidence' is not only skewed, but factually inaccurate, as the rate of that happening is both minuscule and identical for both groups. The more recent report from the London School of Economics concluded: "There was almost no evidence of units being left entirely empty – certainly less than 1 per cent and units 'bought for let' had very high occupancy

rates." Furthermore, our research identified that in fact, the majority of sales to Chinese buyers, were 'buy to live,' as those homes were purchased for their children attending UK universities, which clearly generates enormous revenues for 'UK plc'.

This critical role of overseas investors therefore completely debunks the myth that 'foreign buyers are bad', and it is our assertion that national policy shouldn't be founded on what may be happening in a few prime London postcodes.

Critically, the LSE research also highlights how foreign investment kick-starts our country's housing development and states: "Sales to overseas buyers accelerate development through their impact on developers' decisions to build, ultimately increasing the supply of overall units and more importantly, providing greater affordable housing."

Counter-intuitively, overseas buyers – mostly from Asia – are more comfortable buying off-plan without even requiring a visit to a marketing suite. This clearly requires a higher risk appetite, but they are comforted through the strength of the UK legal system. Developer sales pipelines depend on these pre-sales, particularly during the first phase, to then unlock subsequent funding, and ensure the development actually gets off the ground.

Moreover, international buyers have been the key to unlocking stalled sites, with countless London residential developments depending on this crucial source of funding. The LSE's conclusions stated: "Overseas investment has had a positive net effect on the availability to Londoners of new housing, both private and affordable."

With that in mind, CBRE has estimated that all the Chinese buyers who bought UK properties, are only a tiny fraction of the pent-up demand of potential buyers for UK homes. This is largely due to the UK's high rental yields, sound legal system, stable government, and other cultural factors. Not

least, Premiership football – after London, the cities most popular with Chinese buyers are Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle and Birmingham, though the interest goes nationwide. However, if punitive taxes are introduced, then it is very easy for them to switch their allegiance to a more tax-friendly country like the US.

All this chimes with our own research and is supported by evidence on the ground from Galliard Homes, one of the UK's largest house developers. Their chairman, Stephen Conway, states: "Off-plan sales are vital in securing funding for our developments. We have long recognised the value of Far Eastern investment in the UK housing market and cannot overstate the importance of demand from, in particular, Chinese customers who are currently our main source of off-plan buyers. That is why we now employ Mandarin and Cantonese speakers in our sales team and have translated our on-line sales platforms. In simple terms, without our Chinese customers we would build far less."

This underlines the huge opportunity that the Chinese market could help boost the post-Brexit, 'open-for-business' Britain, sorely needed in the residential sector.

Our Yourkeys platform will include the Chinese language from Q1 2019, which will streamline the pre-sale, off-plan buying process, to encourage Chinese buyers to place 30 per cent deposits, on properties, up to three years before they're built. By making the process easier for these buyers, it will ultimately release vital funding for more new build house developments in the UK.

Therefore, a final 'Chinese takeaway' for Theresa (or her successor) is, please re-think your misguided policy. Far from fuelling our housing crisis and homelessness, Asian buyers will increase the supply of affordable housing across the UK and help fix our housing market.

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Patrick Mooney, managing director at Mooney Thompson Consulting

AS EVER THE DEVIL WILL BE IN THE DETAIL, BUT FOR THE MOMENT IT IS ACCEPTED THAT THIS COULD BE A REAL GAME-CHANGER

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

TIME TO DELIVER ON THE PM'S FRESH COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL HOUSING

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and news editor of Housing Management & Maintenance, says it's time for councils to deliver now the borrowing cap has been lifted.

The Government's surprise decision to lift the borrowing cap on local authorities so they can expand the building of new council homes was one of the most welcome pieces of news of recent times.

As ever, the devil will be in the detail, but for the moment it is accepted that this could be a real game-changer that delivers long-overdue and much demanded freedom for councils to provide the affordable homes their communities so badly need. It is right up there with the Decent Homes programme, which saw millions of existing homes modernised and tenants' lives made more comfortable.

In a series of announcements, Prime Minister Theresa May suddenly appears to be delivering on her often-made statement that finding a solution to our broken housing market is her number one domestic policy priority.

There were warm and encouraging words in the first ever Prime Ministerial speech to the National Housing Federation for the contribution that housing associations can make, coupled with a commitment to invest another £2bn in the affordable housebuilding programme. Taken alongside the announcement at the Conservative Party Conference to lift the cap on council borrowing, this provides the most positive environment for social housing in living memory.

PRUDENCE

We know the money will not magically appear overnight – the Government simply has too many demands on its resources right now – but taken together, there appears to be an understanding that housing has probably become a key issue at the next general election. It could make the difference in what promises to be a tight contest. And that could come sooner rather than later, given the parlous state of the Brexit

negotiations in Brussels and Westminster.

It is hoped that within a couple of years councils could be building at least 10,000 new homes a year (maybe more), to contribute towards the ambitious target of 300,000 homes a year that has been set.

But seeing is believing, and the Budget should provide more details of how the lifting of the cap will work. Of course, there will be some constraints. The borrowing will need to be done within prudential limits but this is to be expected and amounts to no more than living within your means and not taking out loans that cannot be repaid. Local Government probably has a better record than Westminster on that particular score!

Indeed, some councils have managed to run decent sized development programmes in recent years and it's likely that officers at authorities like Sheffield and Bournemouth will be in strong demand to share their experiences and know how. But the failure of Local Housing Companies to build houses in any meaningful numbers provides a cautionary note. We need to ensure that Whitehall red-tape does not stymie this initiative.

STIMULUS

The new council housebuilding programme can provide a much needed stimulus to local economies and help the private housing market and commercial developments to kickstart themselves into life. Ten years of austerity and the growth of on-line shopping have taken their toll – this can be seen in deserted high streets and empty town centres across the country.

Of course one major hurdle to overcome will be: do we have the labour and skills to deliver all of this new building activity? The construction sector has been warning us for the last few years that it is facing a crisis with retirements and

natural wastage outstripping the rate of new recruitments. Brexit is making this problem worse as lots of foreign nationals leave these shores for pastures new, and as yet we are not exploiting the modular housing model sufficiently for this to fill the gap.

The general public apparently does not welcome the prospect of living in a factory built house, but this is probably our best opportunity to showcase just what this part of the housing industry can contribute. Building houses more quickly, to a higher and more consistent standard at a lower cost should surely convince even the most strident doubters that this is a practical solution to one of the toughest problems of today.

Another skill shortage we need to overcome is in local authority planning departments. For the last 10 years we have been losing experienced town planners as part of the general belt-tightening affecting the public sector. The pressure will be on to get housing schemes approved quickly so that starts can be made on site as soon as possible. A presumption that planning consent will be given, whatever the case, is not necessarily the right message to give.

CAPACITY

But here is the rub – the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the Hackitt Review have

shown us that we cannot play fast and loose with Building Regulations or safety standards. The design and planning of housing is one of the most fundamental elements in ensuring that our homes are fit for purpose and will continue to provide for our needs in decades to come. The houses and flats built in the next five years or so will need to last for a century or more and we do not want to be providing our children and grandchildren with a sub-standard product. They will never forgive us!













In her speech to the NHF conference, the Prime Minister called on housing associations to use their skills and know-how to ensure we build the right kind of homes, in the right places at the right prices. It is vital that councils draw on this experience and encourage associations to contribute fully to local community building and regeneration efforts.

The Local Government Association has recently published on its website the results of an interesting and timely study 'Innovation in council housebuilding' which provides a wealth of information and practical examples of how obstacles can be overcome. This is essential reading in council housing and planning departments, but also in developers' offices, so they can understand the issues and think how they can contribute ideas and solutions.

Council leaders have been asking for this financial freedom for years and this is not the time to blow it. The problem and the importance of finding workable solutions means that a much greater emphasis will have to be placed on collaborative working – irrespective of whether this is with neighbouring councils, housing associations or indeed the private sector. There is an opportunity here for all to benefit, and petty jealousies or past mistakes cannot be allowed to get in the way.

I have heard some politicians and senior council officers likening the current environment to the one that existed when Attlee and Macmillan led the great council housebuilding eras of the last century. I am obviously far too young to make similar comparisons myself, but it does appear that the necessary bricks are being put in place to deliver a long overdue fillip to affordable housebuilding. The signs are better now than they have been for the last 30 years or so that national and local government are finally prepared to work together on delivering a workable solution, which we should all benefit from.

The close links between good housing and good health means that an important outcome from this could be that some pressure is removed from the NHS. That is the surely the sort of dividend that all of us can get behind and support.

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS

227 new homes for Barking Riverside

A new development named Parklands, will bring 227 new homes to Barking Riverside in east London, following the project's launch by developer L&Q.

As part of the new masterplan by Lifschutz Davidson and Sandilands, Parklands will include 115 Shared Ownership homes, and 112 units for private sale.

The development will consist of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments, 2 and 3 bedroom duplexes, and 3 and 4 bedroom houses, sitting alongside a new park offering access to a nature reserve, pond habitats and an adventure play area to the north of the site.

A joint venture between L&Q and The Mayor of London, Barking Riverside is one of Europe's largest new brownfield developments, covering 443 acres with 2 km of south facing river frontage. The wider scheme will deliver 10,800 new homes, as well as bringing commercial, retail and leisure facilities. New schools, parks and river walkways will all become home to an estimated 30,000 people at the former 1920s power station site. The development has target of 50 per cent affordable homes.

Matt Carpen, managing director of Barking Riverside London, which is 'master developer' of the site, commented: "The investment in area can be seen from the moment you arrive. The excellent bus service, new roads and landscape will soon become part of a new and established place. It will be supported by new rail and riverboat services around 2021 that will fully unlock the connectivity of this area. Both the existing and new communities are all part of an amazing piece of London which is being planned for exciting things, like river walks, bird watching, swimming by the Thames and genuine riverside living."

Gavin Stewart, sales & customer services director for L&Q's East region, explained further: "The scheme will integrate amazing new technology, such as the UK's largest automated waste system, and the new spaces and places are being designed to support outdoor activity, health and wellbeing, as part of the sites status as a 'Healthy New Town.' Purchasing at Parklands gives first time buyers the chance to be part of an emerging new place and get a piece of the next London property hotspot."

As the capital's only 'Healthy New Town,' Barking Riverside homes will be built around integrated health and wellbeing principles, plus services including a GP surgery, sports facilities, open spaces and parkland. A new ecology centre will also open in 2019, giving local people and school groups a chance to find out more about the area's ecology and conservation projects.

The completed masterplan will be home to a total of seven schools, with four already open, and reportedly attaining some of the best results in the borough. Riverside Campus is the largest free school campus in the UK, and will offer places for 2600 pupils across a primary, secondary and special educational needs school.

Regular C2C trains run from Dagenham Dock to London Fenchurch Street (24 mins), while a regular bus service currently runs between Barking Riverside and Barking Station (20 mins) and Dagenham Dock (5 mins). Barking is also part of the London Cycle Super Highway, and a Barking Riverside Car Club is already in place. Creating greater connectivity, in 2021, a new Barking Riverside station will open, part of a £263m extension to the London Overground by Transport for London.

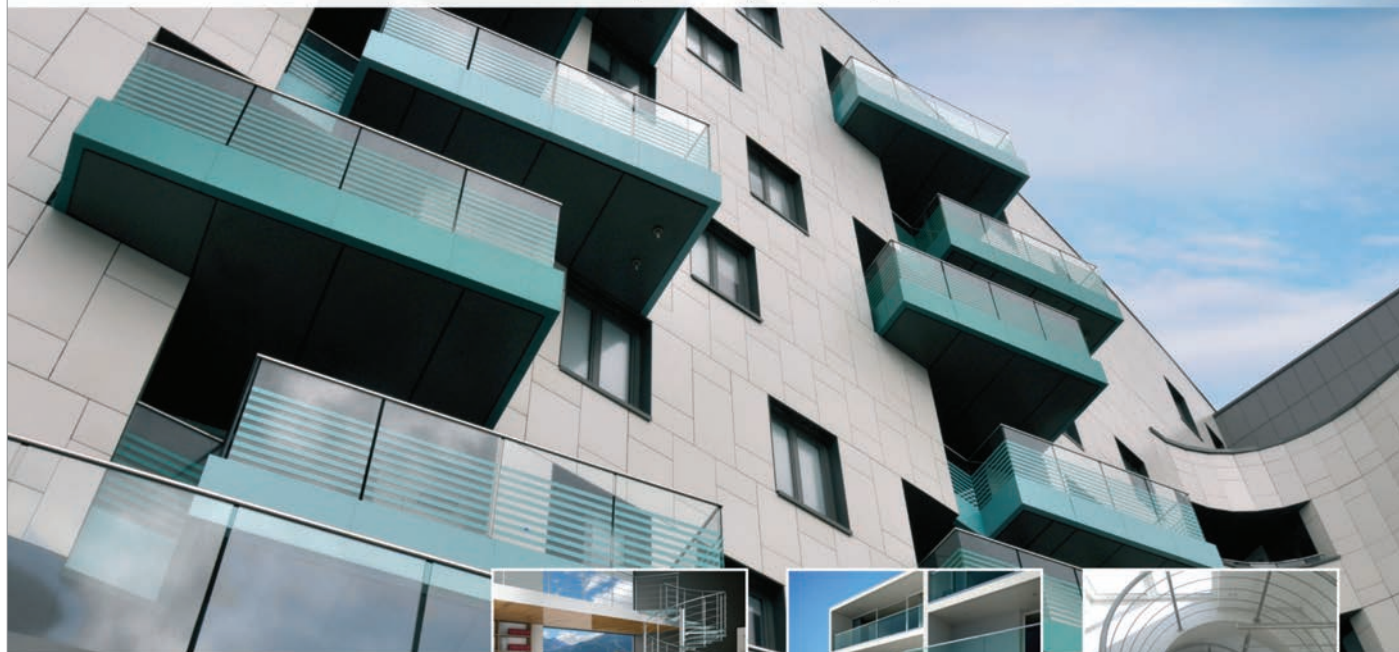
The first launch at Parklands at Barking Riverside comprised 36 shared ownership homes, and took place in early October. Shared ownership prices start from £62,500 for a 25 per cent share of a one bedroom apartment (full market value £250,000).

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CASE STUDY

Hotel-style living in Birmingham



A total of 379 apartments are being launched by Galliard Homes and Apsley House Capital on a site in Birmingham city centre. Intended to produce a sense of hotel-style living, with amenities such as a gym and cinema, the partnership hopes to set a benchmark in the city.

AS PART OF A GROWING TREND ACROSS CITIES, THE TIMBER YARD WILL PROVIDE RESIDENTS WITH A RANGE OF LIFESTYLE AMENITIES

Intended to set a benchmark in the local housing market, the scheme will provide 379 apartments for private sale, complete with hotel-style foyers, concierge, private gymnasium, club lounge, cinema/screening room, central landscaped gardens, commercial units and undercroft parking.

Built on the site of a historic timber yard and joinery factory, the site was first developed by the Gooch family as a timber yard during the industrial revolution. By the mid 19th century the Gooch estate remained occupied by the timber yard, alongside a furniture maker, silversmiths, plywood and aluminium works. The land remained commercial up until the 1970s, when the factories were demolished and a large car park was introduced.

The new homes on the site have been designed around a central landscaped garden, bordered by two residential buildings, up to 7 storeys and 13 storeys high respectively, providing views across the Birmingham skyline. Each building has large floor to ceiling windows, with balconies and terraces. The central garden will be landscaped with trees, plants and lawns, and the project also features what's described as a 'pedestrian boulevard'.

A choice of studio, one, two and three bedroom apartments, including two duplex residences, are present at the site. All the apartments have an entrance hall, reception room and an open plan fully-fitted kitchen. Selected apartments open onto private balconies, terraces and winter gardens. All the master bedrooms are lined with fitted wardrobes, and the master suites in the two and three bedroom apartments have ensuite bathrooms.

The apartments have oak plank-style flooring through the entrance and entertaining areas, with woven carpets to the bedrooms. The kitchens have high gloss grey-silver units, reconstituted stone worktops and integrated appliances. The bathrooms in the development come with large format white marbled floor tiling, to match the white suites, plus reconstituted stone vanity unit tops and timber lined alcoves. Extra fixtures include mirrored



storage cupboards and heated towel rails.

As part of a growing trend across cities, The Timber Yard will provide residents with a range of lifestyle amenities. There will be a fully equipped residents' gym with changing facilities, a private club lounge for relaxation and entertaining, and a cinema/screening room.

Located at the crossroads where the city's main shopping centre, Chinese Quarter and 'Gay Village' meet, the location will provide the residents with access to a range of shops and restaurants.

Robin Norstrom, director at Apsley House Capital, commented: "The highly anticipated launch of The Timber Yard will set a benchmark for new homes in Birmingham City Centre.

"The development of the Gooch estate during the industrial revolution was called the 'enlightenment' because of the economic and social benefits it brought.

"This new development will bring another step change to Birmingham, delivering investment, new homes and residential life to the city centre."

With apartments priced from £199,000, the developers hope that the project will attract buyers with the "opportunity to acquire a cosmopolitan, high quality apartment at advantageous Birmingham prices, in the UK's vibrant second city."

The Timber Yard is the first in a series of £500m (gross development value) regeneration projects in Birmingham planned by the Galliard Apsley Partnership. Four other residential projects are in the pipeline, providing a combined total of 2,800 apartments.

Calculating U-value and Thermal Bridging

The Concrete Block Association provides a free online U-value calculator which is designed to guide users on the choice of block and insulation combinations to achieve specific U-values.

In addition, a comprehensive set of thermal bridging construction details are free to download. These details, and their calculated heat loss values, help designers and SAP assessors to optimise projects.

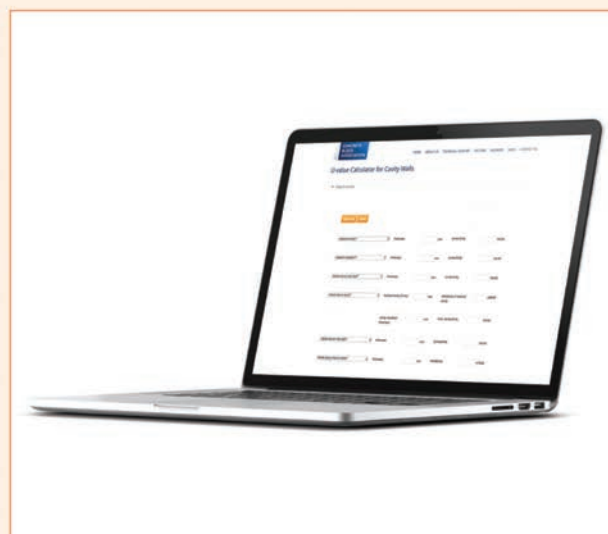
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Schueco's window viewed as 'go-to' solution



The AWS 70 SC outward-opening aluminium window from **Schueco UK** delivers Schueco's renowned 'build quality' at an economical price, a formula that has led to it being widely specified for domestic projects right across the country. Its versatility and excellent performance in use means that many specifiers now view the

Schueco AWS 70 SC window as the 'go-to' solution for projects where high quality is paramount but budgets are tight. With a depth of 70 mm, slim sightlines from 63.5 mm (outer frame/vent) and a choice of five vent profiles offering optimum cost/size/weight options, Schueco AWS 70 SC is ideal for punched openings, ribbon windows and curtain walling.

mkinfobox@schueco.com www.schueco.co.uk



P C Henderson announced as a finalist in British Chamber Awards

Sliding and folding door hardware manufacturer – **P C Henderson** - has been announced as a finalist in this year's British Chamber Awards as it is once again recognised for its exporting achievements. The firm will compete head to head against eight other companies to be given the coveted title of UK Export Business of the Year at one of the most high profile award programmes in the UK. The success comes after P C Henderson impressed judges and was crowned winner of the Export Award at the North East of England Business Awards back in April. The firm has now gone on to be chosen by the North East England Chamber of Commerce, against hundreds of entries, to represent the region at the National Awards. Over 70 of the most successful businesses in the UK will battle it out across nine key awards categories at a prestigious awards Gala Dinner held at Tobacco Dock in London on 29th November. One company will also have the privilege to be crowned Business of the Year and will have the honour of opening the London Stock Exchange when next year's programme is opened in March 2019. The hotly contested Export Award aims to shine a spotlight on companies that have generated substantial success in international trade.

sales@pchenderson.com



Win one of five Google Home devices

ARP Ltd has announced the launch of its photo competition. All you need to do is take some quality images of any ARP products which have been fitted and send them into ARP. Products can be gutters, fascias and soffits, copings, other bespoke pressings and downpipes in either aluminium or cast iron.

Winners will be chosen based on the best images and all those who enter will receive a free thermal mug as a thank you (whilst stocks last). The competition will run until 14th December, with two Google home devices being won in October, two in November and one in December, giving you plenty of time to get your images in. Full terms and conditions and entry details can be found on the ARP website.

ARP is a leading UK manufacturer of aluminium and cast iron rainwater products. Renowned for its specialist knowledge and quality products, ARP can offer both the specifier and the installer the highest standards of performance, aesthetics, and durability. Its product range is made from the highest quality aluminium and cast iron and the company's range of profiles ensure it has a style to suit any project.

0116 298 9495

www.arp-ltd.com/photo-competition



Unique safety glass process supplied for new Pilkington mirror

Chromatics Glass Limited has supplied Pilkington with its unique safety glass process for the recently launched Pilkington Optimirror™ Protect Plus. This new product is a safety mirror which doesn't require toughening or laminating and provides enhanced safety capability. It is formed of a composite material – a mirror bonded to metal through the application of the Chromatics process – rather than a mirror with a safety film. Lightweight and flawlessly flat, the glass remains in place if broken until the mirror can be easily and safely replaced. Pilkington Optimirror™ Protect Plus' safety credentials and aesthetic appeal make it suitable for a diverse range of commercial applications particularly in high volume traffic areas including shopping centres, hotels, gymnasiums, lifts, and train stations. Or for more general domestic environments where it not only provides optimum safety but also creates stunning and contemporary design features. It has been specified and is currently being installed for a development in London for St James, part of the Berkeley Group. Pilkington is the exclusive distributor of the product in the UK and Ireland. Pilkington Optimirror™ Protect Plus comes as standard on Pilkington Optiwhite™, a practically colourless true low-iron glass, but is also available in grey and bronze on request.

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Following the Hackitt Report further changes in Building Regulations have been anticipated, and the ban on all combustible materials on the outside of buildings over 18 metres, championed by Secretary of State James Brokenshire, is one of the first. This ban relates to cladding and insulation for all new high-rise residential buildings, hospitals, registered care homes and student accommodation, but will not be retrospective.

In the residential sector, where much of the work is carried out on projects over 18 metres, it is important to understand the need to bring products to market that have been rigorously tested to meet or even exceed current legislation and regulatory requirements.

The exacting tolerances demanded by high-specification, non-combustible cladding systems require technical insight to design and manufacture a fully offsite solution to fix the system to the main structural frame.

CASE STUDY

As an example, the brief for a recent high-rise project involved the delivery a fully clad offsite-manufactured panellised system, delivered to site complete with the sub frame infill panels, pre-fixed to a lightweight, innovative marble finished cladding system.

A key part of the brief was achieving a fully flush finish on the external side. The steel sub frame achieved the exacting tolerances required by the cladding manufacturer. Steel framing panels were produced with a completely flush finish, using BIM modelling and CAM processes to engineer a pre-cut assembly, where even 2 mm screw heads were required to be countersunk.

Close collaboration was crucial to the success of this project. The scheme was in part delivered through innovative engineering, combined with technically advanced manufacturing capability used to its full potential to deliver a truly offsite system. The preformed SFS infill panels were delivered to the cladding manufacturer to have the marble finished cladding system pre-installed offsite before being delivered as a fully formed system, which was then craned in and fixed back to the substrate. This led to a rapid installation attaining excellent thermal, acoustic and fire properties.

THE PUSH FOR OFFSITE

The publication of the 'Offsite Manufacture for Construction: Building for Change' report by the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee will keep the offsite sector on its current trajectory if the recommendations are implemented. There is an opportunity here for the UK to extend its position at the

INTEGRATING CLADDING INTO THE OFFSITE PROCESS

Steve Thompson of EOS Facades offers his perspective on the offsite opportunities available to housebuilders in a changing political landscape.

forefront of offsite manufacturing globally; such a policy would further strengthen the confidence in the offsite supply chain, and encourage greater investment in innovation in technologies, together with research, development and testing, which includes cladding systems in the offsite process.

This time around, there is a feeling that the push for offsite construction is sustainable, due to the imposed drivers for change. A significant difference between the present and the previous offsite boom is the emergence of Building Information Modelling (BIM), which has been a 'game changer.'

Without doubt, BIM is having an impact on the genuine adoption of Design for Manufacture and Assembly (DfMA) protocols, which significantly aids the offsite manufacturer's ability to address the issue of standardisation — especially important in the residential sector. Fundamentally, DfMA requires design teams to shift their thinking away from 'construction' to 'assembly.' BIM facilitates the opportunity for further upstream integration of components and cladding systems, and will therefore no doubt generate new types of offsite manufactured technologies.

The lack of investment is frequently linked to a lack of certainty of demand or continuity of business. Construction is typically a project-based activity — therefore the customer base can be difficult to retain. To overcome, this it is important to form strategic alliances between developers and main contractors, as well as establish partnerships with major installers operating in the sector. This approach offers benefits to all — working relationships and processes are established, teams have no learning curves, and, importantly, trust is built through reliability and expectations



being met.

Contemporary offsite construction sector technologies are now many evolutions apart from the technology of their roots, supported by third party accreditations and testing that make it more advanced than traditional building processes, and now a readily accepted construction method.

It is clear that the drivers for change vary, and this new Building Regulation will certainly have an impact. Predictability of programme, costs and performance, together with improved quality through the use of BIM technology and manufacture in controlled factory environments, are important factors. This reduces errors onsite, lessens snagging, and enhances performance throughout the lifecycle of the building.

Steve Thompson is managing director of EOS Facades



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British Standards launched BS 8612: Dry-Fixed Ridge, Hip and Verge Systems in order to raise and control manufacturing quality levels. This implementation has already seen some products being redeveloped and improved by manufacturers to comply with the new standards and tests.

The industry must carry the responsibility to ensure all manufacturers produce quality products. In return, specifiers select quality products, merchants supply quality products, contractors fit quality products, and house owners can be assured their roof complies and will function correctly. The time is well overdue where legislation and performance must stand up and be counted.

British Standard BS 5250: Control of Condensation in Building, and BS 5534: Slating and Tiling, have been in place for years to ensure that professional and consistent building conditions are adhered to. BS 5534 was last reviewed and updated four years ago, after the industry and experts deemed mortar bedding for ridge and hip less trustworthy, with a shorter lifespan than newer technologies. In turn, BS 5534 was revised stating that all ridge and hip tiles had to be mechanically fixed even when mortar had been used to improve the fix.

BS 5250 and BS 5534:2014 were very clear on how and where the products needed to be installed to meet the requirements, however what wasn't available was a British Standard to test the products and their durability. With more harsh and adverse weather conditions hitting the UK each year, some systems were failing, which resulted in delays on sites, as well as builders having to revisit a site to fix systems that had become loose or totally disengaged due to the high winds and snow loads.

Over the last few years in particular, dry verge systems have become increasingly popular as they allow not only for additional securing points for the roof tiles, but replace the need for mortar, meeting current regulations. But now, with the increase of products in the market, it has become more and more difficult to specify a durable system, as often the products look alike with similar features, but have hidden compromises to reduce cost.

Early examples of dry verge systems had inherited well-known and common issues such as poor quality raw material being used, resulting in units warping (PVC is a non-starter and polypropylene without certain additives will not perform) and just not being resilient enough. Units being secured either to the end of an extended cut tile batten or directly to the barge board, would result in a less secure fix (the introduction of a face fixing batten bracket is a key point, and improves the fix

BS 8612 – A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL?

Keith Plummer of ubbink explores the impact recent standards have on dry fix roofing, discussing the benefits that they have brought to projects.

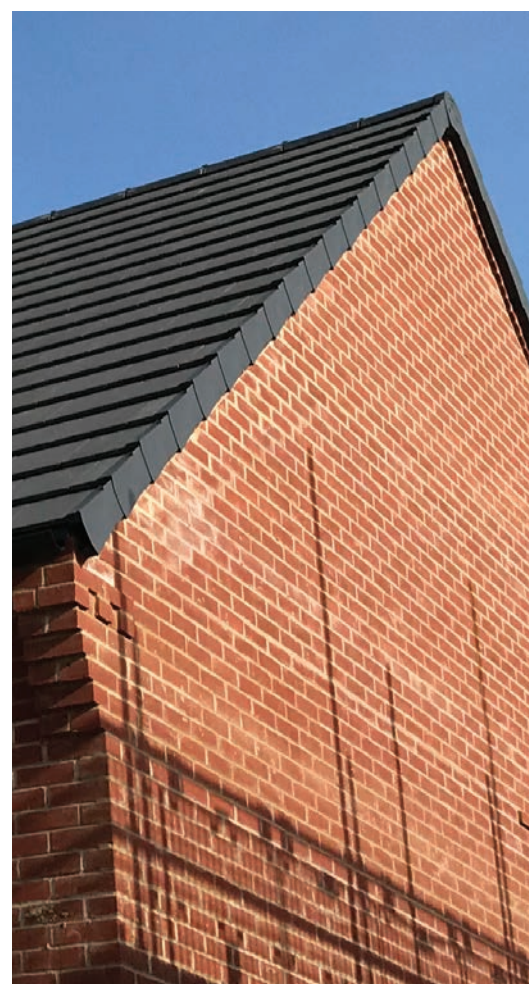
dramatically). If there was no barge board for the starter unit to be installed to, the contractor would be forced to come up with other ways of securing the eaves unit, one such way being with the use of wire threaded through the unit and secured to a nail or screw to the fascia board.

Once the system was installed, these issues were not always clearly visible, and so were 'out of sight out of mind' until the bad weather hit, and failings became more obvious problems for contractors, specifiers and housebuilders. The most common visible issue that did stand out was the allowance of rain water to either drip or run down the gable wall of the property, leaving an unsightly staining.

Industry experts soon realised that the increase in verge products on the market without any standard was proving difficult for specifiers and housebuilders, unable to know if they were selecting a trustworthy quality system with longevity. This is where the start of BS 8612 came into fruition, with all the common factors of dry-fix installs being discussed, and how these should and could be overcome to improve current builds. This gives all parties involved in the selection process, from contractors to end users, the confidence that what is being used on a project is up to a level of expectation, and not a weak alternative.

The new British Standard BS 8612 is set out to ensure that dry fix roofing products pass the physical demands like vertical load for wind uplift, and rain drainage, as well as an accelerated colour fast test for aesthetics. The full independent range of tests are carried out by the experts at the Building Research Establishment (BRE) in Watford, although some larger companies may have the facilities to run their own. Tests are calibrated to indicate which of the products can be installed within the correct wind zones, as long as the full system has been used and installed as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Although BS 8612 was issued in early 2018, the industry has until January 2019 to ease themselves into full compliance



when installing onto new build projects. This new standard may not be a legal requirement, but the National House Building Council (NHBC) and the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) will enforce this change.

Hopefully the new testing procedures will give a greater confidence in the products to specifiers, installers and developers, providing them with the knowledge that if standards are met and manufacturer's instructions are followed, then there should not be a need for a return to make a repair.

Keith Plummer is technical manager at ubbink

Bringing buildings back to life with Eurobrick

There are many older buildings around the UK that just need a little care and attention, and a touch of creativity, to bring them back to life. Eurobrick has been leading the brick slip cladding sector for nearly 30 years and has extensive experience of supplying its systems to redevelopment projects that aim to rejuvenate these older properties.

Federated House on London Road in Dorking is a prime example of how a little creativity, along with the right building products, can give a run down office block a new lease of life.

Formerly a 6-storey office, planning permission was granted to change the use of the building to residential apartments. It

has now been converted into a striking development with a total of 71 new one and two bedroom apartments. The dated building was given a complete facelift with a mixed finish of Eurobrick and Trespa cladding.

Approximately 550m² of our 17mm X-Clad was installed and finished with a red multi stock brick and Sandstone colour Europoint mortar.

X-Clad is an external wall insulation (EWI) brick slip cladding system that is suitable for both new build and retrofit projects and includes the option to add different thicknesses of insulation to help meet the U-Value targets of a project while maintaining a lightweight, slim profile. With a wide variety of brick slips available, and the flexibility to use alongside other finishes, any number of traditional or contemporary finishes can be achieved.

The cladding installation was completed last year by LB&F Ltd for Skillmaster Ltd and the building is almost unrecognisable from its former design with a distinctive, contemporary new look.

Over recent years, the market for brick slips has grown significantly and there is now a large selection of slips available, from traditional characterful styles to smooth, crisp edged contemporary ones. Eurobrick's brick slip ranges



allow for most design aspirations and palettes.

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01738 634 803 www.sidey.co.uk

Roofshield preserves the character



A historic farmstead conversion in Westmarch, Dundee is set to benefit from the added protection of Roofshield, which has long been recognised as one of the highest performing roofing membrane solutions, providing a pitched roof underlay, which is both air and vapour permeable. Jason Stewart of Circinn Developments comments: "It was important to

maintain a strong traditional character to the buildings, preserving the stone finish exterior and slate roof. As part of the roof construction, we insisted on the Roofshield membrane from the **A. Proctor Group** to ensure the highest level of protection."

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com



A natural choice for Stunning New Home

Freefoam Building Products X-Wood Cladding has been used as a sleek contemporary feature to the front and rear elevation of a stunning new home on the outskirts of York. With such an individual design and high specification the owners wanted to ensure all exterior components were robust, stylish, long lasting and hard wearing. X-Wood is an innovative PVC-U exterior cladding that looks and handles like wood but without all the usual maintenance issues associated with timber. Freefoam have used their manufacturing expertise to design and produce a 16mm attractive high performance cladding board comprised of three different layers – a heavy duty through coloured plastic foam core, covered with a durable plastic skin and then coated with market leading Renolit film which creates a hard wearing, stable material with a beautiful subtle woodgrain effect finish. Suitable for both commercial and domestic new build or renovation projects. Please visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=6La-b6Y-6Vc

01604 591110 www.freefoam.com

SHOW PREVIEW

ENSURING HIGH QUALITY IN HOUSING

HOMES 2018 is the premier event dedicated to residential development, strategic asset management and procurement solutions. Housing sector professionals from housing associations, local authorities and the commercial sector will meet to discuss how to build more homes and ensure a high quality standard of housing.

With the widespread change and uncertainty prevalent in the housing sector, it has never been more important to attend. The Hackitt Review, the Social Housing Green Paper, Brexit and the 300,000 homes delivery target have all raised questions for housing professionals. In order to help the housing sector to move forward, Over 150 experts will speak across two days, with six theatres of packed content. In addition, there will be 120 exhibitors showcasing leading housing solutions.

As Brexit draws near, residential development of new homes remains a clear focus for the housing sector. HOMES will help provide housing professionals with the innovative thinking necessary to build more homes and ensure high quality standard of living by discussing Home England's strategic partnership deals, post-budget housing delivery priorities, and how Build to Rent can work for the social housing sector.

Over 4,000 housing sector professionals are expected to attend, hoping to find the answers they need to help fix the 'broken housing market', together with access to some of the highest-quality content in the sector.

A key benefit of attending HOMES 2018 is that you can catch up with all your key suppliers in one room. Over 120 exhibitors, 40 sponsors and 10 key partners will be attending with key focuses on innovation, product launches, hospitality areas and pioneers.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS YEAR

Visitors will meet leading suppliers to the housing sector on the exhibition floor, as well as

benefit from a range of interactive features. Highlights of this year's event include:

- MITIE Solution Street
- Higgins Regeneration theatre
- Fusion21 Buy Smarter theatre
- Knowledge Centre silent theatre
- Fortem Local Authority lounge
- New partnerships with RIBA, UKAA, RTPi and more to broaden your networking with housebuilders, architects, Build to Rent specialists and planners
- National Leasehold Group conference (Weds)
- National Sales Group conference (Thurs)

A key subject under discussion will be how procurement benefits housing professionals. Sessions will explore methods of procurement, and what works best for their organisations, as well as achieving social value from procurement, and whether procurement stifles innovation. Attendees to the show will also explore the latest thinking and best practice around repairs and maintenance in the housing sector, including strategic asset management in a post-Grenfell world, implementing the Hackitt recommendations, and the need for a review of the Decent Homes Standard.

Delegates from the National Leasehold Group Annual conference, National Sales Group conference, and HOMES will be able to attend certain sessions in each other's theatres. In addition, Kit Malthouse MP, Minister of State for Housing, will appear at HOMES 2018, giving the keynote at Kier Theatre Two on 29 November.

KIT MALTHOUSE, MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOUSING, WILL BE THE CLOSING KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT HOMES 2018 ON 29 NOVEMBER



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Klober dry verges at the height of their powers



With the NHBC slated to make BS 8612 compliant roofing dry verge systems compulsory for new builds sooner rather than later, Klober has put its Uni-Click and Contract dry verges through a variety of tests to demonstrate compliance how both comply with the standard. Under the watchful eye of technicians at the company's technical centre, both verge types were put through their paces. "Even though we knew Uni-Click and Contract to be BS 8612 compliant, it was pleasing to see these results: confirmation, if confirmation were needed; that Klober dry verges offer industry-leading performance," says Andrew Cross, Marketing Manager.

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Viessmann introduces new air-source heat pumps

Viessmann has introduced the Vitocal 200-A and Vitocal 222-A, with innovative noise-reduction technology. Both operate so quietly that they are suitable for densely built-up areas such as terraced housing estates, and both have high energy efficiency with low operating costs. Both heat pumps feature Viessmann's new Advanced Acoustic Design. This combines a sound-optimised fan designed to harmonise the acoustic frequency range with intelligent speed control to reduce airborne noise at full- and partial-load operation. This effectively stifles the lower frequency sound of conventional heat pumps which can be perceived as disturbing. The result is that the pumps are barely audible: noise pressure in night mode at a distance of three is a mere 35 dB(A). Installation of the Vitocal 200-A and 222-A is easy. No minimum distance is required between the indoor and outdoor units, no refrigeration leak test is required because the cooling circuit is hermetically sealed, and no F-gas certificate is needed because the connecting pipes to the outdoor unit are filled with water. These new heat pumps are also simple to operate, via the Vitotronic 200 control unit with its easy-to-read plain text and graphic display. Controls can be altered anywhere via the Vitoconnect web interface and free ViCare smartphone app.

info-uk@viessmann.com



Heat Interface Units maintained remotely over the internet

Evinox Energy has introduced remote commissioning and warranty validation for their ModuSat heat interface units (HIUs), which can significantly reduce the cost of commissioning and time spent on site by engineers manually checking and adjusting settings. Many other heat interface units for communal and district heating developments require an engineer to physically attend site to set-up every individual unit manually. Evinox's electronically controlled ModuSat HIU's feature SmartTalk communication technology and can be connected over the internet to remote servers, enabling Evinox to check the operation of each unit remotely and adjust settings where required. Once ModuSat units are installed and ready to be commissioned the following quick and simple process takes place: Installer Registers ModuSat Units Using Evinox's Online Registration Portal; Evinox Check the Operation of Each ModuSat Unit remotely; Evinox Visit site to inspect a sample of units (Around 10 per cent of the total units); Evinox will then certify the units and issue certificates; The Warranty period begins. The benefits don't just end there! Evinox's SmartTalk® communication system enables them to carry out scheduled maintenance checks remotely over the internet.

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Vent-Axia Blooms at The Botanics in Glasgow



Vent-Axia has supplied 94 whole house ventilation units to a prestigious housing development in Glasgow. Sited on the grounds of the former BBC Studios in the west end of the city, The Botanics is a £45m scheme that overlooks the River Kelvin and the botanic gardens. Vent-Axia's Sentinel MEV units

were specified due to the unit's high performance, coupled with low internal noise levels and aesthetics, with the unit only featuring one external grille. The Sentinel Kinetic Advance S MVHR was also selected for four of the properties. In these properties the windows do not open and the Advance was chosen due to its performance, as well as its ability to both improve indoor air quality and help avoid any overheating issues.

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A leading UK manufacturer of pipes, valves and fittings, is drawing on hundreds of years of expertise from within the UK and across the globe to be the UK's only Integrated Piping Systems provider to the plumbing and heating

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www.pegleryorkshire.co.uk

Commodore Kitchens Reaches New Heights with South Quay Plaza Contract

Commodore Kitchens has been awarded the Kitchen design, fabrication and installation package on Berkeley Homes' Flagship South Quay Plaza development in East London.

Designed by world-renowned architects Foster + Partners, South Quay Plaza is a high quality residential development that will play a pivotal role in revitalising the historic Docklands around Canary Wharf. Rising to 220m tall and 68 stories high, the development will be one of the tallest residential towers in Europe. Designed to stand at a 45 degree angle to the South dock, the apartments will benefit from stunning dual aspect views across the City and over the 2.6 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens.

Building on a long-term and highly successful relationship with the Berkeley Group, Commodore Kitchens has engaged with the project's design team for more than two years, advising on product specification, finishes and design features. This collaborative approach has enabled the final design to complement the architectural design of the iconic development.

The kitchens will feature premium, bespoke matt-lacquered handleless units, quartz worktops and down stands in Silestone by Cosentino, with



glass wall cladding and high quality Siemens appliances. They will reinforce the overall design aim of the development to provide elegant and sustainable living spaces and will be a key selling point to attract prospective residents.

Commodore Kitchens' design director, Darren Mahoney, commented: "We are delighted to have been awarded this important new project with Berkeley Homes. This is a high profile development and will add to our impressive

portfolio of quality schemes within London and beyond. We look forward to continuing our longstanding relationship with Berkeley Group and working on this flagship development."

With the construction of the development well underway, the kitchen installations will commence in autumn 2018.

01375 382323

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ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES IN TRANSFORMING A BATHROOM INTO A PERSONAL WELLNESS OASIS

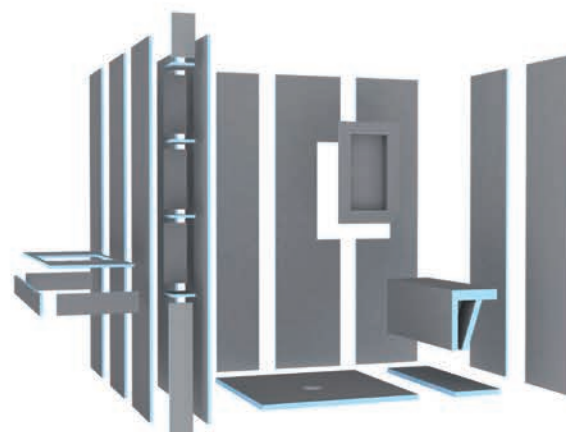
In recent years, bathrooms have become more of a wellness area rather than just a place to shower. As people spend more times in their bathrooms, space, accessibility and tranquillity have become top requirements for UK clients. There is nothing more luxurious and extravagant than a hotel-style bathroom. Sleek, chic and opulent are the ultimate design choices for adding a touch of modern glamour to a bathroom. wedi's precision engineered system components provide a simple, straightforward and secure solution to any requirement.

COMBINATION OF HIGH-END DESIGN & PRACTICALITY DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN A COMPROMISE ON STYLE.

Create a luxurious wet room to make the most of a small area and eliminate the trip hazard of a shower frame. The extensive wedi product range does not only include level-access shower elements in 10 designs, from point and linear drainage to the Discreto optical wall drain, but also numerous modular system solutions such as benches for relaxation, practical shelving solutions, partition walls with/without integrated niches in straight or sinuous lines – it has never been easier to stamp one's own personality on the bathroom area without compromising the overall aesthetics.

NOTHING NICER THAN A BATHROOM THAT NOT ONLY LOOKS A MILLION DOLLARS BUT IS ALSO UNIQUE.

Practical, stylish and low-maintenance. wedi's tile backer boards are called building boards for their versatility in creating tailor-made bathroom solutions of almost any kind. The only limit is one's imagination: custom made washstands can be constructed as free-standing or floating, partition walls with or without cleverly integrated storage or curved shelving, bath cladding set to any desired radii can be brought to life easily with the wide range and formats of wedi building boards.



UNLIMITED DESIGN FLEXIBILITY THROUGH WEDI'S CUSTOMISED BUILDING SOLUTIONS.

Technical support and state-of-the-art production technology are two of the strongest areas that sets wedi apart from its competition. From wellness cabins and experience showers through saunas or steam cabins to footbaths, whirlpools and swimming pools – every detail can be designed exactly to the client's requirements. For example, milled recesses for cables can be incorporated into the individual modules and lighting or sound technology can also be integrated during the manufacturing process. Each product is checked thoroughly during production as well as during quality control and in addition to this, all tailor-made systems are built and tested in the wedi factory before dispatch, to ensure that everything will fit and function precisely on site. wedi provides an all-around support in every phase of the project: from planning and manufacturing, through logistics and delivery, to the construction phase and commissioning on site.

TEL: 0161 864 2336

info@wedi.co.uk

www.wedi.co.uk



Icynene spray foam insulation for high-end new-build



Exceptional thermal performance and low running costs were key criteria for the construction of a 3000sq ft, new-build home in rural North Yorkshire.

Designed for a private client by Harrogate Architects, Townscape, the high specification property was built in the style of a barn on a spacious, level site, formerly occupied by redundant farm buildings.

Practice Head and Project Architect, Nick Silcock takes up the story. "Planning required that the site was developed to reflect the traditional look and feel of a farmstead with an open courtyard area bordered by buildings that sat comfortably with the rural vernacular"

Whilst delighted with the old-world, barn-style of architecture created by Townscape, their clients required a much more up to date treatment for the construction methods and long-term performance of the building – particularly relating to thermal efficiency and low running costs.

Townscape looked at various structural solutions and decided on a hybrid, timber frame arrangement with an additional blockwork inner leaf to the gables.

An outer leaf of coursed natural stone in a pale buff/rose shade with sawn stone dressings, together with a blue slate roof was specified – a style common to the village.

Air tightness and exceptional levels of thermal insulation were also required as the

clients were keen to minimise running costs and achieve a low carbon footprint. Townscapes solution was provided by careful attention to construction detailing and the innovative use of a spray applied insulation system from Icynene.

Icynene is a high performance, spray foam

insulation applied using a pressurised gun system. Foams are sprayed as a two-component mixture that come together forming a foam that expands 100-fold within seconds of application, sealing all gaps, service holes etc

According to Icynene, traditional forms of



insulation are relatively inefficient in sealing the box, in that they cannot completely fill all voids or seal the interface between the insulation and the building structure. Nor can they cope with small structural movements which will often lead to air gaps.

Minimising air leakage is one of the most effective ways of reducing heat loss in a building, as up to 40% of a building's heat loss can be attributed to air leakage.

Icynene "FoamLite" was sprayed directly onto the strand-board backing to the internal timber frame, filling it to a depth of 150mm. As FoamLite is a "vapour open" foam it allows moisture vapour to pass freely through it, allowing the building to breathe naturally, resisting cold bridging and condensation.

Unlike the urethane foams of 20 years ago, modern spray foams such as FoamLite use water as the blowing agent. This means that the reaction between the two components produces CO₂ which causes the foam to expand.

As the foam expands, the cells burst and the CO₂ is replaced by air. Consequently, from an environmental perspective, Icynene has a Global Warming Potential [GWP] of 1 and an Ozone Depletion Potential [ODP] of 0 [Zero]. Icynene does not, therefore emit and harmful gases once cured.

After trimming back excess foam, a vapour control layer [VCL] was applied to the inner face of the frame, with all joints to VCL junctions, window frames, floor and roof junctions sealed with specialist Tenson tapes. Internal facades were then lined with 57.5mm thick insulated plasterboard and wet skimmed. As the roof space was also to be used as the master bedroom suite, a similar insulation treatment was applied.



On the external face of the timber frame, a low e breather membrane – Reflectashield TF 0.81 was applied. This low emissivity membrane is specifically designed to enhance thermal performance of timber framed structures.

The combined structural elements created a

wall thickness of 516mm overall, with a calculated U-value of 0.17 W/m²K achieved.

Because the insulation and anticipated levels of air tightness were so high, Townscape incorporated a mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system [MVHR] into the building. Moist, stale air is mechanically drawn from the kitchen and bathrooms into a system of extraction ducting which passes it through a heat exchanger before being returned to "dry" rooms – lounge, snug, office and bedrooms etc.

Space and domestic hot water heating was given a similar forward thinking treatment in the form of a high efficiency, Air Source Heat Pump driving a wet, underfloor heating system to ground, first and second floor rooms.

Townscapes, Nick Silcock concludes "Like in the car industry, the design and build of high specification homes like this are at the "Formula 1" end of construction technology. Many of the cutting-edge solutions used today will eventually filter down to mass market homebuilding in ten or twenty years from now".

The property was built over an eight-month period by E & K Construction of Easingwold near York and was completed at the end of 2017. Eight months down the line, running costs for the property are broadly in line with expectations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xn4ZHQJLWHM&feature=youtu.be>
www.icynene.co.uk



Designer Contracts plans to double turnover



Designer Contracts plans to double turnover and staff numbers as part of a five-year expansion plan. The company which is celebrating its 25th year in business aims to hit an £80 million annual turnover target and increase staff from 300 to 600 by 2023. As part of its far reaching expansion strategy, Designer Contracts has this year opened three new regional outlets, including a 6,000sq ft space in Leeds, Yorkshire, an 8,000sq ft office in Ashford, Kent and most recently in Norwich, East Anglia. Designer Contracts operates across 15 UK regional facilities. As well as flooring the company provides curtains and blinds, furniture and lighting, and operates a showhome and design services division.

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

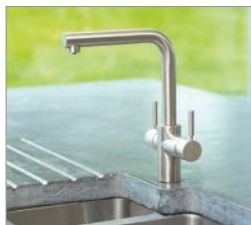
Polyflor launches new Colonia Collection



Polyflor is delighted to reveal an exciting new Colonia range. The updated Colonia Collection features all 18 original shades with the introduction of 8 brand new on trend designs. Following extensive design, trend and performance research each shade is carefully developed to complement a variety of residential interiors and reflect the current interior design trends, identified by its in-house design teams. With a 2.0mm gauge and a 0.2mm wear layer Colonia has been constructed to withstand the demands of busy lifestyles and engineered specifically for the residential sector including private housing, social housing, housebuilders and housing association.

0161 767 1111 www.polyflor.com

InSinkErator® wins contract with Galliard Homes



InSinkErator® is supplying its 3N1 L Shape steaming hot water tap finished in Brushed Steel to the brand new Galliard Homes development, Maine Tower, in London's Docklands. The Maine Tower, a focal point of the Harbour Central development, is to consist of 297 exquisite apartments situated over 42 floors.

InSinkErator® was successful in winning the contract thanks to the 3N1 gaining full WRAS approval and by offering a top quality after-sales service. For further information on the InSinkErator®, please visit the company's website.

01923 375 349 insinkerator.emerson.com/en-gb

Stylish solutions from BLANCO by GUTMANN

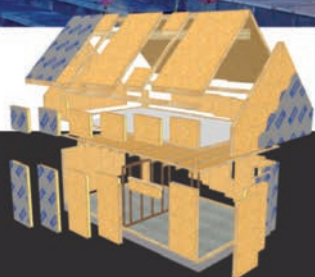


BLANCO UK has launched the new BLANCO by GUTMANN extractor hood brochure which illustrates the very latest in extraction hood design and technology. GUTMANN's hand-crafted extractor hoods set the highest standards on the market, combining style with unrivalled technology and advanced engineering. The creation of individual ventilation systems is conducted by GUTMANN due to their outstanding technical competence and specialisation in extractor hoods.

The BLANCO by GUTMANN hoods feature warm white LED lighting, with some models offering ambient lighting.

www.blanco.co.uk

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Hideaway cabin built with Festool tools



Festool tools have been used to help create the off-grid pop-up pub. The unique Cornwall based project is now fully operational – powered solely through hydro and solar technology. It was important that the tools used were of the highest quality, designed with ease-of-use and safety in mind. The project required equipment that was both mobile and efficient, and Festool provided the ideal solution. The Festool drills used on the project, including the T18 and C18, benefit from premium battery durability which was perfect for the 12-hour work days onsite. They also feature brushless EC-TEC motor technology, making them light without compromising on power, perfect for users in any location.

01284 760 791 www.festool.co.uk

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www.jsp.co.uk



Developers building in style with ultra-thin worksurfaces

Housebuilders are the largest growth area for sales of Zenith solid-core laminate worksurface. Nick Jones, Sales, and Marketing Director for **Wilsonart UK** said: "The demand for Zenith has been remarkable since its launch in 2016. We were the first to market with a slim solid core product range of its kind. We knew it would appeal to kitchen and bathroom designers but the success of Zenith with builders and contractors has been a fantastic bonus. Zenith is 100 per cent solid and waterproof which means it can be stored on site. It's adaptable and easy to handle on site too so can be cut as it is required for kitchens, bathrooms, utility rooms and WCs with no need for off-site templating." Available in three convincing textures mimicking either concrete, granite or wood, Zenith offers a compelling range of design options: Curves, thick-and-thin surface combinations and co-ordinating backsplashes are easy to create and can be fixed at the same time the kitchen or bathroom units are being installed. Zenith has a decorative surface finish on both sides, perfect to create waterfall-end panels and co-ordinated bespoke open shelves. In a kitchen an under-mount sink with drainer grooves that reveal the stunning black core are practical and easy to create.

www.wilsonart.co.uk



Door closer enhances high-rise fire safety

British designed and manufactured, Powermatic controlled, concealed door closers from **Samuel Heath** are gaining increasing popularity for use on fire doors in high-rise flats and apartments. The door closers carry the CE mark and have been independently tested and proved to meet the requirements for one hour and half-hour fire doors under BS EN 1634-1. Unlike other jamb-mounted devices, Powermatic door closers facilitate a door's compliance with Approved Document M, neither do they have to be removed from the door to be adjusted. Powermatic is ideal for restricted door reveals and, thanks to the fact that it is totally concealed when the door is closed, helps retain the aesthetics of interiors and create a less institutionalised, more homely feel. Concealment also reduces the risk of the door closer being damaged through vandalism, misuse or tampering, which could render a fire door useless. It also means less maintenance call-outs and continued fire safety.

0121 766 4200 www.samuel-heath.co.uk

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With 53 per cent of fire-related fatalities resulting from individuals being overcome by smoke or toxic fumes, smoke heat exhaust vent systems (SHEVs) make a critical difference by keeping escape routes smoke-free. In multi-occupancy buildings in particular, they enable firefighters to tackle blazes more safely and effectively and can, therefore, make a significant contribution to reducing structural damage.

British Standard guidance varies according to building height and the distance from the furthest apartment entrance door to its nearest escape route. However, life-saving devices and systems should ideally exceed standards and achieve strictly defined performance criteria. Thorough analysis of the proposed fire strategy and design of common escape routes is therefore essential.

Performance criteria and SHEV system design will depend on the layout of corridors and communal areas. As such, a mechanical smoke extraction system will give greater flexibility in terms of floor space utilisation. Indeed, in addition to providing greater efficiency than a natural ventilation system, it can effectively be designed around space constraints. The need for a secondary power supply may increase initial outlay, but this must be set against greater efficiency, design flexibility and the ability to operate in the event of a mains power failure. In addition, it will provide a mechanism for the fire service to stop, override, and ultimately re-set it into a different mode of operation.

There are crucial factors to take into account when designing a smoke control system. In contrast to a natural ventilation system, a mechanical smoke extraction system utilises an extract shaft so that when smoke is detected, the fire damper to the shaft on the fire floor opens while all others remain closed. The vent at the head of the staircase then opens so that a fan at the top of the shaft can extract smoke and prevent its migration into adjacent compartments.

A recent innovation is the modular smoke ventilation system. This gives the architect or M&E consultant the guarantee of flow rate and pressure performance, while offering greater ease and speed of installation. With new build windows often being limited, a choice of sizes can be supplied pre-commissioned in a prefabricated, prewired pod, ready for a single lift to the rooftop.

In terms of day to day living, overheating has become a common feature of multi-occupancy buildings. Centralised heat generation systems significantly increase temperature build-up in communal areas, a factor which, ironically, has been made worse by improved energy efficiency and air tightness standards. The secondary use of a mechanical smoke ventilation

DESIGNING A SMOKE CONTROL SYSTEM

Steve Knight of Whitesales explains the challenges of smoke control in multi-occupancy buildings.



system is, therefore, becoming more common, as it provides an effective means of reducing temperatures deep within a building. It does this by using the smoke shaft as a cooling chamber so that, when combined with low-level inlet air, it provides negative pressure to draw air up through the building.

For the Grafton Quarter in Croydon, a £25m project to regenerate a former industrial site into a mixed-use scheme, 97 residential units were built in which a fire engineer recommended a mechanical ventilation system for each of the eight-storey blocks. The system was required to provide adjustable flow rates to run in 'escape' and 'firefighting' modes. A control system was linked to the central fire alarm, and fireman priority switches were installed within the stairway on each level. During the planning phase it was also identified that the central boiler systems were constructed to run through the mechanical risers, so it was also necessary to facilitate temperature control for these areas. As a result, a fully integrated system, utilising CFD analysis, was designed within the requirements of Approved Document B and BS9991. A mechanical ventilation unit featuring integrated smoke vent louvres was installed in each building, incorporating controls over floor vents, plus electrical

invertors to adjust extract flow rates. These adjust the fan speed and allow the system to be run at varying levels of output in the event of fire. Additional comfort fans were installed, designed to run continuously at lower speed for energy efficiency, with additional dampers providing comfort ventilation for six of the eight floors in each building. The adaptive controls enable the comfort functionality to be shut down in the event of fire.

There are long-term benefits in terms of both smoke control and management of the living environment to be derived from use of a SHEV system. In terms of overall efficiency, commissioning and cost, there are also advantages in the manufacturer being involved in specification and installation. Such a complete smoke extraction package ensures that, for example, uninterrupted power supplies enable a mechanical system to be installed without the requirement for two dedicated three-phase power supplies. It also removes the risks associated with split sourcing of products and inadequate contracting standards, while ensuring that complementary accessories facilitate a system's efficiency and commissioning.

Steve Knight is technical manager at Whitesales

New High Performance Flame Retardant VCLs

New FlameOut™ Block vapour control layers combine energy efficiency with superior flame retardancy for the ultimate protection in new constructions. They are the latest addition to the Powerlon® range of building membranes.

The use of vapour control layers is on the rise in new residential developments as the industry moves toward constructing more energy-efficient, "intelligent" homes. VCLs improve the air tightness of a building and are applied to the warm side of the insulation, ideally fully taped and sealed, to help achieve the maximum benefit. As well as improving the air tightness and reducing convective heat loss, vapour control layers also perform the vital function of protecting the insulation from moisture from inside the building and prevent water vapour from passing through to cause interstitial condensation.

In this safety conscious time, and as Building Regulations are under review, FlameOut Block VCLs offer the valuable bonus of being flame retardant to a high standard, independently tested to British and international standards: British Standard 476 Fire Tests and EN ISO 13401-1, with the top rating of Class B-s1,d0.



The membrane is self-extinguishing when exposed to direct flame, and so will not contribute to any fire.

FlameOut Block VCLs, with mono-filament reinforcement for high tensile strength, have outstanding water vapour resistance and low water vapour transmission. The layers come in two grades, FlameOut Block (140gsm weight) and FlameOut Block Plus (210gsm weight) and

are manufactured by North Yorkshire firm Industrial Textiles & Plastics (ITP), who have more than 25 years' experience in flame retardant technology. ITP produces a full range of building membranes, scaffolding and temporary containment sheeting, and ground, gas and chemical barrier membranes.

01347 825200 www.itpltd.com

Manchester residential development chooses SE Controls

One of Manchester's latest high rise residential developments, Cambridge Street, is using smoke control systems from SE Controls to provide a safe environment for residents, by ensuring escape routes are kept clear of smoke in the event of a fire.

Designed by Hodder & Partners and constructed by developer-contractor, Renaker Build Ltd, the new building stands on a previously derelict 0.35 hectare site and now provides 282 private rental apartments within two towers, which stand 19 and 28 storeys above ground level.

With such a large number of apartments at Cambridge Street, fire safety is an essential consideration of the building's design with the smoke control system being an integral part of the solution.

Each tower has its own escape staircase at the centre of the structure, which is protected by SE Controls smoke ventilation and control systems. These systems are code compliant to Building Regulations Approved Document B, as the travel distance from each apartment is less than 7.5 metres.

Every floor of each tower is fitted with an automatically opening smoke vent door, leading to a dedicated smoke shaft, which

includes a SHEVTEC automatically opening louvre at roof level. This allows smoke and hot air to be vented and ensures corridors and escape routes are kept clear. On the top floor of each block, an additional corridor roof vent is also incorporated as part of the design, which is controlled by a dedicated SHEVTEC control panel.

The smoke vent doors use SE Controls actuators, which are compliant with BS EN 12101, and these are controlled by a series of OSLoop controllers that provide instant response in the event of a fire to ensure the appropriate doors are opened, allowing smoke to escape.

Cambridge Street, is also installed with SECloudlink™, a remote services solution from SE Controls that uses 4G communications technology to constantly provide system status information, allowing data to be displayed remotely to enable facilities and building managers to monitor the building's smoke control system.

Michael Scrimshaw, Business Development Manager for SE Controls said: "Cambridge Street has rapidly become an iconic landmark on Manchester's skyline with its white tile cladding contrasting with the red brick of adjacent listed



buildings. We're delighted to have been involved with the project, as Renaker Build has delivered a high quality apartment building, which is an attractive proposition in the growing private rental sector."

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Delivering success together

STREAMLINING THE TIMBER TRADE

Ian Church of Snows Timber discusses how timber companies are innovating in an increasingly competitive market, and the benefits they are bringing to construction customers, besides pricing.

With timber currently at a premium, timber importers and distributors must now compete on service, quality and efficiency. With so little room for competition in pricing, they must now do all they can to find different ways to stand out in the market.

The pressure on the worldwide market shows no sign of changing. Demand from the US, India and China is ensuring prices continue to surge, with costs for everything from standing timber to milled end products increasing month by month.

Prices are being pushed higher by both sides of the market – supply and demand. Long term supply continues to look uncertain as peak wood production in the UK will be reached in the near future, and current planting levels are low.

So what can distributors do to appeal more to customers? And what can they do to ensure these buyers come back to them again and again?

Distributors must examine every part of their businesses. From buying raw timber, through production to cataloguing, sales and customer delivery, they must ensure they are using the best and most efficient methods at every stage.

The building industry and high-tech have never been easy bedfellows, but finally, from the biggest, highest volume companies to the one or two-man bands, technology is playing an increasingly important part. It may be a little behind most other industries, but the building trade no longer relies on rough calculations scrawled on scraps of paper by stubby pencils retrieved from behind ears. Along with this, buyers increasingly expect distributors to be able to react to all of their needs on every platform.

New technologies to modernise the industry can make it more efficient, and make it easier to deliver in increasingly turbulent times. By really leveraging technologies to improve efficiencies, some of the challenges to the business can be tempered, but more than that, they can unleash better growth for distributors and a

more satisfying experience for their customers, the merchant.

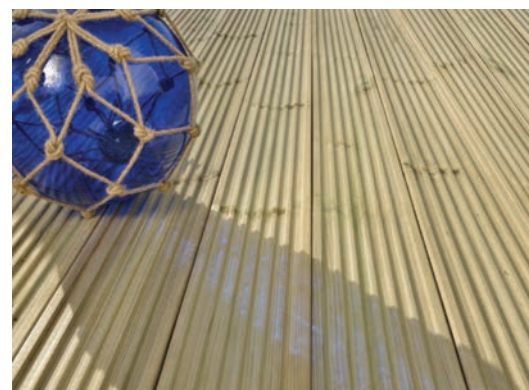
In general, distributors do not tend to have much insight into what other operations in their networks might have in stock, and that can often result in unnecessary delays in delivery. The streamlining of operations to better serve customers and cut down on waste in terms of time, stock and resources, is vital. Knowing precisely what stock a distributor is carrying can have a transformative effect on waste and over-ordering.

Usually, the first contact a buyer has with a distributor is through the sales team. And sales in the timber industry should involve a two-way conversation. The stereotype of the pushy sales person telling the buyer what they need does not work with many knowledgeable people in the market. People can instead learn from one another at every point in the supply chain, which will result in a stronger industry.

Put simply, if clients' needs do not inform buying and production patterns, distributors will be stuck with a lot of timber products they cannot sell.

There are also many improvements that can be made as far as production is concerned. There is no reason to leave sophisticated machinery idle if there is a need for products. The introduction of double shifts and more flexible working hours can be done sensitively for the benefit of employees, as well as to cut production costs.

The logistics of delivery is another area where there are great improvements to be made. There is some great software coming online that combines the tracking of stock and the planning of delivery drops. This can save large amounts of money and time, allowing distributors to pass on the benefits either directly or indirectly to their buyers, by giving employees more time to work on improving systems and serving clients. There are also some tremendous environmental benefits to getting this part of the business right. Efficient delivery means fewer vans on the road, less fuel



used, and a noticeable reduction in CO₂ emissions.

The timber trade may never reach the level of technical sophistication of a consumer technology company, but it is changing quickly and moving in the right direction, as it needs to do.

The aims of timber distributors should remain simple – get the right products to the right people, as quickly and as cost effectively as they can. And, with the pressures on the raw timber market, this is where all the competition lies.

Get the milling of the timber, the delivery of the products, and the admin (a hugely under-recognised part of good customer service) right, and relationships with buyers at all levels will flourish.

Ian Church is managing director at Snows Timber

Design flexibility & performance from Scotframe Val-U-Therm PLUS®



Val-U-Therm PLUS® wall panels achieve 0.08 W/m²K - probably the best U-value wall in the world. Couple this with Scotframe's expertise & track record and the sky really is the limit when it comes to design of buildings that tick all the boxes on your clients' wish lists.

Key to achieving this extraordinary performance is that the insulation is injected in off-site, quality-controlled factory conditions. The foam expands into every nook and cranny, providing a best-in-class BR443 U-value correction factor of zero. As well as excellent thermal insulation performance, details are available to minimise thermal bridging and give excellent airtight fabric levels.

The Scotframe Val-U-Therm® building system was originally launched in 2011 and has been used in over 8,500 homes with an excellent track record. A UK market leader in full timber frame packages for new housing and commercial projects, Scotframe exclusively offers the Val-U-Therm PLUS® closed panel building system. This is accepted by financial institutions, NHBC, Premier Guarantee and Checkmate – the panels have a 60-year minimum service life.

Because it's a hybrid of the best aspects of SIPs and timber frame technology, coupled with the latest advances in material science, it offers much flexibility and innovation in the design and build process. The unique combination of design opportunities includes:

- Can be used for walls, roofs and floors
- All types of design and architecture, even curved walls and roofs
- Can be thermally engineered to perform as an optimum combination
- Unrestricted elevational treatments – brick, stone, render, cladding, tile, timber, etc.
- All interior finishes and treatments
- Large-span roofs with vaulted ceilings, if required
- Dramatic open-plan layouts offering lifestyle flexibility
- Extensive glazed features and uninterrupted roof-space living areas
- BBA accredited building system, including in-fill panels in other building systems

Couple this with its exceptional thermal performance and sustainability, Val-U-Therm PLUS® provides a straightforward and cost-effective way for architects to hit energy efficiency, air permeability and other environmental targets. It offers a fit-and-forget, future-proof solution, whatever level of environmental specifications are required –



for example, 'A' rated Energy Performance Certificates, PassivHaus or the highest levels of energy saving and carbon neutrality.

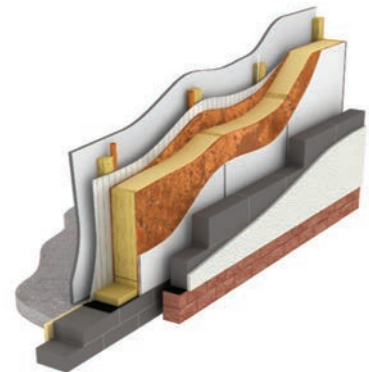
The patented Val-U-Therm PLUS® is also inherently sustainable due to careful sourcing of raw materials with a minimal environmental impact. Scotframe's timber is sourced from FSC and PEFC sustainably managed forests and the insulation in Val-U-Therm PLUS® panels is based on renewable vegetable oil, has zero ozone depletion potential and is CFC, HFC and HCFC-free with a Global Warming Potential of less than five. This means it has a BRE Green Guide A/A+ Rating – the same as straw bales or sheep wool yet is hydrophobic offering flood mitigation.

From the UK's first PassivHaus for rent (which won a Green Apple Award) to examples that significantly exceed the PassivHaus standard, Scotframe has been leading the way using Val-U-Therm® technology in energy efficient building for many years.

The Maryville PassivHaus delivered a total primary energy demand of 69 kWh/m²a (exceeding the PassivHaus requirement of 120 kWh/m²a). This 'Fabric First' approach is also suitable for commercial buildings – the Rocking Horse Nursery at the University of Aberdeen, which caters for 78 pre-school children, achieved an air tightness of 0.475 ACH.

Hence Scotframe homes and buildings are warm and draught-proof in winter, cool and well ventilated in summer, healthy for all the family and enjoy remarkably low energy bills. Scotframe Val-U-Therm PLUS® allows the construction of typical family homes that can cost less than £95 a year to heat.

The great news is that building to these high



standards is not necessarily more expensive or time consuming using Scotframe Val-U-Therm PLUS®. Edinburgh Napier University compared the cost per square metre of superstructure using 10 different building systems.

Scotframe Val-U-Therm® cost £1092 when built to PassivHaus standards, while the other nine systems ranged from £711 to £1138 when built only to existing Building Regulations. It took 65 days to build a Scotframe home to PassivHaus standards; the other 26 homes ranged from 49 to 126 days to build, again only to Building Regulations.

So, if you are looking to design a dream home or superlative building – think Scotframe Val-U-Therm PLUS®.

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WATER AND GAS PROTECTION

Kevin Dodds of Delta Membrane Systems explores the complexities and challenges around structural waterproofing for developments which also require ground gas protection.

Waterproofing structures offers protection to structural components, buildings, and installations from the penetration of water. They reduce risk, and will prolong the life of the structure. Some below ground construction projects, however, require protection from both water ingress and gas contamination.

It's now possible to produce a waterproofing design which incorporates both a waterproof and gas proof protection system, but these types of projects require a different strategy and methodology compared to a 'typical' waterproofing design. BS8102:2009 and BS8485:2015 are intertwined. Basements and below ground structures which need to be watertight and gas proof are not more complex to design, but they do require further considerations at the design phase and throughout the project.

The object of structural waterproofing is to protect a structure from water ingress for its lifetime. The objective of ground gas protection is to prevent a build-up of gasses against a structure.

WHEN IT ALL GOES WRONG

Gorebridge, a town just south of Edinburgh, has recently hit the headlines all for the wrong reasons. Midlothian council developed a former mining area to build 64 new homes. The council had taken all appropriate measures to ensure there would be no ground gas contamination in these homes, engaging with architects, principal engineers, contaminated land specialists, structural engineers and ground investigation engineers. What could go wrong? Seemingly there was no gas proof membrane incorporated in the floor slab construction. The reason? It wasn't specified.

22 residents of the 64 homes complained of dry coughs, dizziness, headaches and anxiety. Six ended up in hospital, and a £12m legal battle commenced – who was to blame for this error? The Gorebridge incident could be an exceptional event, or

ground gas contamination may be a more widespread issue than previously thought.

A WINNING COMBINATION

Innovations within the waterproofing sector have seen the introduction of ground gas protection systems, which are capable of offering both gas protection and waterproofing.

A waterproofing design specialist will be able to interpret the requirements of BS8102:2009 and BS8485:2015 to produce a waterproofing design which incorporates both a waterproof and gas proof protection system.

If a site has been identified with a gas or hydrocarbon contamination, it will have been given a 'Characteristic Situation Score'. This is defined according to how severe the gas flow from the ground is.

All sites which have been characterised with a gas situation score will require a gas protection system and, where identified, a waterproof protection barrier.

METHODS OF GAS PROTECTION

Gas protection is a technical solution to prevent or to control gas penetration into properties. The control of gas migration is normally achieved by blocking the pathway or removing the source of the gas generation. There are several methods available to protect new build properties.

Gas protection measures available to achieve the minimum points score requires a combination of two or more of the following be used:

- structural barrier
- ventilation measures
- gas resistant membrane

METHODS OF STRUCTURAL WATERPROOFING

There are three types of waterproofing methods. These are defined as:

- Type A Tanked or Barrier Protection – cementitious or bitumen-based products applied internally, externally or sandwiched within the structure
- Type B Structurally Integral Protection –

reinforced or prestressed concrete designed through composite and integrated details such as water bars to be water resistant

- Type C Drained Protection – cavity drainage systems which allow for water ingress but in a controlled fashion

Evaluation of groundwater conditions, risk assessment and options for drainage outside the structure should always be considered.

SPECIALISTS & WARRANTIES

Structural warranty providers such as the NHBC stipulate it as a mandatory requirement that a CSSW qualified waterproofing designer is involved in the waterproofing design process, and other warranty providers such as Premier Guarantees and LABC are following suit.

The Property Care Association has devised a register which provides a central point for individuals with the relevant waterproofing design skills. The PCA register allows developers, architects and builders to quickly locate vetted and approved waterproofing design specialists who can assist in the design and planning of underground waterproofing.

A waterproofing design specialist will work with architects, surveyors, contractors and engineers alike to provide a design service which complies with BS8102:2009 and BS8485:2015 and offers detail to design. The ability to easily identify and engage a waterproofing design specialist will allow a design team to conform to the recommendations set out in the Building Regulations.

Kevin Dodds is director at Delta Membrane Systems



Structural solution helps cut costs



A survey and design exercise by a leading structural engineering practice has helped reduce costs and transform a disused mill into a luxurious new residential accommodation building. Greater Manchester-based **Rhodes & Partners** undertook the work on the Grade II listed building in Derbyshire, and devised a solution which helped minimise the need for costly temporary work by utilising as much of the original structure as possible. Rhodes & Partners' Technical Director, Peter Graham explains: "Part of the structure had suffered a high degree of deflection, but we were able to design a detailed system of cross-bracing which stabilised the building and allowed the refurbishment to proceed."

0161 427 8388 www.rhodesandpartners.co.uk

Timber frame is re-shaping the UK



The growth of timber frame is gradually changing practices within housebuilding as the construction industry slowly but surely embraces the idea of off-site manufacture. The reduction in on-site activity means that, once the building's foundations are installed, erection of the

main structure follows very quickly. The materials that go into a timber frame system are generally more sustainable and more energy efficient than traditional masonry. For example, **Norbord's** SterlingOSB, is manufactured from home-grown forest 'thinnings'. SterlingOSB is a sustainable, low-energy product with excellent physical performance characteristics.

www.norbord.co.uk



Builder and plasterers essentials

One of the world's largest construction manufacturers: **Simpson Strong-Tie**, has released a new catalogue of structural connectors, beads and meshes aimed squarely at the repair maintenance and improvement sector. The 2018 'Builder and Plasterers Essentials' brochure includes all of the core products that the professional builder or plasterer reaches for when renovating or extending homes.

Simpsons' Sarah Greenway explains: "We wanted to provide something more accessible to the builders merchant. We spoke to our customers and they told us what they really like to see in the catalogue (and what they don't particularly need) and this is the result – a brochure focussed entirely on the things that matter to the RMI sector."

The lighter and easier to navigate brochure is available online from the Simpson Strong-Tie website, hard copies are available on request.

01827 255600 www.strongtie.co.uk

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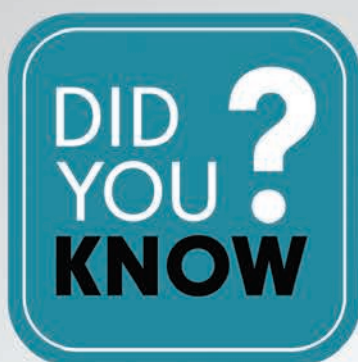
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