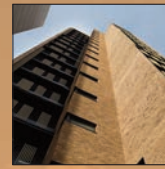




Brian Berry reports on how SME workloads are up, despite difficult conditions facing builders



Sadiq Khan launches £38m fund for community-led housing in London



Braeburn Estates hands over an innovative offsite housing scheme for Lambeth council

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Developer Retirement Villages provides a sociable mix of apartments and cottages on a sloping site in the Essex village of Newport



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James Parker

FROM THE EDITOR

As a dad with a new baby, I know how hard it can be juggling the many challenges of work with the more considerable challenges of keeping a small human fed, washed and entertained. While it should be otherwise, women still bear by far the greatest burden in our society when it comes to childcare, and if construction wants to fix the huge gender diversity mismatch, it needs to change its attitude on flexible working.

All responsible employers talk about it being a good thing, but how many are allowing it to happen in practice? The industry wants to make itself more attractive to female applicants, but how far has it gone to provide the work/life balance that's increasingly required?

It's one of the key factors that is still putting large numbers of women off joining the industry, beyond the persistent stigma of construction still being too blokey, and even openly sexist. While the worst and most obvious excesses like wolf-whistling may now be consigned to the past, are there more persistent, more subtle obstacles around flexible working?

Half of the firms that responded to a 2018 *Construction News* survey said they had never had a female manager. The role models are still in short supply for women looking at the industry as a possible career path. A shocking 48 per cent of women said they had experienced discrimination, and you wonder if part of this was a lack of flexibility on employers' part to help make jobs fit better around peoples' lives.

In desk roles, it's not beyond the reason of at least larger firms to offer flexible start/finish times, job sharing or working from home where productivity isn't hampered. In fact, it might be enhanced due to having a less stressed, happier colleague.

While there are small mercies – 16 per cent of senior roles are occupied by women – the pay gap is still shameful, averaging 36 per cent. Construction is one of the worst of UK industries on pay, representing a failure to reward not only women's skills, but also to deal with the fact their priorities may shift as life progresses. It presumably also reflects the fact that site work is hugely male dominated – 99 per cent males in fact.

The move to offsite may well be one key means of addressing the latter imbalance. The increased move to far cleaner indoor methods, not requiring staff to jump when called onto site in all weathers could be a much needed lever for flexible working, and support a greater role for women in hands-on construction in general.

As well as childcare, both sexes may be caring for ageing relatives. While SMEs may never find it easy to offer fully flexible terms, making provision for staff to balance their lives with work, and trusting them, will in turn glean that trust as well as respect from staff, leading to better results. It's not easy, but it's good business, and means you'll keep the best staff.

James Parker

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ON THE COVER



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A VILLAGE WITHIN A VILLAGE

Developer Retirement Villages provides a sociable mix of apartments and cottages on a sloping site in the Essex village of Newport

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Half of local authorities will miss housing targets, says NAO report

Half of England's local authorities won't build enough homes to meet the "housing delivery test" set by the National Audit Office (NAO) for 2020, in a report published recently by the government watchdog which criticises the current planning system and the DCLG.

In the document, 'Planning for new homes,' the NAO critiques the planning system, alongside local councils' lack of action in meeting Government targets. It states that the reductions in local authority capability, an under-performing Planning Inspectorate, alongside failures in the system to ensure adequate contributions for infrastructure, all mean that "it is clear that the system is not working well."

"Given these problems," the report says, "We cannot conclude that the planning system currently provides value for money in terms of delivering new homes effectively."

The independent audit body has claimed that, as of December 2018, 44.1 per cent of authorities had an up-to-date local plan (less



than five years old), that sets out their strategies for reaching the targets. Until November 2018, the DCLG had only challenged 15 local authorities on this issue. The NAO believes that without new plans, local authorities will have less control over the location of developments, and that this lack of control risks "ill-suited" developments.

The report revealed that total spending by local authorities on planning functions fell 14.6 per cent in real terms between

2010-11 and 2017-18, with local authorities increasing their income to avoid further reductions.

The report also criticises the Planning Inspectorate for being slow to determine appeals, although the agency has itself acknowledged that its performance is unacceptable. On average, The Inspectorate is believed to take 38 weeks to determine an informal hearing or inquiry-based housing appeal.

Tax and Brexit blamed for 'parlous' state of market

The combination of successive tax hikes on residential property and uncertainty around Brexit "looms heavily" over the UK, according to London Central Portfolio's (LCP) analysis of recent HMRC's Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) statistics.

The analysis has revealed that tax receipts for 2018 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are down 8.5 per cent on 2017, and amount to £8.669bn, a loss of revenue of £802m.

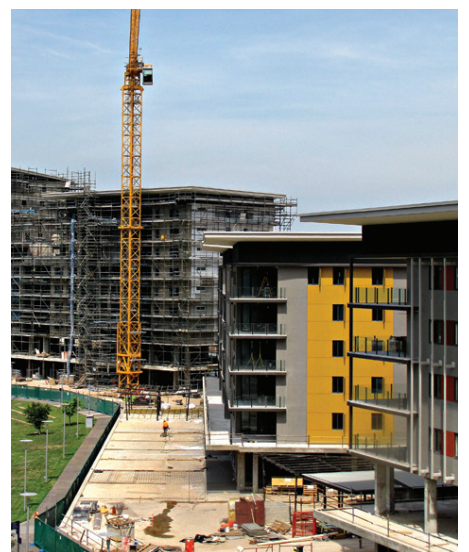
Along with this, transactions have fallen by 2.6 per cent in 2018, and now stand at just over one million. This compares with HM Land Registry data for 2018, which reports a 4 per cent fall. On a more granular level, HRAD transactions (those which include the 3 per cent additional duty) have been the hardest hit, with a fall of 4.6 per cent).

First Time Buyers' Relief, an initiative introduced to help many struggling to get on the housing ladder, amounted to £517m in 2018. This represents a saving for the average purchaser of £2,374 "at a crucial

time when they are saving for their first deposit," said LCP. However, take up reportedly appears to be plateauing, with 60,700 transactions claiming FTBR in Q4 2018, compared with 59,000 in Q3; a rise of just 2.9 per cent.

LCP stated that, with the housing market in such a "parlous" state, "it can only be hoped that Chancellor Philip Hammond will not implement an additional levy of 1 per cent on non-residential purchasers, proposed in the last Budget." The company believes that this would be "particularly imprudent" in light of the UK's need to build on global investment as it exits the EU.

Foreign investors were revealed to make up a significant proportion of buyers in LCP's report, particularly in new build developments. With developers "currently struggling and scaling back projects," LCP believed this new tax would not be welcome, as the higher end stock enables developers to build out much needed affordable housing. It also sees a material



impact on tax revenues as unlikely, given the recent trend of falling receipts, alongside steadily rising tax rates.

Naomi Heaton, CEO of LCP, commented: "HMRC's 2018 stamp duty statistics do not paint a rosy picture of the UK housing market, with neither the buyer nor the Exchequer winning out. Until the Government has a clear road map for Brexit, we are unlikely to see increased transactions, and therefore increased revenues."

Community-led social home schemes get £38m

A £38m fund for community-led housing in London has been launched by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, intended to “enable communities to play a leading role in building new social and affordable homes.”

The number of SME builders has fallen over the last 10 years, and Khan has called for action to buck this trend. He said the new London Community Housing Fund will help address this, by allowing local residents to get directly involved in building and managing new homes themselves, such as via co-operatives and community land trusts.

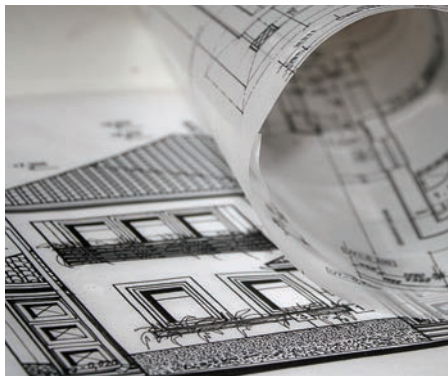
The new fund is expected to “unlock” 500 community-led homes by 2023, and will make grants or loans available to support building, development and delivery. Some of the funding will also be allocated to provide financial help for potential costs such as submitting planning applications or design fees.

Now open for bids, the fund comes alongside a new prospectus published online by City Hall, intended to provide guidance for community groups who wish to bid, and advice for Londoners who wish to form such a group. Communities looking to develop their own homes will be able to contact the London Community-Led Housing Hub for information, advice,

funding and technical support.

Sadiq Khan explained some of the reasons behind the launch: “In London we have become far too reliant on large developers to build new housing. We need more homes to be built by councils and by communities themselves – and so I want to support more community-led housing projects that put London residents at the heart of the process.

“We have listened to what community-led housing groups say they need, and in response this new fund offers practical support and help with development costs that have often held community-led projects back. I urge Londoners interested in developing their own homes to read our new guidance and bid for funding.”



Government overhauls Complaints Resolution Service

A new Housing Complaints Resolution Service has been announced by Communities Secretary James Brokenshire, intended to give homeowners and tenants “quick and simple access to help when things go wrong,” as well as a New Homes Ombudsman.

It’s intended that the new complaints service “will provide residents of all kinds a straight-forward way of getting help when faced with issues around their homes,” such as repairs and maintenance.

In contrast to other sectors, there are currently several different housing complaints bodies, with the system branded by Brokenshire as being “complicated and bureaucratic.” The new service is set to prevent people from “battling with their landlord or builder to resolve issues on their own,” and make it easier to claim compensation.

Alongside the complex system of multiple complainant bodies, membership of redress schemes is currently compulsory for some tenures but not others. In the private rented sector, for example, there is no obligation for landlords to register with a complaints system, “leaving renters without any course for redress,” said the Ministry of Housing. In order to combat this issue, Brokenshire has announced that private landlords are to be legally required to become members of a redress scheme, with a fine of up to £5,000 if they fail to do so.

To protect the interests of those purchasing new build homes, the Government has repeated its commitment to establishing a New Homes Ombudsman, which is intended to champion home buyers and hold developers to account. The Ministry of Housing stated that legislation will be brought forward at the “earliest possible opportunity, requiring all new developers to belong to this Ombudsman.” Developers will also have to belong to the new body by 2021 if they wish to participate in the Help to Buy scheme.

Brokenshire commented on the wide-ranging announcement: “The proposals I have announced will help ensure all residents are able to access help when they need it, so disputes can be resolved faster, and people can get compensation where it’s owed.”

£497m Government social housing fund announced, amid criticisms of inadequate action

The Government is set to make £497m of funding available to build 11,000 social homes across the country.

Announced by Communities Secretary James Brokenshire in a speech given to the London First Building Summit, he argued that new housing in the capital will be key to reaching the Government’s housing targets, stating that there is “no question that we need to raise our game urgently.”

Richard Beresford, chief executive of the National Federation of Builders (NFB), welcomed the news, while noting its shortfalls: “Despite not being new money, this decision shows the Government is listening and taking action. It’s not enough, but it’s a first step in the

right direction towards building more social and affordable homes.”

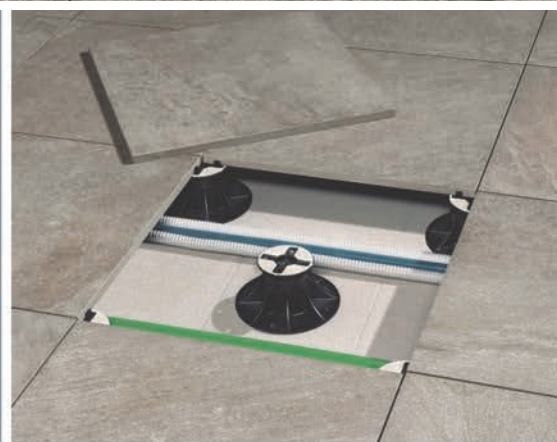
The NFB has argued however that while this a forward step, more needs to be done on planning reform. Rico Wojtulewicz, head of housing and planning policy at the House Builders Association (HBA), explained: “Brokenshire needs to seize every opportunity to build more homes, but the greatest obstacle remains the slow and expensive planning process which prevents us from getting our shovels in the ground. From Essex to Ecclestone, as long as the planning system remains broken and unreformed, we will never build the 800 homes a day we so desperately need.”



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Construction output falls as Brexit uncertainty continues



The UK construction sector saw a “loss of momentum” in January, according to the latest PMI data, with business activity growth heading towards its weakest for 10 months.

The IHS Markit/CIPS UK Construction Total Activity Index dropped to 50.6 in January, from 52.8 in December. The index has posted above the 50.0 (no-change) mark in each month since the snow-related decline in March 2018, but the latest expansion was the weakest seen for a decade, IHS/CIPS confirmed.

The Construction PMI data also showed that new orders increased only marginally at the start of 2019, which contributed to the slowest expansion of employment numbers for two and a half years.

Despite the slowdowns, construction firms surveyed reported a positive outlook for business activity in 2019, with around 41 per cent of the panel anticipating a rise in output, while only 16 per cent forecast a fall. Large-scale civil engineering projects were cited as a key source of optimism, while Brexit uncertainty was the most commonly cited concern. A number of survey respondents noted that uncertainty caused by the current stalemate had led to hesitancy among clients, and a corresponding slowdown in progress on new projects.

All three categories of construction output recorded weaker trends than those reported in December. Residential work was the strongest performing area, although the latest expansion was reportedly only modest, and the slowest seen since March 2018. Civil Engineering activity increased marginally, with the rate of

growth much softer than December's 19-month high. Commercial work was the weakest performing area in January, “with anecdotal evidence pointing towards Brexit-related anxiety as the cause,” said IHS/CIPS.

New business growth eased to reach an eight-month low in January. According to the PMI, construction firms widely reported softer demand conditions and longer sales conversion times, leading to what IHS/CIPS calls a “wait-and-see” approach to spending by clients. Concerns about the near-term outlook for new projects resulted in more cautious staff hiring policies at the start of 2019, with the latest survey pointing to the slowest rise in employment numbers since July 2016.

Meanwhile, slower growth of input buying is said to have helped to reduce pressure on construction supply chains in January, with the latest deterioration in vendor performance being the joint weakest since September 2016. Construction firms also pointed to the smallest reduction in sub-contractor availability for two and half years.

Input price inflation continued to moderate in January, with average cost burdens rising at the slowest pace since June 2016. Where an increase in purchasing costs was reported, this was generally linked to rising prices for imported construction products and materials.

Councils spend £22m a year renting back RTB homes



Over £22m is being spent by councils in London each year renting back homes sold under the Right to Buy, with a London Assembly spokesperson calling for the abolition of Right to Buy in the capital.

In a new report from Labour's London Assembly housing spokesperson, Tom Copley, claimed that it was “reckless” of the

Government to continue with the Right to Buy scheme in a time of housing shortage.

In the report, entitled ‘Right to Buy: Wrong for London,’ Copley states that the number of Right to Buy homes now in London's private rented sector has risen by at least 11,825 in the last five years, to reach a stock of approximately 54,000. These figures come in responses to Freedom of Information requests submitted by Copley to all London councils, and are reportedly conservative, as some councils did not provide data. It was revealed that 42 per cent of homes sold through Right to Buy in London are now being rented out by private landlords at market rates (up from 36 per cent in 2014).

According to the report, councils are being forced to rent back properties formerly sold under the Right to Buy to use as temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless families. It was found that at least 2,333 Right to Buy homes are now being rented by local authorities, with Newham alone renting back 808 of these at a cost of £12.9m per year. The total yearly cost to councils renting back these properties is stated to be at least £22,345,760.

Westminster Council is reportedly renting back 650 former council homes, but couldn't provide a figure for the annual cost of this. Based on the average cost of renting back council homes across London, this could be in excess of £8m a year.

In order to meet the growing need for more housing, some councils are reportedly buying back homes they had previously sold under Right to Buy. Ealing Council, for example, has bought back 516 former council properties. While more than half of these were for regeneration projects, Copley tells that Ealing found themselves spending £107m buying these back – more than six times the £16.2m they received through the original sales of these homes, which were discounted by £15.6m under Right to Buy.

Copley commented on his report: “Something has gone very wrong when tens of thousands of homes built to be let at social rents for the public good are now being rented out at market rates for private profit, sometimes back to the very councils that were forced to sell them.

“The Right to Buy is failing London and should be abolished. Home ownership is still important for many people, but it can't come at ‘any cost,’ particularly if it means families struggling to put a roof over their heads or living in poor conditions. It's not right that cash-strapped councils are having to fork out eye-watering amounts renting back properties they were forced to sell at a discount.”

He suggests that, “at the very least,” he wants to see the Government “exempting newly built council homes from the Right to Buy and legislating to prevent Right to Buy homes being let on the private market.”

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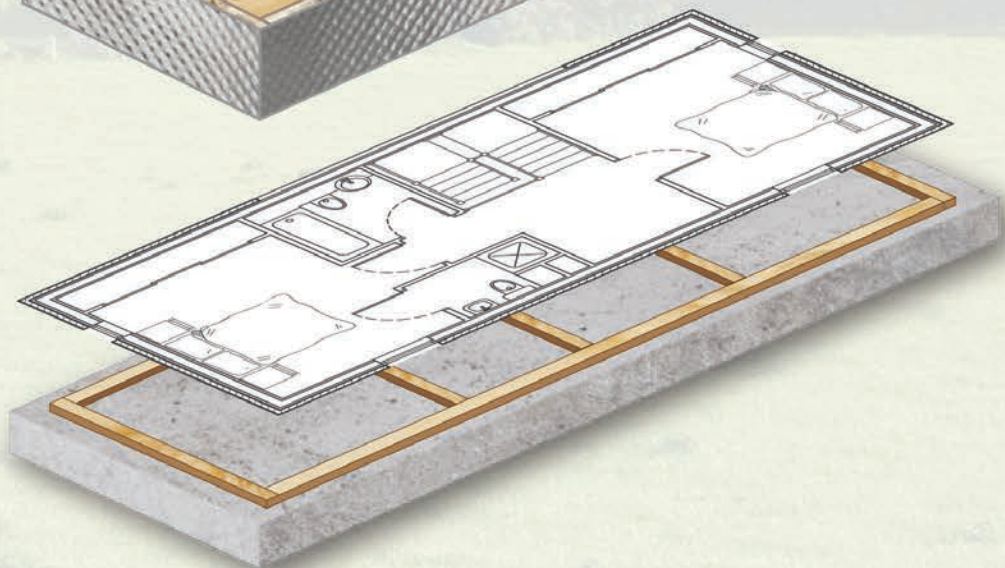
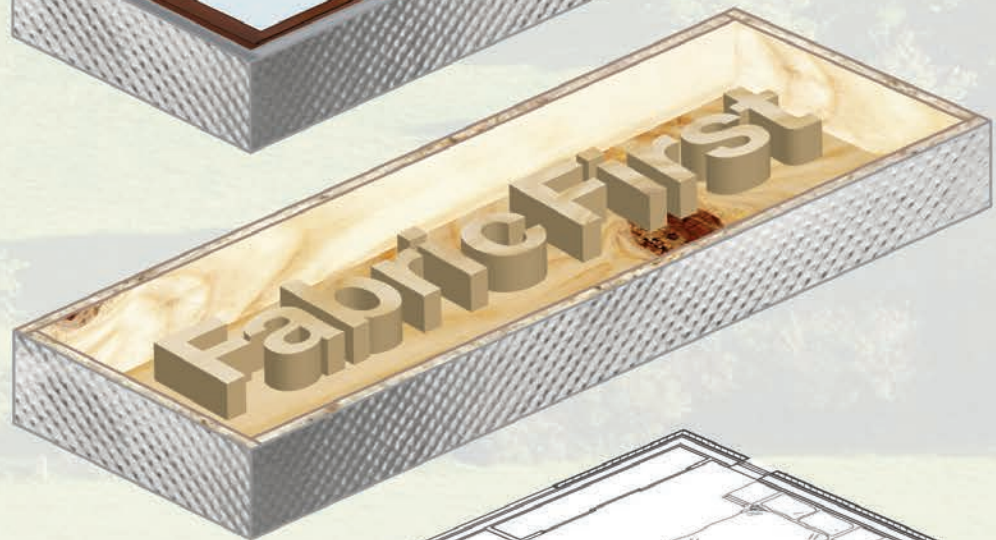
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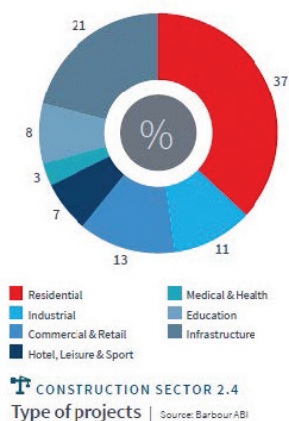
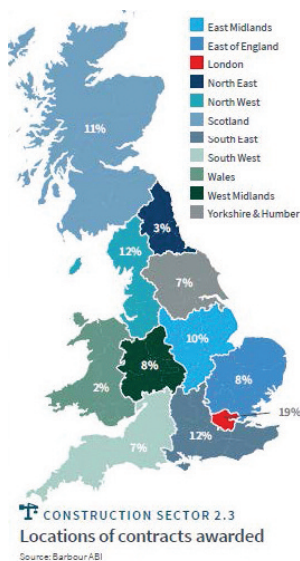


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SPEED OF CONSTRUCTION





Contract values slide by 13.1 per cent year on year

The value of all construction contracts awarded in the UK was down 13.1 per cent in 2018 from the previous year, at £61.6bn. The share of residential contracts rose however, the sector leading the way with the highest proportion of contracts.

According to Barbour ABI's latest edition of the Economic & Construction Market Review, the quantity of construction contracts awarded also continued on a downwards trend, with 10,352 awarded during 2018, down 8.2 per cent on 2017, and 16.8 per cent from the 2014 peak of 12,440.

The 'planning pipeline' of projects reportedly remains positive, however. Infrastructure performed particularly well, with a 113 per cent increase on 2017.

The residential sector had the highest proportion of contract awards by value in 2018, with a 37 per cent share, which is an

increase of 2 per cent on 2017. Following this, infrastructure was reported to be the second largest sector for contract awards in 2018, with a 21 per cent share. This was a decrease of 9 per cent on 2017, however.

In terms of construction performance across the UK regions, London had the highest share of contracts awarded in 2018, with a 19.4 per cent share, down slightly from 20 per cent in 2017.

The south east had the second highest construction performance, with a 12.1 per cent share, followed by the north west, accounting for 11.8 per cent of contract awards, down 0.1 per cent and 0.2 per cent respectively on the previous year.

Infrastructure fund launched for 8,500 homes across Northants



Work has begun on two developments of a combined 8,500 new homes in Northamptonshire, enabled in part by a £70m loan from Homes England.

The two new residential schemes in Kettering and Wellingborough, located within an hour of London and Birmingham, will reportedly help to create around 3,000 jobs, and well as bring schools, leisure and commercial space to the area.

The schemes' combined value is projected to be around £2.5bn over their

lifetime, which is estimated to be 20 years.

Homes England has agreed the loan as part of the £4.5bn Home Building Fund. The investment is intended to fund infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

Speaking of Homes England's role in delivering the sites, Sir Edward Lister, chair of the agency, said: "Providing infrastructure upfront is key to unlocking significant housing growth, and Homes England's investment in Kettering and Wellingborough will enable two major housing projects to be delivered after many years of delay."

Kit Malthouse, Minister of State for Housing, also commented: "I am delighted to hear shovels are already in the ground as builders set about delivering 8,500 much-needed homes."

Grey appointed to top risk role at Homes England

Homes England has appointed a new chief risk officer, as part of its plans for a "strategic and assertive" approach to building new homes.

Mark Gray has joined the agency from British Business Bank, where he has served as chief risk officer since 2013.

He will be accountable for the effective management of financial risk, as well as the implementation and maintenance of the risk management framework across existing and future programmes.

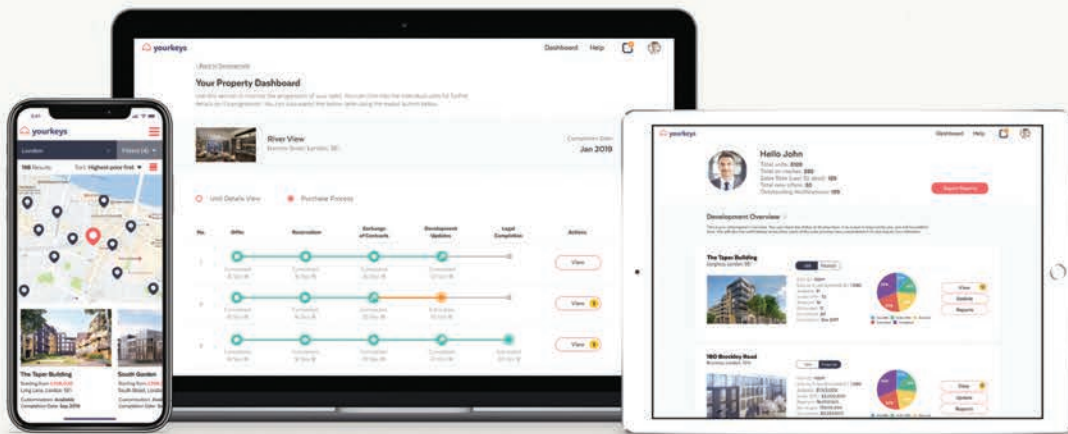
Homes England chief executive, Nick Walkley, commented on the appointment: "I'm delighted to welcome Mark as he takes up this vital role within the organisation. He brings with him a wealth of experience of working with partners to help increase and unlock resources; a mission that very much chimes with that of Homes England."

"As chief risk officer, Mark will have responsibility for protecting the business through financial risk management, which becomes increasingly important as we increase pace through our funding and delivery programmes."

Mark has previously worked in investment banking for Banque Nationale de Paris, Swiss Bank Corporation, Credit Suisse First Boston and Morgan Stanley, as well in financial services for Shawbrook Bank and General Motors Acceptance Corporation.

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- ✗ Confused and unhappy buyers
- ✗ Poor communication



Redrow founder triumphs against Daily Mail

“Substantial” damages plus an apology have been received by Steve Morgan CBE, founder and chairman of Redrow, following the settlement of his defamation claim against *Daily Mail* publisher Associated Newspapers.

The action followed false and defamatory claims from the newspaper that Morgan made significant personal gain by purchasing six Redrow houses, designated for sale as affordable homes, at £860,000 – which would have been a large discount to their market value of £2.1m.

A statement was read in court, and the *Daily Mail* published the following on its site: “In fact, £860,000 was the highest offer made, so we were wrong to allege that Mr Morgan had exploited his position to line his pockets in a greedy, unethical and morally unacceptable way. He did not buy the houses at a discount to their market value, and they are being rented out to local residents in accordance with affordable housing criteria.

We apologise to Mr Morgan for the distress and damage to his reputation and, at his request, have made a substantial donation to charity in lieu of damages.”

At Morgan’s request, the damages payment has been made in full to charity, and will reportedly be put towards adapted mini-buses for two special needs schools in Ellesmere Port and Llandudno. They will enable severely disabled children to access offsite activities.

Morgan commented: “This is a significant victory against the *Daily Mail* and one which demonstrates that the publication cannot unjustly print defamatory and untrue stories without basis or reason.

“The suggestion that I would ‘greedily’ take self-advantage at the expense of low-income families is hugely insulting and has caused me a great deal of anger and distress. These allegations fly in the face of all that I stand for. “It is a shame that it has taken 18 months for justice to be served.”



New sponsors for Women in Social Housing

Industry network Women in Social Housing (WISH) has announced a number of new national sponsors from the housing and construction sectors.

Construction company Kier, law firm Capsticks, development and investment company MHA London, and housing specialist recruitment company Greenacre have agreed to sponsor the independent networking organisation, currently the only membership-based network for women working across every discipline of UK housing.

David Mawson, executive director of specialist services at Kier, commented: “As an industry, it is vital that we work together to create a workforce that is diverse. It brings with it so many benefits, from widening the talent pool to reflecting the residents that we serve.

“As a business, we have a number of internal and external initiatives in place to support our commitment to creating a balanced business. We are proud to be sponsoring the Women in Social Housing network. It is supporting women as they enter our industry, and proactively showcasing the career opportunities and various routes to entry as it looks to inspire more people to consider a role within the built environment.”

Aiming to challenge stereotypes and help to remove barriers for women working in these industries, WISH is undertaking work in schools to support young women to consider careers in housing, as well as assisting women already working in the sector to progress and develop.

The company already has a number of sponsorships with like-minded organisations and suppliers, such as JLL, PRP, Calfordseaden, and BRC Recruitment Consultants, alongside partners Hough Bellis Communications, Campbell Tickell, Resource (creative services partner), Connectin (events partner) and 24housing (media partner).

Barratt reports ‘good progress’ in developer’s half year results

Barratt Developments has announced its half year results for the second half of 2018, reporting that it had made “good progress,” while acknowledging the uncertainties present in the current business environment.

The results showed that Britain’s largest housebuilder by volume completed a total of 7,622 units, up 4.1 per cent from 7,324 during the same period in 2017. Barratt also reported that revenue was up by 7.2 per cent to £2.1bn, and that its pre-tax profits were at £408m, a 20 per cent increase on the previous years’ figure which was £342.7m.

Despite the current uncertainty in the industry surrounding Britain’s impending departure from the EU, Barratt maintains it’s in a “strong position,” stating it has a “substantial net cash balance, strong balance sheet, a healthy forward sales position and an experienced management team.” It insists that this “strong financial foundation” provides it with the flexibility to take action as and when necessary.

The company also said that given the uncertainties, it has been working with suppliers in a number of ways to ensure the “continuity of supply of non-UK manufac-

tured components” in order to “mitigate the potential for disruption.” These include product specification reviews, logistic route reviews and the holding of additional inventories.

Barratt credits its positive results in part to the utilisation of modern methods of construction, an area it plans to continue developing. It says this has allowed them to develop housetypes which are “easier and quicker to build.” Barratt has also stated that customer satisfaction and build quality remains high.

Commenting on the results, chief executive David Thomas said: “The group has delivered a strong operational and financial performance across the half year. Operating efficiencies are delivering improved margins and our controlled and disciplined business model means we have a high-quality land bank, strong forward sales, excellent financial position and efficient cash flow generation.”

He continued: “Whilst we continue to monitor market conditions closely, current trading is in line with our expectations. and we are confident of delivering a good financial and operational performance in 2019.”



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Slow speed of housing delivery due to absorption rates, says Letwin

The reason for the slow delivery of housing developments in the UK is not to do with construction methods, but is down to market conditions on individual sites, according to a leading Conservative MP.

Sir Oliver Letwin, who oversees the Cabinet Office, has undertaken a review of build out of development sites. He told a Westminster Social Policy Forum event: "The reason why it takes so long to build these houses out on these very large sites has to do with whether there are people, who at the prices at which they are being sold, want to buy more houses in that place at that time or not."

Letwin added: "Unsurprisingly, builders like to sell the houses that they've built very quickly." The current generation of large builders are "very conscious" of what happened to many firms during the last recession, and "try desperately to make sure they have only built the number of houses that they can sell of that kind, in that place at

that time, at that prices."

He said that while his review has made recommendations on tackling this, there were "truths" such as that builders do not set the prices, but rather the secondhand market. However, he also added that a further 'truth' was that "almost all of the homes that the very large builders build are astonishingly, and to my mind appallingly, predictable." Letwin continued: "If you know the builder, you broadly know the product. The degree of monotony that is generated on these sites is quite unlike what we saw in other countries, where large sites are highly various in many respects."

He said this was largely a problem occurring in homes for sale on the open market, and that "there is precious little else on most of these sites." Letwin believed that driving down house prices was not the solution. "If you would make the assumption you are not going to drive down the price, but want to increase the rate, then you have to address



kinds of demand that are not being addressed at the moment," he said. "One way is to vary the product, so that even amongst the open market for sale houses there are different kinds of things, because there are different kinds of people and different people have different desires."

He concluded: "There's another set of untapped demand for homes that are not being built on these sites."

Industry panel tackles the big issue: how can we kick-start new build sales?

Housebuilders and developers recently attended a panel event in London on possible ways that the industry could improve the new-build housing market, with talking points including research and development, greater personalisation and Government tariffs.

Hosted by Property Wire, and chaired by Gilles Barrie, former Property Week editor, the event kicked off with Dave Bexon from Redrow, who stressed that it was a critical time for housebuilders, and the last thing the sector needed was the Government to introduce "draconian" tariffs for foreign investors. It was noted that more developments have been launched overall, due to foreign buyers favouring first phase, off-plan pre-sales.

Riccardo Iannucci-Dawson from sponsors Yourkeys pointed out that the construction sector only invested 2 per cent into R&D (reportedly the same as the farming industry), compared to 25 per cent invested by the tech industry, and that to improve efficiencies and greater revenues the industry needs to invest more into technology.

Andy Frankish from The Mortgage Advice Bureau gave insights into how

radically different the mortgage landscape will be during 2019. This is reportedly largely due to the introduction of 'Affordability Passports' as an alternative to mortgages, providing greater flexibility for buyers to make offers on new homes more rapidly.

Nick Wright, from CBRE, stated that housebuilders and developers need to "bite the bullet" and offer much greater personalisation. He told the audience that millennials are just the start of consumers demanding greater choice, and that the spoils of that market will only go to the companies who best respond to those consumers.

The attendees also heard from Paul Smee from the Conveyancing Association, on legislation just introduced by the CLC (Council for Licences Conveyancers). He told that this states that all property lawyers must now publish prices, service and quality information on their websites to help foster innovation and competition across the legal services market.

Finally, Iannucci-Dawson closed the event by stating that Yourkeys addressed many of the issues raised, including the new requirements imposed on conveyancers. He

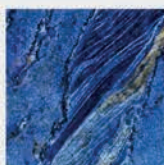
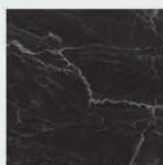
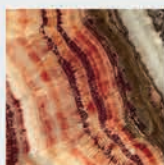


stated that Yourkeys was one solution that helped accelerate the sale of new-builds and reduced the number of sales fall-throughs, helping to kick start sales in 2019.

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Modular construction – can it really be the answer to the UK's housing crisis?

Chris Patrick, partner at QS/project management firm Bruceshaw, reports on the opening night debate at the Surface Design Show, which heard from designers and others on the potential of modular construction in the housing sector.

The opening night debate of the Surface Design Show in London was highly topical for housebuilders, being titled 'Factory-made Housing: is this the solution to building better homes long-term?' The talk was held in association with the Royal Institute of British Architects and New London Architecture.

The discussion was chaired by NLA chairman Peter Murray, who was joined by Nigel Ostime of architects Hawkins\Brown, Hazel Rounding of architects shedkm, and Jane Richards of engineering and professional services firm WSP.

To begin, Murray took the audience back to post-war Britain, when Harold Macmillan was faced with the ambitious task of building hundreds of thousands of homes. Macmillan's answer? Pre-fabricated housing. It was hugely successful in terms of meeting targets and the needs of the nation, but the style and design of the structures has become less popular as time has passed.

Faced with another housing shortage now however, could modular housing, or Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), be a large part of the solution? Could contemporary design overcome the apparent PR problems existing modular or pre-fab homes face, given their proven ability to solve build problems fast?

BREAKING BARRIERS

Nigel Ostime then explained the benefits of MMC, combined with a Vertically Integrated Supply (VIS) chain, if embraced by the sector: the potential to eliminate RIBA Stage 4 and create a faster, safer, lower carbon, and less wasteful production model – and the potential to employ a more diverse workforce in the process.

But there are barriers to the method. For one, cost: opening a factory to produce pre-fabricated housing through MMC methods is no small endeavour. This would create a major barrier for developers entering the pre-fab homebuilding market, Ostime said.

Another barrier is the outdated misconceptions about pre-fabricated homes being flimsy and unattractive. These need to be eliminated. "The best way to address the problems is to build them (pre-fabricated homes) and prove their efficacy," proffered Ostime, who went on to cite developer Pocket Living as an example of how to do MMC well. Helen Rounding, from shedkm, also came out in emphatic support of MMC, highlighting the excellent design and quality that can be achieved.

Rounding said that in the wake of the last recession, the housing market needed to be challenged and disrupted, which shedkm began to do with their Town House project – demonstrating how it was a neighbourhood of homes that would rebuff some of the misconceptions around factory built houses.

A last barrier may simply be rhetoric. We always talk about rooms rather than space, when it is space that is the issue. This

habit of using a syntax that is in its nature more personal is particular to residential building of course. Jane Richards pointed out that the term pre-fab, with all its aforementioned connotations, is not helpful in selling the idea. Modular building systems are no longer rectangular boxes, they are much more flexible.

DEVELOPING MODULARITY

Jane Richards of WSP joined the talk with a positive note, having observed a shift in thinking over the last 18 months to a more favourable attitude to offsite manufacturing. She said that the discussion across the industry has progressed from if to how, and the construction world knows it must now respond to the need for building modular spaces in volume. Berkeley Homes, having invested in its own factory, is predicting that 20 per cent of its pipeline will be pre-fabricated. And L&G and Laing O'Rourke are also embracing and investing in the change too.

Shifting from a building to a manufacturing mindset comes with another issue – it requires a steady demand for the supply. In order for this to happen, inter-governmental departments need to be behind the cause to ensure the availability of land in the right locations upon which to build.

And there lies the final barrier. Once Government has recognised the vision, the industry needs to reorganise itself and deliver using Modern Methods of Construction that meet the requirements of the prevailing housing crisis, fast, and for the future.

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Springfield Properties acquires Livingston housebuilder

The completed acquisition of the entire issued share capital of Walker Holdings (Scotland) Limited (trading as Walker Group) ("Walker") has been announced by Springfield Properties.

A Livingston-based housebuilder, focused on private housing in Edinburgh's commuter belt, Walker Holdings was acquired for a net consideration of up to £31m. The net amount of the acquisition is to be funded from Springfield's existing cash balances and borrowing facilities with Bank of Scotland.

It is intended that this acquisition will expand the company's land bank and sales presence to the popular, high-growth commuter belt surrounding the Scottish capital. The move utilises and exceeds the group's budget for its current financial year for land purchases, and therefore supports and enhances the group's existing forecasts and visibility for future years.

The group will retain Walker's premises in Livingston, all of the company's 50 staff,

and the Walker brand. Peter Matthews, Springfield's managing director for Central Scotland (Private Housing), will take over the responsibility of running the business.

Sandy Adam, executive chairman of Springfield, commented on the news: "The acquisition has enabled us to diversify our land bank with sites at various stages of planning and development in East Central Scotland, where we have been looking to strengthen our foothold.

"We are pleased to have efficiently delivered a large proportion of our land-buying plans for the wider Edinburgh area, adding 10 sites to our land bank in one deal rather than with multiple individual deals. Walker's active sites bring an immediate sales presence in new locations and the sites in the pipeline further strengthen our land bank and enhance our quality of earnings."

Following the acquisition, the Group is currently operating on a total of 43 active sites.



Sheffield JV celebrates its 600th house completion

A housing-led regeneration programme in Sheffield – Sheffield Housing Company (SHC) has reached a string of major milestones. The joint venture body set up by Sheffield City Council is celebrating the completion of the 600th home, as well as the creation of 500 new jobs – 62 per cent of which have been filled by people from the city, and the awarding of 60 apprenticeships.

In the process, the company has spent over £80m with construction sector businesses in the city region. SHC was set up in 2011, and works with private sector construction partner Keepmoat Homes and Great Places Housing Group.

Of the new homes built in Sheffield, 452 have been sold outright, 36 sold for shared ownership, 26 offered at market rent and 86 at affordable rent.

Councillor Jack Scott, cabinet member for development at Sheffield City Council, commented: "The numbers tell a story when it comes to SHC. Through working in partnership, we have delivered huge economic and social boosts that will benefit areas of Sheffield that need it most, regenerating communities and giving people the support they need to build better homes, lives and opportunities."

SHC is currently working on the second phase of a 25 year plan to build 2,300 new affordable homes.

Gordon More, chief investment officer, at Homes England, said: "We're using our land, finance and expertise to speed up the delivery of new homes. A £5.4m loan, through our Home Building Fund, is a significant step towards increasing housing supply in Sheffield. We are committed to working in partnership with organisations like SHC to provide high quality affordable housing."



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Weston Group opens its £12m 'housebuilding factory' in Braintree

The Braintree Logistics Centre, a new 75,000 ft² build-off-site and distribution complex, claimed to be one of the most advanced in the UK construction industry, has been opened by Weston Logistics, part of the housebuilder Weston Group.

The "housebuilding factory" is a hybrid plant that introduces automotive-industry style logistics, as well as assembly and quality control aspects. The £12m centre is located on a high security, 3.5 acre site, and was designed by PRC Architects, Gideon Hillman, Globe Tooling and Weston Group.

Constructed over 18 months, the new complex contains a 10,000 ft² manufacturing, assembly and quality control workspace, as well as 60,000 ft² of warehousing space, and 5,000 ft² of offices. The complex currently has 40 staff, which will be augmented by 60 new logistics division jobs.

Weston Group's residential development division, Weston Homes, is offering purchasers a range of options to customise the specification of their home, including choice of kitchen units, colours, worktops and upstands, and a choice of bathroom suites, wall and floor tiles, colours and finishes. Buyers are also offered a choice of flooring such as wood or carpets, or different colours and finishes, to living areas, kitchens and bedrooms.

The storage centre holds the components required to build a house or apartment, including flooring, cladding, wall tiles, panelling material, kitchen components and bathroom components. When sourcing these materials and components, the supply chain is closely monitored and tracked via

GPS from an on-site control centre. Items are then barcoded, stored until needed, then retrieved, assembled and quality control tested, packaged as per the homebuyer's individual specification choices, then shipped to the group's different residential development sites.

The centre has the capacity to handle 1,200 'intermodal' container shipments per year. Three dock-leveller bays allow for the unloading of materials on pallets, and an advanced storage and retrieval system (ASRS) barcodes and stores items in a 60,000 ft², 26 ft high pallet racking complex, with 27 storage isles, which can hold over 8,000 pallets and other materials.

The computer controlled, wire-guided system fitted to the floor and storage isles allows for the computer-assisted Toyota fork-lift trucks in the complex to operate safely and precisely at extremely high-speeds. Weston Group claimed that deliveries can be unloaded, computer-coded and stored in as little as 15 minutes, compared to an average of three hours previously, and levels of transit and storage damage have been dramatically reduced.

At the shipping bay, data on customer's individual specification choice is downloaded onto a hand-held barcode and customer-order scanner, creating a 'pick-list' for items to be retrieved from the storage bay and assembly centre.

The manufacturing, assembly and quality-control workshop has been designed around a series of conveyor belts and stillages-on-wheels, which transport items to processing machines, as well as to precision engineering

tools and site assembly plants.

Raw materials can then be cut and assembled in the workshop into items such as bedroom wardrobes, bathroom vanity units and bathroom cabinets. Kitchen and bathroom components can be quickly assembled and transported on the 'stillages'. The workshop also enables water taps and kitchen and bathroom basins to be assembled, fully tested for water leaks, flow and temperature control, and barcoded once quality control-approved.

The bespoke customer order, typically a kitchen pack, bathroom pack and other fittings and finishes, is then packaged and shipped to the group's development sites. The complex can supply up to 60 plots per day at maximum capacity, but current plans are for Braintree to help deliver up to 5,000 new homes per annum.

Bob Weston, chief executive of Weston Group, commented on the complex: "The new Braintree Logistics Centre is a highly advanced distribution and build-off-site centre, and represents the future of the volume housebuilding industry.

"Within the next 10 years technology will allow for new homes to be fully manufactured off-site by robots and computer-assisted engineering tools, customer specification choices fully automated, and factory-made components then built on-site using machines like a highly advanced Lego system.

"This step change will help enhance site safety, quality control and automotive-like precision. Our factory is another pioneering part of the process."



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INDUSTRY MOVERS



James Lambert

Bellway

James Lambert has been appointed as commercial manager as Bellway Eastern Counties' third member of staff, as part of the company's rapid expansion plan.

Lambert brings five years' Bellway experience with him to the role for the developer's latest division. He first worked for Bellway in a summer placement while studying his Quantity Surveying BSc at Sheffield Hallam University, before applying for a full-time role as a surveyor/estimator when he graduated in 2013.

Commenting on his appointment, Lambert said: "I gained five years' experience at Bellway's office in Milton Keynes and was really keen to try a new challenge when I heard that the company was launching a new division from Huntingdon. Being part of the founding stages was too good an opportunity to turn down."

Lambert's new role as a commercial manager means that he is jointly responsible for land acquisitions sometimes worth tens of millions of pounds. "Working on such high value estimates for our land acquisitions is a massive responsibility, but I relish the challenge and working with the variety of consultants," he said.

Bellway Eastern Counties is currently building new homes at The Furrows in Warboys and Bower Place in Cottenham, Cambridgeshire.



Mark Cash

Genesis Homes

Less than six months after joining Genesis Homes as a senior site manager, Mark Cash has been promoted to head of construction.

Cash has worked in the construction industry since finishing school. The promotion continues a rapid career trajectory for Mark, following a successful stint at Story Homes where he was taken on as a trainee and promoted to assistant site manager before finishing his probation.

Commenting on the appointment, Genesis Homes' managing director Nicky Gordon said: "We always aim to attract and promote talented and ambitious people who are driven to make their mark and deliver an outstanding product. Mark makes a great contribution to our team and we're looking forward to seeing him develop further in his new role."

Cash said: "It's great to work for such a young company creating a product that's so fresh and unique in Cumbria. You really have the chance to grow with the company, to put your mark on things and make sure everything is done right from day one."

Genesis Homes is due to begin construction on its Sanders Brow site in Armathwaite in the Eden Valley this month.

Cheffins

Cheffins has appointed Maxwell Fahie as residential development surveyor.

Fahie joins the Cheffins team from Long Harbour, where for the past two years he specialised in Build to Rent and PRS acquisitions across the UK.

Commenting on his appointment, Fahie said: "The new role will enable me to advise both existing and prospective clients on their development opportunities, and work closely with the rest of the Cheffins departments to provide a comprehensive service through planning, development and disposals through the new homes team, in addition to identifying and generating further opportunities."

Keepmoat

Keepmoat Homes has appointed a regional managing director for its north east region, based in Hebburn.

Ian Worgan joins with a wealth of experience in the homebuilding, sector having most recently been north east managing director for Story Homes. Prior to this he has held roles with Taylor Wimpy and had an accomplished career working for businesses across the world.

Commenting on his appointment, Worgan said: "I'm thrilled to be joining Keepmoat Homes and am looking forward to working with the team and our partners to create new opportunities for our customers to get on the property ladder."



Emma Colin

Linden

Linden Homes has appointed Emma Colin as its new sales and marketing director for the south west region.

Colin has returned to the west country after working for Ballymore in London for the past four years. With 14 years' experience in the property industry and extensive knowledge of the south west market, she is responsible for sales of 400 homes a year across the Devon and Cornwall region.



Julian Howarth

Persimmon

Persimmon Homes Severn Valley has appointed experienced construction professional Julian Howarth to the role of construction director.

Howarth joins the business after chalking up more than 30 years in the construction industry, with experience as a quantity surveyor and commercial manager at other developers.

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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

PROBLEMS ARE MOUNTING FOR SME BUILDERS

Brian Berry of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), explores the mounting problems SME builders are experiencing, despite workloads increasing. He looks at possible efforts to address shortages of finance and skills in particular, and wonders whether Government will reconsider its post-Brexit immigration policies.

The latest quarterly State of Trade Survey by the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) showed that workloads for construction SMEs grew in Q4 2018. These results are particularly impressive, and perhaps even surprising, given the political uncertainty firms are contending with, and the serious barriers that small building firms are facing.

I've written before in this column about the challenges the construction industry is facing in hiring key trades, and this will be a familiar story to many in the industry. Unfortunately, it will not be surprising to hear that this latest research shows that 64 per cent of small builders are struggling to hire carpenters, and 61 per cent are facing problems hiring bricklayers. Indeed, carpenters and joiners have surpassed bricklayers as the trade in shortest supply for the first time in more than a year. A simple case of supply and demand means that these shortages are resulting in workers demanding

higher wages, and this is causing issues for construction employers.

A TOUGH OUTLOOK

Looking ahead, the picture doesn't seem to be much brighter. Expectations for the future have become more pessimistic in comparison to the previous quarter. Two-thirds of construction SMEs foresee wage increases over the next six months, up from the previous quarter. This means that these firms' already thin margins will be squeezed even further. What's more, expected workloads over the next six months have dropped. These politically uncertain times are the enemy of small building firms – they rely on the confidence of homeowners to commission home improvement projects. This uncertainty is also to blame for the fact that almost half of construction SMEs are reporting signs of a weakening housing market.

This latest FMB research also shows how

64 PER CENT OF SMALL BUILDERS STRUGGLE TO HIRE CARPENTERS, AND 61 PER CENT ARE FACING PROBLEMS HIRING BRICKLAYERS





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crucial it is that the Government continue to address the issue of access to finance for SME housebuilders. Many small-scale housebuilders continue to experience real difficulty in accessing the finance they need to build homes. Indeed, this data shows that a fifth of construction SMEs have had projects stall in the past three months due to delays to loans, or loan refusals, from the banks. Although concerns over access to finance have eased slightly in recent years, there is more that can be done.

Another piece of research we have undertaken, The House Builder Survey 2018, showed that if firms were able to borrow 80 per cent, rather than the current 60 to 65 per cent of project cost, SME builders would be able to bring forward, on average, 40 per cent more new homes. Given the ambitious housebuilding targets the Government is seeking, we cannot afford to ignore such a chance to significantly increase housing delivery.

BREXIT

Given the impact construction can have on the wider economy, the Government



should seriously consider revisiting the post-Brexit immigration proposals that could cause even further damage to the industry. We know that projects across the country are being stalled because there physically aren't enough people to build them. We therefore question why the Government thinks it is wise to significantly limit the number of construction workers coming into the UK post-Brexit. If construction firms are unable to hire

migrant workers of varying skill levels post-Brexit, the already severe skills crisis will worsen, and there is a real danger that housing targets simply won't be met and infrastructure projects will be delayed.

We hope that the Government listens to the industry – we need to re-focus on economic stability, and ensure an immigration system that recognises the serious challenges the construction industry faces.

WE QUESTION WHY THE GOVERNMENT THINKS IT IS WISE TO SIGNIFICANTLY LIMIT THE NUMBER OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS COMING INTO THE UK POST-BREXIT

LGA's Martin Tett: planning is not a barrier to housebuilding

Responding to the National Audit Office's 'Planning for new homes' report, in which the Government watchdog stated: "We cannot conclude the planning system currently provides value for money in terms of delivering new homes effectively," councillor Martin Tett, the housing spokesman of the Local Government Association, has come out in defence of planning.

Tett's comments were as follows: "Planning is not a barrier to housebuilding. Council planning departments are doing an incredible job with extremely limited resources, approving nine out of 10 applications, with the majority processed quickly.

"Councils are committed to ensuring homes are built where they are needed, are affordable, of high-quality and supported by adequate infrastructure and

services, but it is vital that they have an oversight of local developments.

"We remain clear that the Government's housing needs formula does not take into account the complexity and unique needs of local housing markets, which vary significantly from place to place, and imposes unfair and undeliverable targets on communities. This risks leading to a housebuilding free-for-all which will bypass the needs of local communities and could damage public trust in the planning system.

"By lifting the housing borrowing cap the Government has accepted our argument that councils must play a leading role in solving our national housing shortage. With hundreds of thousands of homes in England with planning permission but yet to be built, it also needs to give councils powers to make sure developers build out approved homes in a timely



fashion, and use the Spending Review to adequately fund planning departments and allow them to set planning fees locally so they can cover the cost of processing applications."

futurebuild

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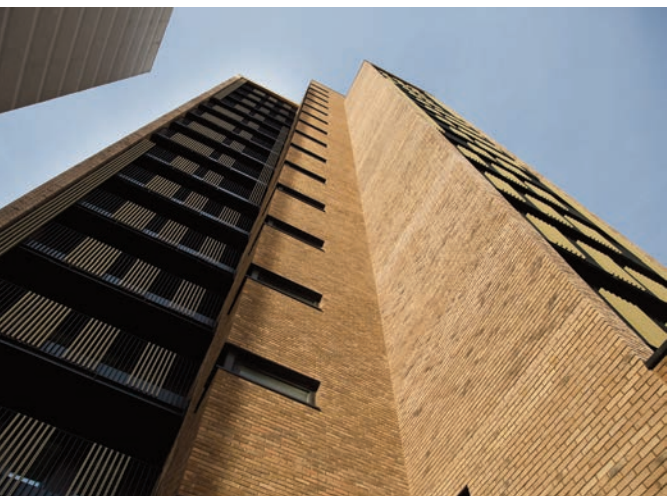
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NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Braeburn Estates JV hands over offsite-constructed scheme in Lambeth

New offsite affordable homes have been built as part of the regeneration of an old council estate in Lambeth, London, in a joint venture between Qatari Diar and the Canary Wharf Group.

The JV, named Braeburn Estates, worked in close partnership with Lambeth Council on the off-site delivery model for the scheme, for both the regeneration works and construction of affordable homes (including four-bedroom townhouses), which are to be retained by Homes for Lambeth.

The Lollard Street development comprises 89 residences plus a nursery and children's centre, communal gardens and public realm improvements. The scheme replaces a problematic car park block, which had fallen into disrepair and was attracting anti-social behaviour, with new pedestrian routes and public open green spaces between buildings.

In addition to the homes at Lollard Street, further affordable units are also being delivered within the mixed use Southbank Place development, on York Road, where 98 extra care and intermediate rent apartments are due for completion at the end of 2019.

Lollard Street's full residential offering comprises one sixteen-storey tower block, one seven storey tower block, four four-storey blocks, and 15 three-storey townhouses. The homes provided include one and two-bedroom apartments, as well as four-bedroom family houses.

The buildings and interiors have been arranged to enhance natural light and increase space, and offer outdoor space for every home in the form of balconies for apartments and gardens for the townhouses.

The interiors of the homes are intended to "set the benchmark for modern, affordable housing," said Braeburn Estates. Clean lines, open-plan areas and rooms have been designed to a high specification, "incorporating contemporary fixtures, fittings and integrated appliances, which work together to create a feeling of luxury and a comfortable, new place to live."

DELIVERY

Braeburn Estates stated that it as a result of its offsite construction methods that it has "been able to deliver one and a half times as much affordable housing in total."

The delivery model, which has focused on the available developer subsidy being "100 per cent allocated to construction costs," has also released sufficient funds to complete the new purpose-built school building and play space for the Ofsted rated 'Outstanding' Ethelred Nursery plus Children's Centre, for the benefit of local residents.

Braeburn Estates reportedly shouldered all of the project's construction and regeneration costs as well as risks, and Lambeth Council celebrated the handover of the completed project at an event which was held on 18 January.

Speaking at the handover ceremony, Lambeth Council leader, Cllr Lib Peck, said: "The Lollard Street development is a fantastic example of us working with developers, through the planning system, to provide the council-level rent homes we need to help tackle our housing crisis."

The homes at Lollard Street will be offered exclusively through Lambeth Council's subsidiary Homes for Lambeth.

Barking modular scheme is claimed to offer lower-cost build

Planning permission has been granted by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham for a second off-site housing development in the area by architects astudio.

The development, Mellish Close in Barking, consists of one, two and three-bedroom flats, and is targeted to be completed in 60 weeks, as opposed to the 24-30-month time frame of traditional construction methodologies.

The project will be delivered in partnership with regeneration company Be First and offsite modular manufacturer Rollalong. Manufacturing assembly will begin immediately, and the project is expected to complete this year.

astudio's volumetric modular construction method enables the "expedited assembly of low-energy homes, fitted out and manufactured offsite using precision methods of construction." The company added that they intend to provide "robust, high-design modular housing at less expense than traditional methods."

The homes are supplied on a turnkey standardised production basis, which minimises costs through bulk purchasing materials and components, in turn speeding up the production process and



reducing the potential for defects during build, the firm said. Multiple fixtures, fittings and cladding options both internally and externally are available, "enabling each building to have a distinctive look and feel," said astudio.

Richard Hyams, co-founder and CEO of the practice, hailed the project as "another milestone" for its amodular design and build system, which he said demonstrated "there is a better way to procure affordable homes far faster and at much lower cost than traditional construction techniques."

He commented: "That the UK faces a housing crisis is recognised all the way up to the corridors of Westminster. As a recent cross-party Parliamentary Commission has found, we need to build 3 million affordable homes over the next 20 years just to keep up with Britain's housing needs.

"Given the scale of the housing crisis, modular construction techniques such as ours must form part of the response of policy-makers to address the UK's housing crisis. To be given the go-ahead for a project of this scale tells us planners have begun to recognise this."

Luxury new homes approved at East Yorkshire village

Planning permission has been granted and work has commenced on Phase 1 of a new development in the East Yorkshire village of North Cave.

The development by Duchy Homes will consist of 36 "high-quality homes", of which eight are to be affordable. The housebuilder says it gained unanimous approval from the East Riding of Yorkshire Council for the "versatile" collection of three, four and five bedroom houses and bungalows on vacant land.

Duchy Homes says the development will be designed to "suit a variety of residents' needs and lifestyles" and provide "much-needed" housing to the local area. The rural location means the development when benefit from "beautiful" views across playing fields and the North Yorkshire Wolds, while its proximity to Brough train station and the M62 means residents will have easy access to Hull, Leeds, York, Sheffield and Doncaster.



The developer prides itself on building "luxury" developments, promising buyers "excellent build-quality with luxury fittings and generous, thoughtfully-designed interiors". The show home is expected to open in July.



CASE STUDY

Putting community at the centre

Providing retirement homes alongside a multi-functional social hub, it is hoped that Debden Grange will become a 'village within a village' for retirees in Essex. Jack Wooler spoke to Andrew Mills of developer Retirement Villages Group, to see how the project is progressing.

Debden Grange is an 81 unit age-exclusive scheme in the village of Newport, Essex, being developed by Retirement Villages and constructed by builder Castleoak. The two-phase project, due to complete in 2020, includes a residential care home – which will be operated by a third party – and a communal 'clubhouse'.

Debden Grange is the newest addition to the developer's portfolio of 16 'villages,' and is intended to offer a lifestyle of independent living, in a range of cottages and apartments complete with communal facilities.

The benefits of community living have been placed at the heart of development, with the residents' clubhouse to incorporate a relaxing lounge, restaurant, bar, library, meeting rooms, hairdresser and external terraced area.

Billed as a 'village within a village,' Debden Grange is intended to provide residents with the freedom to use it as a base to come home to, or a place to immerse themselves into an active social scene, with the clubhouse to host a 'vibrant' calendar of events.

PLANNING AHEAD

Located just off of Bury Water Lane and Whiteditch Lane, a short distance from the



market town of Saffron Walden in Essex, the new development is placed within easy reach of the M11, and there is a regular train service from the local station into London's Liverpool Street in one direction, and Cambridge in the other.

According to Andrew Mills, development manager at Retirement Villages, the company is "constantly looking at potential new locations" such as this to develop.

He explained to Housebuilder & Developer how the site was chosen: "The type of offering we have is in high demand, but location is also a big driver for potential residents – for example, they want to move closer to family.

"We already have an existing successful village in this region, and were made aware this site could be available. In early 2016 a conditional contract for its purchase was exchanged, and towards the end of that year we secured outline planning permission."

At the end of 2017, a reserved matters consent for the detail elements of the scheme was secured, and work started on site in February 2018. Full completion is expected before the summer of 2020, but a smaller first phase of seven cottages is intended for completion around Easter.

When it came to planning, Mills told that the pathway to securing consent "went smoothly," with no major issues arising. "We had a good working relationship with the local council throughout the process," he added.

With a lot of housebuilding work underway nearby, along with the current climate of the housing shortage, Mills believes that people are "much more understanding of

the need to develop new homes," and as such, the team "haven't had any significant issues with the local community."

He continued: "We always try to work with the local community and make sure the villages are a part of the area in which they are situated. In many of our other villages our residents either visit or contribute to the local community, so we are confident the same will happen at Debden Grange."

TAILORED FUTUREPROOFING

The overall scheme of 81 units comprises 64 apartments and 17 cottages, alongside the 40-bed residential care home. "Each property will be offered on the basis of a 125-year lease, with a 10 per cent assignment fee and a low ground rent," Mills explains. Residents will also pay a service charge for the communal facilities, which includes the clubhouse, as well as elements such as staff, maintenance of the grounds, and laundry services.

Mills explains the Clubhouse's key function as being to "breathe life and activity into the village." He continued: "It's the residents who make the villages as vibrant as they are – they run their own social calendars. But it's important to have excellent facilities in which to run those clubs – the clubhouse is integral as a meeting place, function area and general communal facility."

When developing retirement properties, besides the addition of communal spaces, there are many factors that differentiate the design process from that of developing conventional homes, along with many similarities. "In some ways, it shouldn't

**DEBDEN GRANGE IS
INTENDED TO OFFER A
LIFESTYLE OF
INDEPENDENT LIVING, IN A
RANGE OF COTTAGES AND
APARTMENTS**



differ at all, at least not in the planning,” explains Mills. “You always have to take into consideration who you are designing and building for – the residents of the property should be at the heart of the design and build decisions made, whether that’s a young couple, a growing family or retirees.”

“There are some considerations though, which mainly revolve around access, but also creating a sense of freedom and choice – something residents place high on the list when they move to Retirement Villages. This could be as simple as creating shallow steps or creating multi-purpose communal areas that residents can call their own.”

According to Mills, all Retirement Villages properties are tailored to the end user, but designed to be adaptable: “They have to be designed with our residents in mind, but each individual’s circumstances and mobility can change dramatically over 10 or more years.

“As vibrant and mobile as many of our residents are, the fact is we need to future-proof properties so they can continue to enjoy their home, even if their physical capabilities change.”

As part of this, elements such as corridors and access ways must be sufficiently widened to allow for mobility scooters and other aids to get through, and many Retirement Villages bathrooms feature walk-in showers.

“Many of our properties are open-plan too,” continued Mills. “This suits retirement living because it makes access to different areas of the property easier. It also makes the space much more communal. For example, if your partner gets up to make a cup of tea, they do not leave the room to do it, so the feeling of togetherness is much stronger.”

SITE LAYOUT

As a retirement development, the topography of the site reportedly posed the greatest challenge, with the site sloping approximately 6 metres north-south. The buildings have been laid out such that the site tiers into a number of ‘plateaus,’ allowing vehicular and pedestrian access to the various building entrances, while maintaining acceptable gradients for less able residents.

Assisted living apartments form the spine of the development, allowing access to the plateaus via lift and stair cores that serve all levels, alongside several assisted living cottages. The care home has been located on the uppermost – and largest – plateau, providing level access to all elevations of the building, and an opportunity to create landscaped gardens for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

While the groundworks of all buildings take a traditional form, with the building’s slabs being laid in beam and block, the construction process for each will differ slightly. For the assisted living apartments, the superstructure will consist predominantly of timber frame, with isolated areas of traditional and reinforced in-situ concrete construction in areas where tanking is required at changes of level.

The rainscreen cladding of the frame is a palette of three materials: facing brickwork, Marley Eternit Cedral Click weatherboarding installed both horizontally and vertically, and a lightweight render system applied to a cementitious backing medium that is fixed via battens to the timber frame. Windows are PVCu in anthracite grey, and roofs are a part of the timber frame package. The roofing consists of traditional softwood trusses, and the roof covering is a Forticrete SL8 plain interlocking concrete

IT PROVIDES THE FREEDOM TO EITHER BE USED AS A BASE TO COME HOME TO, OR AS A PLACE FOR RESIDENTS TO IMMERSE THEMSELVES INTO AN ACTIVE SOCIAL SCENE



tile in slate grey.

The assisted living cottages superstructure designs are also of timber frame, utilising the same palette of materials and rainscreen applications used for the 64 assisted living apartments. Again, floors are a part of the timber frame package, and are a mix of traditional softwood trusses and rafter and purlin. The roof covering however is a Forticrete Gemini small format plain interlocking concrete tile in slate grey.

For the care home and clubhouse, the lower ground floor of the building will essentially be a concrete frame supporting a transfer deck at first floor. At this level, traditional cavity wall construction will form the external walls, the infill to the concrete frame and the internal partition walls.

The transfer deck at first floor level provides the substructure to the first and second floor of the building, which is to be constructed in timber frame and utilising the same palette of materials and rainscreen applications as the apartments.

Roofs are again part of the timber frame package and are traditional softwood trusses. The roof covering is a Redland Mini-Stonewold plain interlocking concrete tile in charcoal grey.

The developer had strong sustainability goals for this project – the scheme is intended to achieve a 21 per cent reduction in carbon emissions. With the exception of the care home and clubhouse, all buildings on site have solar PV panels on the roof. Alongside this, sustainable drainage has been incorporated into the design, both for surface water during the construction phase

of the project and for the life-cycle of the village.

PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Debden Grange functions essentially as “a village within a village,” but is intended to be “very much part of the local community.” Retirement Villages hopes to tap into this, selling a lifestyle, as much as a home, and meshing the development into the locality was a key driver for the firm.

“Integrating into the community means being hands-on, looking at how we can support the two village schools, and potentially work closer with the parish council,” said Mills. Retirement Villages will also be looking to employ local village people for the 20-plus roles that will be necessary once the project is fully up and running. “We also hope to hire local contractors to support the operation of the village and, in turn, hope our residents in the future will play an active role in the wider Newport community,” he added.

Mills concludes: “All our villages are welcoming and inclusive, but perhaps this is even more so here at Debden Grange, where we are very much part of the larger community.

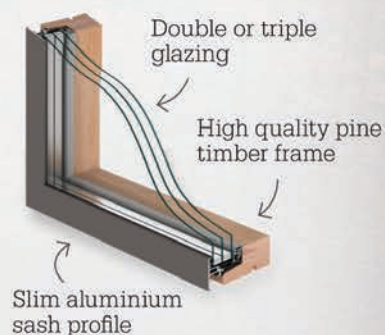
“It is more than simply being a developer, we will continue to manage the village for the decades ahead. This means creating a sustainable model based on long-term links and relationships with the wider community. Over time, we will become an important and integral part of the local fabric.

“For us, Debden Grange is not only about our future, it will also form an important part of our heritage.”

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SHOW PREVIEW

ADDRESSING FUTURE BUILDING CHALLENGES

Futurebuild, the leading built environment event for housebuilders to meet, learn, be inspired and do business, will take place at ExCeL, London from 5 – 7 March.

Futurebuild, the new name for Ecobuild, will focus on exploring and tackling the biggest challenges impacting the industry, and, according to the organisers, will be a unique destination for visitors to gain unrivalled insight and hands-on experience around the latest thinking, innovations, products and materials in order to address these issues.

Developed in conjunction with industry-leading partners, Futurebuild will provide over 500 hours of structured learning across an inspiring conference programme and 11 seminar streams – all completely free and CPD accredited.

MEETING CHALLENGES

Central to Futurebuild is the ‘ecobuild’ conference, which will inspire housebuilders to take action on the most pressing challenges through insights from leading experts and knowledge-sharing. With an overarching theme of ‘Time For Action,’ the conference sessions will be

collaborative forums where visitors will develop plans for implementing change and proposing action for a more sustainable future.

A total of 13 key challenges will be tackled through this programme. These include ‘The Housing Challenge – more than houses’ which will see key speakers such as Jon Sawyer, director of Housing and Residential Growth at Manchester City Council, explore why there’s still a housing crisis in the 21st century. ‘The Quality Challenge – why can’t we build better buildings?’ will also be addressed.

PRODUCTS AND INNOVATIONS

More than 500 market-leading brands and organisations from across the globe will be showcasing their latest innovations and contributing to the extensive knowledge programme. To ensure visitors gain a truly immersive and in-depth experience across all areas of the industry, these exhibitors will be hosted across six curated Hubs: Urban Infrastructure, Interiors, Buildings,



Materials, Offsite and Energy. Each Hub will include unique features and “concentrated education programmes” hosted by a sector-specific authority.

Visitors will be able to explore the latest solutions across blue, green, grey and social infrastructure in the Urban Infrastructure Hub. All aspects of the city will be covered, while exhibitors including ACO, Biotechure, Green-Tech, ICE, Ronacrete and Wavin will be showcasing their latest innovations. The Hub will also cover topics such as “placekeeping” and putting health and wellbeing at the start of placemaking, in a dedicated seminar theatre.

New for 2019 is the Interiors Hub, where housebuilders will have the opportunity to meet leading institutions and manufacturers – including Decolux, Delabie, Fisher and Paykel, Novy and Zip – to discuss pioneering products and collaboratively explore the latest trends and ideas.

Across the Hubs, visitors will also have access to a variety of new and expanded pavilions and attractions, including: The City Walk, Made In Britain, the “mindful” Materials Certification Pavilion, the Association of Decentralised Energy (ADE) pavilion, the Home of the Future by Tufeco, the RIBA stand designed by Gundry + Ducker, and many more.

NEW AND EXCLUSIVE FEATURES

Futurebuild will be enhanced by a range of new and exclusive partnerships and features.

As an official UK Government Innovation Partner, Futurebuild will be hosting the Innovation Zone with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and Innovate UK. At the Zone, BEIS will be showcasing the work of the Energy Innovation Programme, and demonstrating how it is delivering the Clean Growth Strategy. Focusing on “true innovation,” it will provide a platform for investment and knowledge exchange across three areas: a dedicated three-day seminar series, an exhibition featuring innovative companies that BEIS and Innovate UK have provided funding to, and a ‘Business Bar’ in collaboration with the Knowledge Transfer Network – providing 1-to-1 advice and support on accessing funding.

New for 2019 is the Knowledge Forum – a dedicated area where industry-leading

partners, academia and professional bodies will offer a comprehensive look at the biggest issues facing the built environment. Hosting CPD workshops, the Knowledge Forum will provide useful solutions and guidance for visitors to take back to the office.

The Waste Zone will return with new and expanded features, including the new Circular Economy Hub. Curated by architect, academic and author Duncan Baker-Brown, the area will have an unusual ‘beach hut’ format and showcase how waste can be a valuable industry resource.

Futurebuild is also partnering with the event Vision to provide a London-focused seminar programme alongside a reportedly unrivalled networking opportunity for housebuilders. The programme will be curated by Vision and hosted in the Vision Seminar theatre, surrounded by an exhibition of brands looking to improve the built environment and public spaces through new technologies, products and services.

For more information and to register visit

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Ancon to exhibit at Futurebuild 2019



ANCON will be showcasing its latest fixing innovations at Futurebuild (formerly Ecobuild), 5th – 7th March, London ExCeL, stand number C82. Awarded with the Queen's Award for Innovation in 2018, this is the third time that Ancon has been honoured in this prestigious award scheme. Alongside a string of innovation and product development accolades,

Ancon will continue to enhance its product range further in 2019. For more information, call Ancon or visit their website.

0114 275 5224 www.ancon.co.uk

Futurebuild stand no C82

Another camera that pushes the boundaries



For building inspection and the prevention of energy loss, a thermal imaging camera is now considered an essential tool and thanks to its continuous development strategy, **FLIR Systems** provides this industry with an exceptional choice of products. Year on year FLIR Systems introduces new infrared features and capabilities that help users do their job quicker and more efficiently and 2019 is no exception. Indeed, Futurebuild 2019 has been confirmed as the UK

launch platform for a new infrared camera and the showcase for the latest technological developments in test and measurement instrumentation.

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Futurebuild stand no D204

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Designer Contracts strengthens team



Designer Contracts, one of the UK's largest flooring suppliers, has announced a new, senior appointment to support its continued success. Lee Hassett joins the head office team as project executive with over 30 years' experience in the flooring industry. With 11 years of operational expertise, Lee also has 19 years retail knowledge and has worked within the logistics sector. Said Lee: "I'm pleased to be part of Designer Contracts and its future

growth strategy. I've been made to feel incredibly welcome and look forward to the new challenges that lay ahead."

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

Schueco UK Excellence Awards 2019

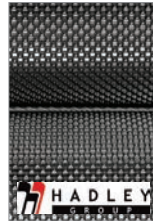


Schueco UK are calling on architects, main contractors and specialist contractors to submit entries to the 2019 Schueco Excellence Awards for Design and Innovation. This highly regarded annual competition continues to attract large numbers of submissions from all over the UK and Ireland, with Schueco confident that entries for the 2019 competition will top last year's record total. The only criteria for an eligible entry are that the project

submitted should have been completed before the end of March 2019 and should have utilised at least one Schueco system in either aluminium or steel, with the involvement of a Schueco UK network partner fabricator.

mkinfo@schueco.com www.schueco.co.uk

Hadley Group to exhibit at Midest



Hadley Group will bring its technical expertise to the Midest exhibition in Lyon later this year. The international show, which runs from 5-8 March at the Eurexpo Centre will cover a number of industrial subcontracting sectors. Visitors to Hadley Group's stand at stall 6N92 will get a first-hand insight into its comprehensive range of industry-leading products. Hadley Group's technical team will be on-hand to introduce the company's product portfolio, with a particular focus on the company's vinepost and custom rollformed products. Attending Midest is part of a broader programme of exhibitions that Hadley Group is set to participate in across Europe in 2019.

0121 555 1300 www.hadleygroup.com

Rob van Steen joins DKG Group's team



The DKG Group, the organisation behind successful brand **Keller Kitchens**, has made internal changes in line with the growth of the business, including expanding and strengthening the team of directors. Rob van Steen, previously Keller Kitchens' Commercial Manager for the UK, has been promoted to the board of directors. In his new role as Director of DKG's dealer organisation, Rob will work

with account teams to focus on supporting and growing the group's dealer networks across the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK.

www.kellerkitchens.com

Rhodes & Partners report a record year



A leading structural and civil engineering consultancy has reported that 2018 was a record year for the company, in which it surpassed all previous records for the volume of work which it had handled. "Last year was

tremendously busy for us, and we exceeded our previous record for the number of jobs recorded over a one-year period by 10 per cent," says Managing Director Nick Ribbeck. "We have been following a strategy of carefully managed and sustained growth, and this latest landmark is proof that our strategy is working." **Rhodes & Partners**, which has a number of business award wins to its credit, offers a wide range of professional services for both small domestic and large commercial projects.

0161 427 8388 www.rhodesandpartners.co.uk



Construction workers warned to prepare for harsh winter

With recent long range weather forecasts suggesting the UK could be facing the coldest winter for almost a decade, roof systems manufacturer **Marley** is urging construction workers to get prepared for freezing winter temperatures. Bitterly cold weather, ice and shorter periods of daylight mean there is a much greater risk of accidents on construction sites during the winter months. As well as the risk of slips and falls, prolonged exposure to the cold can cause construction workers to suffer from more colds, bronchitis, asthma, painful joints and fatigue. In extreme cases, workers outside for long periods, without the right protection, could even suffer hypothermia and frostbite. Pete Flynn, health and safety advisor at Marley, explains: "It is important that all construction workers understand the hazards of working in winter and know what precautions to take when cold weather sets in. Builders and sub-contractors must carry out their own thermal risk assessments and take appropriate action to protect their employees." To help prepare for freezing temperature, Marley is giving away hundreds of winter goodies. To apply for one of 500 free flasks, heat pads or ear bands, visit the website and fill in your details.

01283 722588 www.marley.co.uk/wintercampaign

THE TILE ASSOCIATION

TILING SHOW

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The Tiling Show – It's where the tiling industry does business!

The Tiling Show, organised by **The Tile Association**, takes place ahead of the TTA Awards at The Hilton Birmingham Metropole, from 10am on Friday 12 April. Intceram are the main sponsor.

The Show is open for all to visit and visitors will have the opportunity to see leading brands from the tiling industry. It promises once again to be a unique event, hosted by the tiling industry for the tiling industry.

The exhibitors so far confirmed include Aquacut, ARDEX, BAL, Banks & Lloyd, Jackson, Lithofin, Mapei, Norcros Adhesives, Palace Chemicals/Laticrete, Parkside, Saint-Gobain Weber, Scarfatto Ceramiche, Shackerley, STS Ltd, Trimline Group, TTA, UltraTileFix. Last year over 30 companies exhibited and it is expected that the number of exhibitors will be in excess of that this year. In addition to guaranteed networking opportunities and the chance to see the latest products, the Show will provide the opportunity to clinch some good business deals, since all exhibitors, as last year, are requested to have a special Show offer running on the day.

With its central location, the Tiling Show is simple to visit, whether travelling by road, train or air. Accommodation is also available, and full details can be found on the dedicated Show website.

0300 365 8453 www.thetilingshow.org.uk



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Enter UltraTileFix's exciting New Year competition for your chance to win a holiday of a lifetime. You can choose from a family trip for up to two adults and two children to Disney World Florida, a three night stay for up to four adults in Las Vegas or a 10 day all-inclusive holiday to the Caribbean for two adults.

Each of these holidays includes flights, accommodation plus spending money. Simply purchase £250 worth of UltraTileFix products from your local retailer or distributor and send UltraTileFix proof of purchase by visiting the website and uploading a photo of your receipts/invoices for your chance to win. For every £250 you spend you will receive one entry into the competition. The competition closes on 31st March 2019.

01827 254455 www.ultratilefixcompetition.co.uk

Three join sales team at Vortice



The Vortice sales team has welcomed three new recruits; Colin McNally, formerly involved in passive fire protection and underfloor heating, Darren Clare who has a background in ventilation and Gary Williams who previously worked in the wholesale sector.

Offering a complete project management approach, the Vortice sales team works closely with all its customers to offer technical help and advice and the internal sales team then ensures that the products are delivered at the right stage of the project. The new team enhances the ongoing advice and support by the head office technical team which can produce a fully compliant design and quotation service.

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Dallmer's new individual shower channels



In response to the growing demand for level-access showers, **Dallmer** has added two more new flush-in-floor shower channels to its DallFlex system, bringing the number of Dallmer shower channels that can be combined with a single drain body to an impressive nine! CeraFloor Individual is the elegant shower channel that boasts outstanding design. The shower channel comes in a length of 1500 mm and can be shortened to suit the specific shower area.

CeraFrame Individual is a compact, short shower channel. The only thing you can see is a discreet 300 x 50 mm rectangle. The short shower channel is the perfect frame for a minimalist cover plate.

01787 248244 www.dallmer.com

Roofshield preserves building in countryside



A large residential development in the heart of the beautiful Perthshire countryside is benefitting from the superior protection of Roofshield, one of the highest performing roofing membrane solutions, a pitched roof underlay, which is both air and vapour permeable. To form an integral part of the roof construction, Scotframe selected the Roofshield membrane from the

A. Proctor Group to ensure the highest level of protection. Scott Cameron, Project Manager for Algo commented: "The Roofshield membrane has been excellent in terms of its weather tightness, with absolutely no leaks across the whole of the 583m² site. It's also incredibly robust so we didn't have to worry about tearing or damaging it on site."

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com

Flush Tilt and Turn windows for The Strand



Profile 22 Flush Tilt and Turn windows were chosen for new residential and retail blocks and a community facility hub in Kirkholt, Rochdale. The project's architects, Triangle Architects, had specified the Flush Tilt and Turn Window

in Anthracite Grey for the project because of its ability to deliver aluminium aesthetics but with a better price and performance. The Flush Tilt and Turn Window has a sash that is neatly positioned inside the frame of the window to create an elegant and sleek 'flush' appearance. It has a maximum opening size of 1450 x 2300mm and offers exceptional performance. The window is Secured by Design accredited.

info@profile22.co.uk

New Flush Door added to Heritage collection



Building on the stunning success of its award-winning Heritage Flush Window, **Deceuninck** has launched an equally stunning new Flush Door to its Heritage Collection. The Flush Door has the only dedicated open-out flush door sash on the market, perfectly complementing the Heritage Flush Sash. The new Flush Door combines beautiful style with

outstanding performance. It has been designed to replicate traditional timber and aluminium and comes in 26 colourways from stock. Deceuninck's latest product is also #BestInClass for weather performance and energy efficiency.

01249 816 969 www.deceuninck.com

Thermo-reflective breather membrane for energy efficiency

POWERLON ThermaPerm is a new engineered breather membrane with a thermo-reflective layer for improved energy performance. ThermaPerm's foil layer helps to reduce the transmission of heat both from the exterior and interior, reflecting warm weather heat and reducing heat loss in winter months. The CE marked membrane offers good breathability, a superior W1 rating for water tightness and comes in two roll widths.

The energy-efficient ThermaPerm membrane is suitable for both wall and pitched roof installations. While particularly useful in new timber frame construction, it can also result in positive reductions to the U-value of renovations and conversions of existing properties.

U values (measured in W/m²K) express the thermal conductivity of building materials and installations; the lower the value, the more energy efficient the building. Buildings Regulations Approved Document L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) states that new buildings should have a U value of 0.28 W/m²K for walls, 0.16 W/m²K for pitched roofs with insulation at ceiling level and 0.18 W/m²K for flat roofs and for pitched roofs with insulation at rafter level.

To maximise the energy savings, Thermaperm



POWERLON ThermaPerm is a new thermo-reflective, insulating breather membrane for walls and roofs

should be used in conjunction with a thermo-reflective vapour control layer, such as POWERLON UltraBlock, installed on the warm side of the insulation. When traditional unfaced wall breathers and VCLs are replaced by thermal resistant versions, there can be a significant overall reduction in the U value. How the membranes are installed can impact on the thermal efficiency of the building; tiny gaps or cracks in plasterboard, gaps between insulating panels, unsealed overlaps in a vapour control

layer - all will create a thermal bridge, allowing heat to transfer. Air tight construction, without any weak spots, results in "thermal bridge free design" for maximum energy efficiency.

POWERLON ThermaPerm and POWERLON Ultrablock are produced by Industrial Textiles & Plastics (ITP) of North Yorkshire, manufacturers of protective materials for buildings and construction.

01347 825200 www.itpltd.com

Celebrating the great, the good and the simply outstanding

This year the Offsite Awards has seen fierce competition with over 200 entries across 22 categories from high profile names, all competing to be crowned as industry leaders of the offsite manufacturing and construction sector.

Steel framing innovators EOS, are celebrating success at the Offsite Awards and have announced that they have reached the finals in no less than five categories this year including:

- Best Use of Steel Technology - The Ram Quarter
- Housing Project of the Year - The Ram Quarter
- Leisure Project of the Year - The Travelodge, Middlesex Street, London
- Education Project of the Year - Sarah Swift Building, University of Lincoln



- Healthcare Project of the Year - Sarah Swift Building, University of Lincoln

The Ram Quarter, Wandsworth, London

Transforming the former Young's Brewery site in Wandsworth, where beer has been brewed since 1533 - The Ram Quarter sensitively integrates historic Grade II buildings into the scheme which provides accommodation for boutiques, restaurants, a craft-brewery, a brewery museum and 650 new exclusive loft style apartments. Working in partnership with Ardmore - EOS designed, manufactured and supplied a range of 15,000m² of SFS and 280m² load-bearing steel systems for the project. From SFS infill for five new medium to high-rise blocks to a bespoke load-bearing system of internal pods within the listed brewery house.

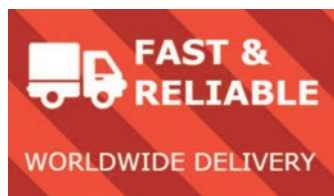
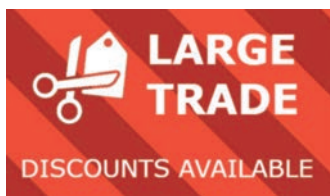
Steve Thompson, Managing Director of EOS said of the awards success: "We are really chuffed - it's fantastic to be nominated in five categories of these prestigious awards - especially taking into consideration the calibre of the competition and variety of projects. This is testament to a progressive approach, the dedication of the EOS team and the



partnerships we have formed with some of the most forward-thinking companies in the construction industry."

With over 14 years' expertise across all construction sectors - EOS specialise in the design, manufacture and supply of a wide range of bespoke steel framing systems for the offsite residential markets.

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Traditionally, housebuilding techniques in the UK relied upon the use of local materials typical of the region, with selection echoing the surrounding geological formations and environment in which they were built. Homes constructed near forested areas would use timber, in clay regions bricks would be used, and in the stone belt, stones from quarries were used to build walls.

As wall building practice evolved during the 20th century, techniques also changed. From using solid walls as standard, the adoption of a cavity design dividing the wall into an inner and outer wall began to be widely adopted. This meant the inner wall was now responsible for load-bearing duties rather than the thick wooden beams or locally sourced stone of old.

With load-bearing duties taken care of, it was possible to suspend the outer wall from the inner wall for weatherproofing purposes. Insulation could be added between the inner and outer wall to achieve heat retention. Since the outer wall no longer needed to be self-supporting, and now had the sole purpose of keeping weather out, this permitted the use of thinner materials. As a result the choice of surfacing available to housebuilders opened up.

INSULATION

Adding insulation to a home requires an application to the local building control department, but when it comes to the cladding itself, Building Regulation approval is not always needed. As long as the home is not in a conservation area, changes can usually be added under permitted development rights.

With today's weatherboarding choices extending beyond timber, brick, stone and render, housebuilders have more freedom to select and change the outside aesthetic of their home. The availability of modern day alternatives has seen the rise of new timber, High Pressure Laminate (HPL), and fibre cement, to name but three examples.

MODERN MATERIALS

Timber, an age-old favourite, particularly in Scandinavia, was conventionally stained black or brown when applied as cladding. Easy to install and affordable, the 21st century has seen the adoption of unstained timber such as spruce, cedar and oak as it can last for decades without requiring surface coating, although other surface treatments are needed for the wood to maintain its looks.

One drawback of timber is the limited design choice it offers. Cedar, for example, has become a victim of its own success. It's become such a popular aesthetic for housing developments in recent years that

OPENING THE ENVELOPE

Simon Wild of Formica Group discusses how the application of cladding using traditional building methods has evolved, and explores the modern materials now on offer.



architects and designers are shunning it in favour of more unusual options.

After timber, fibre cement is the most established material for weatherboarding. Although one of the heavier materials to

use for cladding, fibre cement is simple to install and low cost, especially as it can be nailed. Since it can be painted, it is available in a wide choice of colours, although care is needed, as the paint can chip.

TODAY'S MODERN SURFACES MEAN A BUILDING'S EXTERIOR LOOK IS NO LONGER RESTRICTED BY THE MATERIALS FOUND IN THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT



In terms of impact resistance, fibre cement can break, so care must be taken around fixings. In addition, cut edges need to be sealed to protect from water ingress.

Robust, lightweight, straightforward to apply and moisture resistant, HPL cladding provides a very cost effective and extremely low maintenance way to improve the look and efficiency of older builds. Transforming old building stock can be easily accomplished, with a fresh, new cladding skin, and the building's thermal

performance can be improved if additional insulation is included into the cladding system design. HPL can also be used to fully clad new builds, or incorporated as part of a design feature alongside materials such as brick, render or glass.

New 'lap' weatherboard cladding systems can be bought off the shelf from builder's merchants to give the look of timber, but without the need for any pre or post-installation treatments. A screw-fixed solution makes it simple for

both professionals and semi-professionals to install. Creating sleek builds with clean lines is easy, as the fixings are concealed by the next overlapping plank. In addition, HPL cladding doesn't need to be painted during its lifetime.

BEYOND THE FACADE

Selecting the right cladding for a housebuilding project can significantly improve a build's cost and property value, not just its aesthetic.

When choosing a cladding solution, it is important to consider how the material will affect the building's energy efficiency, environmental impact and overall performance. Such measurements cannot be done in isolation as cladding is a system, and so consideration must be given to factors like insulation, thermal performance and the material's sustainability credentials.

Today's modern surfaces mean a building's exterior look is no longer restricted by the materials found in the surrounding environment. The availability of a variety of weatherboard cladding options means performance and aesthetics can be balanced rather than one being sacrificed over the other.

Simon Wild is European category marketing manager at Formica Group

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Alongside its profile matching service, Glidevale can colour match to the exact blend of colours required. When profile matched and colour blended with neighbouring slates, tiles and ridges, the ventilators are almost indiscernible once installed.

In addition to profile matched tile and slate ventilators, Glidevale offers a range of universal ventilators which fit a large number of tile profiles. Where tile matching is unnecessary and a single solution is required for a number of roofs, the compact universal range can be



utilised. This includes the Glidevale Versa-Tile G5, providing a guaranteed ventilation area of 20,000mm² and purpose made to match virtually all interlocking single lap tiles. Also suitable is the Universal Flat Interlocking In-Line® Tile, which has a guaranteed ventilation area of 10,000mm² and can be used with a range of tile profiles including Marley Modern, Redland Mini Stonewold, Sandtoft Calderdale and Russell Grampian, amongst many others. Tile vents are

offered in seven UV-stable colours and can be easily installed as part of the normal tiling process.

The compact universal tile and slate vents range is typically available ex stock. Profile and colour matched tile and slate ventilators are made to order and can be on site within a few days from manufacture. For more information, please email sales@glidevale.com.

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Dresser adds precision

Dresser Mouldings, one of the UK's largest bespoke timber manufacturers specialising in quality, bespoke timber mouldings, is now offering Sansin Precision Coat factory finishes.

Sansin's Precision Coat products have been developed to meet the demand for coatings that balance wood protection and performance along with stunning colour and aesthetics. Backed by over 30 years of proven experience protecting large commercial, residential and mass timber wood buildings and structures, Sansin's factory finishes deliver high performance and durability in low-VOC, water-borne formulas for modified, engineered and speciality woods.

Bill Gunn, Managing Director of Dresser Mouldings commented, "The addition of Sansin's Precision Coat factory finishes combines both the beauty and protection of a class-leading product with the commitment to quality manufacturing and attention to detail for which Dresser Mouldings is known."

www.dressermouldings.com



VEKA Group onsite at the Offsite Show

VEKA Group was happy to meet attendees and discuss new opportunities at the 2018 Offsite Construction Show. VEKA's Head of Sales for the South Matthew Adaway said: "As the fenestration industry's leading supplier of PVC-U systems, our stand attracted a large number of visitors who were interested in VEKA Group products and there were a host of different sectors represented. We were able to talk 'all things VEKA Group' to architects, housing associations, main contractors, housebuilders and offsite companies, to name just a few.

"Off-site construction has been bubbling away – as an idea – for 20 years or more, and this event illustrated to me that real, tangible things are definitely happening in this area now. Building in this way makes the process more precise and promises to eliminate a host of variables that can potentially cause delays on traditional site-based building projects, such as problematic weather conditions. "VEKA Group is a global brand with a reputation for quality and reliability, and the versatility of our systems means that we are well suited to meet a huge spectrum of requirements, whatever the style of property."

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Property development loan from Aldermore



Based in Somerset, Alexander James Cox Ltd is a project management and development company with a vast amount of experience and expertise. Over the last 15 years the company has completed over 29 units in its own right across Somerset and the Bristol area. The developer has an impressive list of accolades, including the completion of a project in the centre of Bristol called 'Farrs Lane', as well as being nominated for 'Best Refurbishment Project' at the What House Awards 2017. Aldermore's funding will provide support in the construction of three detached four-bedroom houses in the village of Almondsbury on the outskirts of Bristol.

0333 355 0332 www.aldermore.co.uk

Jason Tebb on Nationwide House Price Index



"Once a way forward around our departure from the EU is clarified, we are expecting to see the pent-up buyer demand that has been building over the last year or so contribute to increased transaction levels, as consumers who have 'waited to see' are likely to create a busier market for 2019 than we've seen for some time. This

translates to our increased capital commitment for this year, as we continue to support SME developers who are seeking an innovative joint venture model to take advantage of the opportunities such an outlook provides." Jason Tebb, Chief Operating Officer, Go Develop.

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SUDS IS NOT MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN

Brian Wilson of Tobermore explores how the changing climate is urgently increasing the need for sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

Climate change is the talk of the moment, with consumers being encouraged to reduce and monitor their water consumption.

Flooding in summer and winter is now a feature of our changing climate. 2018 saw unprecedented levels of rainfall, which brought devastating flooding to areas of the UK, destroying homes, belongings and livelihoods.

Last year's floods, and those in preceding years, have many causes, and it would be wrong to lay the blame on one single reason. However, there is no doubt that the laying of impermeable ground surfaces such as concrete and tarmac has reduced permeability, and rainwater has had nowhere to infiltrate to. The

British drainage and sewer system is at its maximum capacity in many areas, particularly in the regions where the highest level of flooding has been experienced.

Worryingly, recent research shows that extreme flooding may become more frequent in the UK due to climate change, with almost five times more heavy rainfall events predicted to exceed 28 mm in one hour in the future than currently. With the continuing unpredictability of our weather all year round, permeable paving is now a necessity.

In the UK there is a growing acceptance that a more sustainable approach is needed to manage rainfall and flooding. If flood water is effectively managed, it can be

recycled and used when needed.

Through a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS), storm water can be absorbed by permeable paving through enlarged joints, which are filled with grit instead of the sand used in conventional paving, and stored in a special sub base beneath the paving. This acts like a huge tank, and the aggregate that is used for the sub base filters out most of the pollution that may have been washed off the roads and roofs.

JUSTIFICATION

Of course, the question of cost always raises its head when considering SuDS solutions. There is a general consensus that permeable paving is an expensive solution.





WITH THE CONTINUING UNPREDICTABILITY OF OUR WEATHER ALL YEAR ROUND, PERMEABLE PAVING IS NOW A NECESSITY

However, when the overall drainage costs are taken into consideration, permeable paving can be a very cost-effective solution compared to traditional methods. Many permeable paving ranges can be machine laid, reducing both labour costs and project completion times.

It is also worth bearing in mind that, unlike some other SuDS solutions, permeable paving does not require any additional land take, and so does not reduce the number of viable units on a housing project.

In terms of design, permeable paving can enhance the style, character and visual

appearance of a home. Permeable paving is increasingly manufactured with the same aesthetic benefits of the non-permeable product equivalent, ensuring that style is not compromised when employing a functional SuDS solution.

Looking to the future of permeable paving, 2019 will see more innovation in permeable paving product styles, with manufacturers creating interesting permeable paving styles and designing additional laying patterns, moving away from the more traditional herringbone-laid rectangular paving.

LEGISLATION

Today, few would disagree with the principle that SuDS and techniques such as permeable paving are needed to help fight flooding and pollution – particularly with overloaded sewers, urbanisation and climate change.

In April 2015, the Government introduced new planning guidelines for the use of SuDS on any new housing site with more than 10 units. The aim of the guidelines is to ensure that any new development has measures in place for

combating potential flooding issues.

Wales presents a good example of this. As of 7 January this year, proposed new developments must be served by sustainable drainage systems which comply with the Welsh Ministers' Standards, and which are approved by the SuDS Approving Body (SAB).

This is a very important milestone in a long journey towards full acceptance of the importance of SuDS in the UK, which is obviously good news for suppliers, who will hope to see increased demand for water management products and services.

Furthermore, the Environment Agency recommends that where appropriate, storm water source control measures, which also improve water quality, should be incorporated into a development proposal. They are essential for any new development in areas where existing sewerage systems are at full capacity.

With the recent flash floods in parts of England, it appears highly likely that this legislation will be adopted throughout the rest of the UK.

Brian Wilson is sales manager at Tobermore

Glidevale ground gas solution with Protect GDB10 Plus

Providing a continuous, impermeable protective barrier against ground gases including methane, radon, carbon dioxide and hydrocarbons, Protect GDB10 Plus membrane is suitable for Amber 1 and 2 applications as defined by NHBC. The product is compliant with BS 8485:2015 and has also been independently assessed and certified by BM TRADA.

As required by BS 8485, both the membrane and the joint integrity have been tested for methane resistance. Furthermore, Protect GDB10 Plus is one of the only products on the market that has been independently methane permeability tested to BS ISO 15105-1 for joints. This provides peace of mind to contractors and



The Protect GDB10 Plus membrane has been methane permeability tested to BS ISO 15105-1 for joints.

Glidevale offers a range of purpose designed, pre-formed accessories to ensure reliable and continuous protection.



housebuilders that the product will create a fully sealed system.

Using the membrane on site has clear benefits including high tensile strength which means there will be no damage to the membrane when being installed. In addition, the membrane is not supplied folded, therefore will not have creases when laid out. This ensures the concrete can be poured easily and effectively on site.

The company supplies a range of purpose designed, pre-formed accessories to maintain

protection at wall cavities, corners, and services to remove the need to form difficult shapes on site. A range of underfloor and cavity wall ventilation accessories removes gases and moisture vapour where required, enabling regulatory requirements for ventilation to be met. 150mm wide gas jointing tape is needed to seal the overlaps, providing a simpler fixing solution to save time on site. For more information, please email sales@glidevale.com.

0161 905 5700 www.glidevale.com

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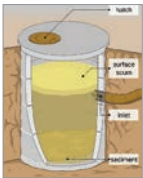
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Model BTAF



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Discharge legislation is changing



The Environment Agency (EA) introduced new rules regarding the discharge of treated sewage by systems installed and in use on or after 1st January 2015. If you have a septic tank you need to identify whether it discharges to a river or stream (surface water discharge) or whether it discharges to a drainage field, as after 1st January 2020 discharges to surface water from both old and new septic tanks will no longer be permitted by the EA. If your system requires replacing or upgrading due to its discharge location, you have three possible options: connect to mains sewer; install a drainage field so the septic tank can discharge to ground instead; replace your septic tank with a small sewage treatment plant. Email EA for more information.

03708 506 506 enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Heating scheme meets targets with Ecodan



A brand new residential development in Manchester is meeting environmental planning requirements thanks to an Ecodan system providing community heating to 105 new homes. "Following the successful installation of a Mitsubishi Electric air source heat pump system on a previous residential scheme, we recommended the Ecodan ASHP

system as we knew it would perform well, and offer a cost-efficient solution for The Aaben," explained Dan Martell, Design Engineer, EDP. The CAHV Ecodan system boasts a capacity of 344kW and can operate at sufficiently high temperatures to provide heating and domestic hot water.

01707 278666 www.heating.mitsubishielectric.co.uk



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HEATING & VENTILATION

Supplement





Schiedel Chimney Systems has launched a competition to win the Isokern Garden Fireplace, celebrating the UK's growing love affair with its gardens. Architects, Landscape Architects and Designers are invited to submit designs for an external living area incorporating Schiedel's latest heating solution. The Isokern Garden Fireplace adds an attractive and useful focal point to any garden. Its striking, free-standing design brings drama to the grandest scheme. Whatever the scale, Schiedel's Isokern Garden Fireplace will bring warmth and attention to any outdoor living space. For more details on the competition please visit their website.

www.schiedel.com



Consort Claudgen has launched the CRXSL wireless controller which is compatible with all Consort's RX and SL heaters and allows multiple control of RX and SL heaters at the same time. It is mains or battery-powered and offers up to six temperature settings a day, seven days a week. It has three different operating modes and features a 15-minute Boost with temperature control to provide the maximum comfort quickly. Other features include optional open window detection, child lock, large backlit LCD display and touch screen. For further information on Consort Claudgen's products, please visit their website.

www.consortepl.com



Johnson & Starley's WarmCair condensing warm air heating range is suitable for a wide range of applications including private residential and social housing. With rapid warm up times and low noise levels, models are suitable for new builds and the direct replacement of existing warm air systems. Designed for simple and quick installation, the WarmCair warm air heating system offers a choice of upflow or downflow models available with or without hot water and incorporating a stainless steel heat exchanger and other first class components to ensure long life and low maintenance costs. WarmCair heaters are compliant with Building Regulations Part L.

www.johnsonandstarley.co.uk



Stelrad Radiators are one of the leading providers of radiators for new build developments across the UK and Ireland with its popular Compact series leading the way.

In addition, the company is seeing an increasing number of premium panel and decorative radiators being specified for new build homes, to differentiate some new homes from others.

The range of specialist bathroom and kitchen radiators is growing too.

To find out more information and see the whole range, head over to the Stelrad website.

www.stelrad.com

NEW



CRXSL Wireless Controller



Compatible with all Consort's RX and SL heaters

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-  **Child lock**

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It can control any of our RX or SL heaters and allows multiple control of RX and SL heaters at the same time!

It offers up to six temperature settings a day, seven days a week. Other features include...

- ▶ **Mains or battery-powered**
- ▶ **Quick and simple pairing to heaters**
- ▶ **Large easy-to-read backlit LCD display**
- ▶ **Touch control**
- ▶ **15-minutes Boost feature**

For more details, call 01646 692172
or visit our website: www.consortepl.com

Vent-Axia Leads the Way with Quiet Living



Vent-Axia has launched a new range of acoustic solutions for its Sentinel Kinetic mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) units. With the negative effect of noise on our health now recognised, the new Acoustic Top Box and Acoustic Enclosure have been designed to further reduce the already low noise levels

of the MVHR units to improve the quality of life of inhabitants and reduce noise complaints in very noise sensitive applications. Vent-Axia's new acoustic range includes two solutions, the first is the Acoustic Top Box which reduces induct noise at key frequencies in living areas, bedrooms and wet rooms. Meanwhile the Acoustic Enclosure reduces breakout noise from the MVHR unit, lowering noise levels throughout the dwelling.

0844 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com

VASCO: 2019 be bold and embrace colour



2019 is the year of colour – so banish the beige and embrace vivacious and vibrant colours such as a Carmine Red or Melon Yellow from **Vasco's** extensive, contemporary colour palette. Be bold and beautiful when selecting a radiator, break away from safe, muted shades in favour of intense show-stopping colours. White and cream effortlessly blend into a

room, but a bolder colour can be just the wake-up call a room needs. VASCO's carefully selected palette of 56 colours is guaranteed to help inject new life into your home. A designer radiator in a bright or contrasting colour can be a wonderful statement piece and is an ideal way of introducing a colour accent to a room without over powering the space.

0333 7727718 www.vasco-group.eu

Heat Interface Unit Testing



UKAS accredited

in accordance with BESA UK HIU Test Regime

BSRIA combines their technical and market intelligence expertise with a purpose-built test facility to provide Clients reassurance with the performance of HIUs, with the testing regime including:

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- CALCULATING THE CAPACITY OF THE DOMESTIC HOT WATER (DHW) CIRCUIT
- LOW FLOW CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DHW CIRCUIT
- PLATE DEFLECTION TEST
- STEADY STATE HEAT LOSS TEST

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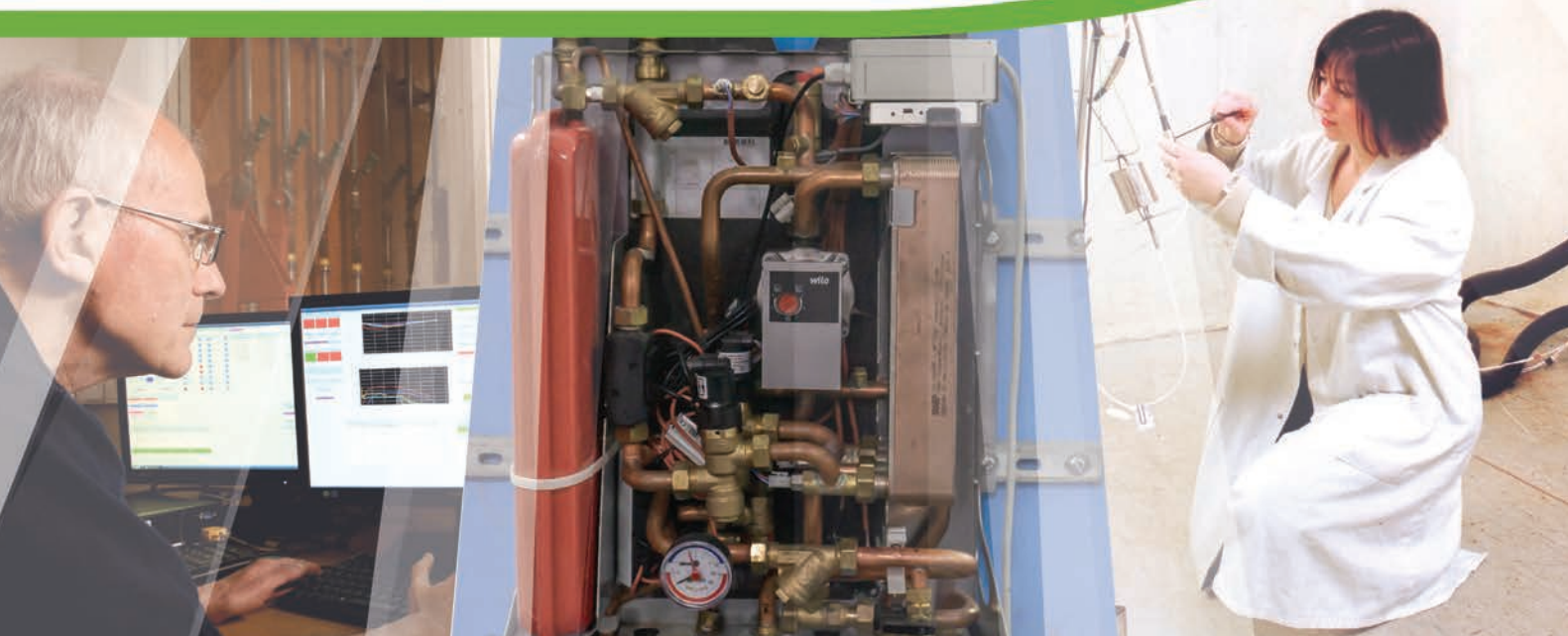
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BSRIA are now accredited to carry out testing in accordance with the current version of the BESA UK HIU Test Regime (October 2018) at its purpose built UKAS accredited HIU test rig. As well as testing in accordance with the BESA test method, BSRIA is able to carry out bespoke testing of HIUs as to suit any client application, due to the flexibility of the test rig and the experience of the BSRIA engineers and technicians. BSRIA has combined technical and market intelligence expertise with a purpose-built test facility, in addition BSRIA can provide the latest market trends through their latest market intelligence reports.

www.bsria.co.uk



Dunsley Heat's newest development is the Avance 500 multifuel stove. All new from the ground up this stove has been designed for contemporary living and has passed all the new standards for Eco design 2022, with an energy rating of A+. Featuring a very large glass window for a superb view of the dancing flames, and a design to fit the most modern of homes. The Avance has high level controllability with a fast response for high and low burn. The most ideal setting will quickly be found moving the slide slowly to find the most suitable position. Efficiencies of up to 81.2 per cent burning wood logs can be achieved.

www.dunsleyheat.co.uk



Poujoulat UK is a provider of some of the most valued chimney solutions in the United Kingdom. Poujoulat UK was created to supply Europe's market-leading metal chimneys and pre-fabricated stacks directly to the United Kingdom, with the expansion of this market supported further by the Groups acquisition of the Guildford Head Office in 2006. Since then, Poujoulat UK have evolved to service the many and specific requirements of that market and, while it has developed in collaboration with a wide range of organisations from the manufacturing, retail, heating and construction industries.

www.poujoulat.co.uk



Floor Heating Systems products are sold throughout the world under its brand name Varme.

The Varme brand covers the comprehensive range of underfloor heating and associated products, from the traditional electric cable and mat kits, to its wide range of water based systems including the new state of the art low profile water based Aqualay system.

All of its products are manufactured to the highest quality and its customer service is second to none. Why not give the company a call and put them to the test.

www.floorheatingsystems.com

Longcliffe Quarries launch LONGFLOOR



Longcliffe Quarries are now supplying **LONGFLOOR**, a groundbreaking dry powder bulk binder for the manufacture of liquid cement screeds. The LONGFLOOR liquid cement screed system has major advantages over both traditional screeds and anhydrite/gypsum

flowing screeds. LONGFLOOR can be laid at ten times the speed of traditional screeds, manual handling is avoided and a denser, more even surface and creamy smooth finish achieved. This innovative product is not susceptible to cracking, crazing or curling and can be laid in wet areas. Applications include both domestic and commercial and provide good thermal conductivity over underfloor heating.

01629 540284 www.longfloor.co.uk

Flexvent success from Flamco...



One of the leading HVAC component manufacturers, **Flamco** is celebrating the sale of its five millionth Flexvent air vent valve in the UK and Ireland. Selling around 200,000 of these units a year, it's clear to see that these are essential components to keep on every heating installer, air conditioning installer and plumbers van.

For more information, head for the Flamco website or go to its YouTube channel and see a presentation on the installation of a Flexvent.

www.flamcogroup.com/uk-en www.youtube.com/user/flamcogroup



Vanguard with Wifi By Electrorad

Using wireless technology, **Electrorads** Vanguard with WiFi range of electric radiators is one of the first to have voice control compatibility with market-leading Amazon Alexa.

Its wireless control via a gateway and App, enables 'voice control' of the heating system, making it one of the smartest ranges in the marketplace. Whether it's to turn up or reduce the temperature, the radiator can be controlled simply by speaking to Alexa.

Unlike some other equivalents, they also feature an inbuilt RF chip with a signal that can 'hop' up to five times to reach remotely-sited radiators. They also feature a Geo-Location option that automatically reacts based on the homeowners' proximity to or from the house.

The Vanguard WiFi offers outputs of 750w, 1200w, 1500w and 2000w, and being Lot 20 compliant, it features a number of energy saving controls that include Open Window Sensors which stop the radiator heating when a draft is felt and restarts when the draft stops and Adaptive Start Control which helps the radiators to "learn" when to switch on in order to achieve optimum household comfort.

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Schiedel.co.uk

BoilerMag Invests in £250,000 State of the Art Filtration Testing Facility

BoilerMag has opened a brand new testing facility to carry out sophisticated filtration analysis for central heating system filters. Located at BoilerMags' Sheffield headquarters, this state of the art laboratory will provide customers with performance guarantees for flow rates, contamination levels, and filter efficiency.

The quarter of a million pound investment has enabled BoilerMag to incorporate a fully automated PLC controlled test rig, including laser particle counters and digital pressures differential gauges pre and post filter, as well as real time data logging. Strict testing criteria means that BoilerMag can provide Architects and Specifiers with detailed data on the performance of magnetic heating system filters with regard to HVAC pressure drops, flow rates, as well as accurate contamination and particle analysis determining efficiency levels. The rig incorporates numerous delivery pumps, each controlled via fully adjustable inverters enabling precision test flow rates between 30 to 1,500 litres per minute to be achieved. This wide flow rate capability enables domestic, commercial and industrial sized filters to be fully put through their paces, including side stream units,



strainers, and delineating systems.

BoilerMag Sales and Marketing Director Steve McAllorum said: "We are delighted to be able to offer facilities for the testing of water treatment products to the highest industry standards. The filtration testing facility is a huge investment for BoilerMag, allowing us to carry out extremely sophisticated, in depth testing of filter efficiency. We fully anticipate to be able to offer customers the full scope of UKAS accredited services for closed system analysis in the near future."

Although designed and developed by filtration experts Eclipse Magnetics, the BoilerMag range of heating protection products is now marketed under the world renowned

Spear and Jackson brand name. Both Spear & Jackson and Eclipse Magnetics are part of the Spear and Jackson Group, therefore the BoilerMag range not only benefits from the expertise of innovative magnetic filtration technology, it also carries the strength and heritage of the Spear & Jackson name.

With premium quality manufacture and high collection capacity, the BoilerMag range of heating system filters offer a range of quality system treatment products for all applications, from small domestic properties to large industrial installations. The BoilerMag domestic heating system filter ensures that virtually 100 per cent of ferrous oxide and scale is removed on first pass. Perfect for residential applications, it can be installed and cleaned in minutes, effectively removing both magnetic and non-magnetic debris.

The BoilerMag XL is designed for use in medium sized commercial, retail, or large residential properties, while the BoilerMag XT is perfect for industrial heating systems. Both offer a 10 year warranty, ensuring protection even in the most demanding large scale applications.

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Microbox chosen to ventilate St Peter's House



Vectaire's Microbox 125/2DC was chosen to ventilate St Peter's House and Admiral's House in Kents Road, Torquay. The unit is slim (less than 184 mm deep) so is particularly suited for in-line installation where space is at a premium. Additionally, it can be installed at any angle and only requires one discharge grille. It is an efficient, low energy solution to controlling condensation and pollution in residential properties up to 185m². It has a variable choice of low (trickle), boost and purge speeds at installation with low noise levels and low running costs. It is easy to install, using the minimum amount of ductwork (therefore fewer fire dampers and less coring), saving approximately £250 per system. It will operate in up to 60°C, is IPX4 rated and SAP PCDB Listed.

01494 522333 www.vectaire.co.uk

New Stratos-MAXO ...soon be here!



The Wilo-Stratos MAXO offers greater efficiency, connectivity and comfort than ever before. It is the first pump which has an intuitive user interface – that makes installation and operation easier than ever before. The Wilo-Stratos MAXO also redefines system efficiency. By featuring innovative energy-saving functions and new control modes it

attains maximum system efficiency and the highest level of compatibility with existing systems. This new pump will be available in the UK from 1st April 2019.

To find out more about Wilo's Energy Solutions expertise and its wide range of high efficiency pumps and pumping systems, visit their website.

01283 523000 www.wilo.co.uk

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Evinox Energy Supply Canary Wharf's New District, Wood Wharf



A new urban district is being created in London's Canary Wharf, which when complete will feature up to 3,600 new homes, a GP's surgery, a two form primary school for 420 children, 490,000sq ft of retail space and eight acres of public spaces squares and parks. The development, called Wood Wharf, has been designed to provide a new residential led, mixed use, waterside community and is expected to be completed by 2023.

The scheme was approved by Tower Hamlets Council in 2014, which described its design as "innovative". In recognition of this innovation, Wood Wharf won the Tall Buildings category of the MIPIM Architectural Review Future Project Awards in 2014.

Working with the developer, Canary Wharf Group (CWG), in combination with SES Engineering Services, Emico and Haydon Mechanical & Electrical contractors, Evinox Energy supplied heating and cooling interface units for 1330 apartments for the first phases of this development, with more to follow for the remaining phases.

Homes are all connected to a district heating network, with each apartment featuring a ModuSat XR-ECO Twin Plate heat interface unit for the supply of heating and hot water and a ModuSat Single Plate interface unit to provide cooling.

TESTED BY BSRIA TO PROJECT DESIGN PARAMETERS

Interface units were tested by BSRIA as a requirement of this project, something Evinox were happy to undertake, confident their first-class product manufacturing and performance would exceed the required results.

Peter Linehan, Evinox Technical Sales Manager comments, "The main objective of the testing was to confirm the performance of the heating and cooling units under the specific design parameters of Wood Wharf phases A2/A3, E1/E2. The method statement was based upon three different sources; BESA UK Standard for Heat Interface Units Technical Specification, BSRIA BTS 2/2015 Test Method for Heat Interface Units and recommendations from the clients commissioning company."

Peter continued, "Evinox's ModuSat XR-ECO TP HIU's and ModuSat SP CIU's were submitted, with a total of 8 units tested at the BSRIA Test House. These included each building's most common HIU/CIU model and high load units. The interface units achieved excellent results, performing to the project requirements, which culminated in an order for the first 5 phases of the Wood Wharf development."

FLEXIBLE MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES

In addition to the efficient performance of the ModuSat units, Evinox equipment was also chosen due to the flexibility of manufacturing and short delivery timescales. "On-time" delivery schedules were critical for this project, as some of the equipment was being built into prefabricated pods by a third party prior to delivery to site.

Their range of heat interface units are designed and developed internally by technical engineers to UK standards, and built in Evinox's own production facility in Brasov Romania by partner Romradiatoare, using lean manufacturing principles. Working closely with component suppliers enables them to deliver bespoke



units, built to project specific requirements, in a timely manner.

WORLD-LEADING COMPONENTS

One of the key components used in every ModuSat HIU, is the high efficiency plate heat exchanger from SWEP, who are a world-leading supplier of brazed plate heat exchangers for HVAC and industrial applications. Evinox's ModuSat XR-ECO HIU delivers impressive, ultra-low DHW return temperatures to the primary network by incorporating SWEP high efficiency domestic hot water plate heat exchangers with volumetrics that encourage turbulent flow. This contributes to excellent annual Volume Weighted Return Temperatures and system operating efficiency.

01372 722277 www.evinoxenergy.co.uk

Sto solutions help create development



One of the most prestigious residential development projects in the UK has recently been completed using a number of different products from **Sto**. StoTherm Classic external wall insulation and StoDeco profiles have been used to provide high levels of thermal insulation and an outstanding external appearance

for the 11 new properties which make up the development in St John's Wood, London, close to the world-famous Abbey Road Recording Studios. Sto solutions were selected for this project as they offered a unique combination of speedy construction and outstanding quality of finish.

www.sto.co.uk

Beaulieu Fibres launches UltraBond



Beaulieu Fibres International unveils a unique opportunity for carpet manufacturers to create fully recyclable needlepunch carpets, and benefit from production and resource savings, without influencing performance. UltraBond is a patented polyolefin bonding staple fibre that

eliminates the need for latex or other chemical binders to bind nonwovens. It opens up a new path for creating 100 per cent polypropylene (PP) needlepunch carpets which meet the same performance requirements as traditional latex-bonded carpets while reducing the end-of-life environmental impact. Functional properties such as pilling resistance, resistance to wear and abrasion, and also UV resistance are guaranteed.

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Featuring the Premium Ladder Moulded in the SoundSecure Doorset and the Scandinavian Horizontal SpeedSet Plus Doorset.



FIT FOR THE JOB

InSinkErator® tap gains WRAS approval



The InSinkErator® Rose Gold J Shape 3N1 steaming hot water tap, which safely delivers instant, filtered, steaming hot water, alongside regular hot and cold water, from the same fixture, has gained approval from the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS). The approval from WRAS demonstrates the commitment of InSinkErator® to compliance

and the safety of its consumers, by encouraging the efficient use of water within the home and offering products that prevent the contamination of public water supplies. InSinkErator® has also gained approval from WRAS for its hot water tank and filter unit.

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

Reginox jazzes up granite range



Reginox has launched the new Harlem collection, a range of highly affordable granite composite sinks. Harlem combines style, quality, design and durability and comes in a choice of four 'silvery' colourways – Black, Caffè, Grey and White. All sinks in the collection are available as either

single or 1.5 bowl configurations and feature a large reversible drainer, which is ideal for food preparation. The sinks are stain, impact, heat and scratch resistant, ensuring they are extremely durable, and come with a ten-year guarantee.

01260 280033 www.reginox.co.uk

A touch of luxury that buyers are looking for



The saleability of a new or renovated home very much depends on the quality of the interior. With its natural textures and a versatile range of colours and finishes, wood flooring by Woodpecker brings that touch of luxury buyers are looking for. Their engineered wood floors are compatible with underfloor heating, offering a durable surface that's easy to clean and maintain. And, with the support they offer housing developers,

Woodpecker is the natural choice. Get in touch to find out how they can support you with your project.

02920 888 223 www.woodpeckerflooring.co.uk/professional

Let sleeping dogs lie with Norbord's flooring



Norbord's CaberFloor P5 – one of the UK's most specified chipboard flooring products, has been upgraded to produce a high performance floor with reduced impact and airborne noise transmission. Called CaberAcoustic, the new product comprises 18mm or 22mm CaberFloor P5 chipboard with a 10mm acoustic felt layer

permanently bonded to the underside. Designed as a floating floor laid over an existing deck in either new-build or refurbishment applications, CaberAcoustic is installed with the tongue-and-groove joints glued with CaberFix D3 adhesive and all perimeters of the panel sealed with acoustic flanking strips.

www.norbord.co.uk



Wilsonart Launch #wilsonartquestionhour

Wilsonart launches a question and answer hour on twitter. #wilsonartquestionhour is an open invitation to customers, retailers, installers, housebuilders and anyone using any of the Wilsonart worksurfaces and splashbacks. Every Thursday at 3.00pm technical, design, installation, specification, project or maintenance queries will be answered immediately by Wilsonart product experts. Tweeters are also invited to share tips and tricks, hacks and hints.

Caroline Elliott, marketing manager for Wilsonart, explains: "Twitter is a quick and easy place for everyone to interact. Many of our customers are contacting us via all social media platforms so we felt taking it one step further to develop a fun, and an informative hour would be fitting."

Just tweet a question or comment and use the hashtag #wilsonartquestionhour questions can be sent in advance and will be answered during this time.

www.wilsonart.co.uk



P C Henderson expands its range of sliding barn door style hardware

P C Henderson has introduced a number of new additions to its range of Rustic sliding barn door hardware – including a new top mounted version and a new 'antique rust effect' finish. The new Rustic Top Mount offers a stylish, contemporary twist on the company's classic Rustic 80 system with its matt black hangers being mounted to the top of the door. The company has also introduced a new 'antique rust effect' finish to its classic Rustic 80 system to further complement the range. The company has also recently launched its new Rustic Soft Stop system – an extremely easy to fit accessory which can be installed onto new or existing applications. The sophisticated system catches the door in its final moments of travel and pulls it gently into its final position, preventing slamming and adding to the overall longevity of the product. Ideal for barn and warehouse conversions, period properties or simply for a distinctive feature in the home, the system caters for interior wooden doors weighing up to 80kg and is available in 2000mm and 3000mm track lengths. Tested to over 100,000 cycles, the system guarantees a smooth and quiet system which will withstand the test of time. The classic Rustic 80 system is available in matt black, stainless steel or the newly added antique rust effect and the Rustic Top Mount available in matt black.

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Industrial design on tap with new Hex range



Abode is always at the forefront of the latest kitchen trends and tapping into the burgeoning trend for industrial elements in kitchen design, Abode has launched Hex. Hex is a range of mixer taps available in a variety of configurations and finishes which make it the perfect pairing for an industrial styled kitchen. Marking a shift towards finishes other than chrome and in line with the growing trend for industrial elements and dark colourways in kitchen design, Hex can be chosen in Brushed Brass, Brushed Nickel or Black. Abode's high quality is evident down to the last detail with Hex, each design has carefully considered features such as knurling on the spout of the pull-out option and understated industrial detailing on the handles and spout.

01226 283434 www.abodedesigns.co.uk

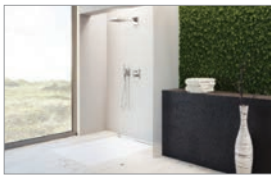
Fashionable tap for modern kitchens



The beautiful, angular shape of BLANCO's fashionable LUPER tap brings a modern design to all kitchens. The cross-shaped mixer tap has ceramic disc control and provides a high pressure water flow with a minimum of 0.5 bar pressure. With an elegant high spout offering plenty of room for filling pots and pans or washing dishes, the high quality model can also be swivelled by 360 degrees, and also features a twin lever. BLANCO's stylish chrome tap is perfect for all requirements and is easy to install.

www.blanco.co.uk

Kaldewei to exhibit at ISH Frankfurt 2019



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Keller's chic Chelsea kitchen



Keller Kitchens' new Chelsea kitchen reflects a vintage style; with a modern twist. The beautiful cabinetry features the new Tip-on technique, enabling the narrow profiled framework to be completely handleless; perfect for a sleek and seamless blend between cupboards

and drawers. The boxed shelving is ideal for easily accessing much used items and adds personality to the kitchen. The silk gloss lacquer cabinets are easy to wipe clean and maintain, and are available in a large range of colours including White and Powder Pink (as pictured). To create a full-retro look, homeowners can add chic wallpaper behind tempered glass or patterned tiles as focal points; the possibilities are endless.

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SOFTLY, SOFTLY

Ryan Blake of Harvey Water Softeners details the dangers of hard water, and explains the techniques that can help developers attract customers seeking the benefits of softer water

With any new build or renovation project, the main focus for developers or specifiers is usually to get the project finished on time and – more importantly – within budget.

However, there's one consideration which could make the difference between costing any future homeowner thousands more in new appliances in years to come, or them saving that money instead. That difference is the hardness of the water.

TESTING THE WATER

Not all tap water is the same. Depending on location, mains water contains different levels of minerals such as magnesium and calcium, either naturally occurring or artificially added, for reasons of health or taste.

Generally, the higher the levels of minerals in the water, the harder it is, and the more important it is for developers to take note.

When building or renovating in hard water areas, it pays to know. Developers need to be familiar with the impact limescale can have in kitchens and bathrooms on taps, shower screens, appliances or any surface that regularly comes into contact with water.

Caused by the minerals in the water, limescale can quickly cause an unsightly mess, and make a dream development look worn out in a matter of months.

Limescale from hard water is not just a fact of life to be lived with. If left untreated, it can cause real damage to appliances and heating or hot water systems too. Any device with a heating element that uses water is affected. When those appliances are brand new, exposing them to hard water is little different to throwing money down the drain.

There are hard water maps available online which can give a good rough indication for each area, but a water

testing kit will give a more exact reading on a house by house basis.

WATER SOFTENERS

In order to counteract hard water problems, a water softener removes hard minerals from the mains to prevent limescale from forming. It protects new appliances inside and out, making them last longer with fewer longer-term maintenance issues, and keep things looking better for longer.

They can also remove existing scale build up in older properties. An ageing hot water cylinder can typically be made limescale-free in six months, or a kettle or shower head in six weeks. System pipework can take a little longer – up to two years depending on how much scale has been allowed to build up – but the difference it makes can be significant. Not quite 'box fresh,' but close!

The higher the spec of the kitchen, the greater the consideration that needs to be given to water hardness. Price-wise, water softeners are a similar investment to other 'white goods' appliances that get frequent use day after day. So adding them into the budget for an already significant renovation, redevelopment or new build makes sense for lots of households.

They can be installed quite easily – normally only a few hours' work – at the same time as a kitchen or bathroom refit. For new builds, they can be bought and installed before Building Regs are signed off to save on the VAT.

However, with non-electric softeners, there's no ongoing servicing requirement as





there is with a boiler.

Modern mains pressure hot water systems require a water softener with a higher flow rate – especially if there are going to be features like rainfall showers in the bathroom or a boiling tap in the kitchen.

MAKING THE DECISION

Water hardness varies from place to place, so whether water softeners are right for each project depends very much on the location. The benefits of softened water extend beyond appliances to skin conditions, savings on cleaning and

WATER HARDNESS VARIES FROM PLACE TO PLACE, SO WHETHER WATER SOFTENERS ARE RIGHT FOR EACH PROJECT DEPENDS VERY MUCH ON THE LOCATION

bathroom products, and more.

When specified, it pays to earmark the space for the softener in the designers' plans from the start, just like any other feature. Space is usually at a premium, especially in older houses where the purpose of the work is to create more living space. However, there are some softeners which can be fitted internally or externally with the right purpose-built cabinet to protect it from the elements.

For builders or developers, it can keep customers satisfied with your work for years longer, so it's certainly something to consider.

Ryan Blake is national Dualflo channel manager for Harvey Water Softeners

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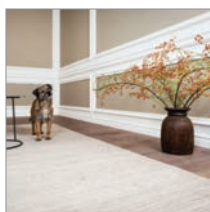


A new option in bathroom specification, believed to be unique in the shower/wash dry toilet sector, has been launched by **Closomat**. Closomat has introduced a "configurator" on its website to give designers and potential purchasers the ability to personalise their new Asana shower (wash/dry) toilet, and see it in preview, before buying. Just by clicking on the various options, potential customers can create their ideal style combination. Options

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SEAL THE DEAL

Richard Osborne of LTP Ecoprotec looks at the options for sealing outdoor surfaces, and the benefits that each can bring to projects.

When discussing the best sealer for a job, it's generally assumed that it's for use indoors – for a limestone floor or a granite worktop. After all, who actually seals an outdoor surface? The average patio or terrace may get the occasional jet wash to blast away slippery algae, but outdoor slabs are basically left to their own devices, aren't they? This view is now, however, being reassessed, and it's driven to an extent by the popularity of the 'seamless' inside-to-outside installation.

When the same material is used inside and outside, it doesn't take long for the two areas to show a contrast. This is particularly evident in stone installations, where flush surfaces are continued through bi-fold doors. Generally, the indoor slabs are sealed and the outdoor surface isn't, so it very quickly becomes darker, and dirtier.

One reason for a reluctance to contemplate external sealing is that traditional spirit-based products can make outdoor sealing almost impossible; they're best applied when a surface is bone dry and free of any residual moisture. If they were applied in damp conditions, moisture could

become trapped between the surface and sealer, and this could create an unpleasant, milky appearance.

SPIRIT-BASED VS WATER-BASED

Today, there's a new breed of water-based sealers on the market that eliminate these issues. They are equal in performance to spirit-based sealers, with the added benefit that they can be applied over moisture. Once applied and cured, water and spirit-based sealers actually function in a similar way. They're both tough, durable and provide stain protection.

Spirit and water-based solvents are simply used to facilitate application. Once a surface has dried, the spirit evaporates into the air and releases VOCs into the atmosphere, so they don't actually contribute to a treatment's ongoing performance. Water-based treatments enter a stone's pores in the same way, but as they tend to be VOC free, they don't have the same negative impact.

One key difference worth mentioning, however, is their appearance. Spirit-based sealers tend to be clear as the sealer

polymer and the solvent form a continuous clear solution, whereas water-based sealers appear white. This is because the polymers are present as separate particles and scatter visible light differently than the water in which they are dispersed. However, this original appearance does not create the permanent milky look caused by trapped moisture under a spirit-based solvent.

Despite the huge leaps that have been made in water-based technology, so many companies remain unconvinced about outdoor sealing. As well as the weather issue, they claim that it's simply a waste of money, that there will be logistical difficulties, that it will change the stone's appearance and create a patchy surface. However, a quality, natural-finish, water-based impregnator is actually easy to apply, will not change appearance, and will not create a patchy surface. It will, however, protect both areas and retain that seamless look.

As well as facilitating treatment in any season, a quality water-based sealer will offer greater protection against the elements. It will provide some UV resistance, offer protection against frost, lichen and algae, and prevent staining from pets and wildlife, plants and leaf matter, and barbecues.

There are other less obvious benefits of switching to a spirit-free product. They are safer to transport, handle and store, which is a plus as there can be a vast amount of admin involved in the storage of 'hazardous' spirit-based products, including completion of reams of paperwork and the requirement for secure fireproof locked





containers. Also, as a general rule, water-based sealers tend to go further, with a typical extra coverage of between 10 and 20 per cent on most surfaces.

It's also worth mentioning that sealing, as opposed to not sealing, provides its own environmental advantages. The main one being that a sealed surface requires much less cleaning. This, in turn, reduces associated waste and water consumption,

and eliminates the need for more drastic intervention with harsh chemicals.

OTHER EXTERNAL SURFACES

Advances in stone-effect porcelain finishes have resulted in wider specification – and as well as installation in homes, these surfaces are now being continued onto patios.

Just like stone, external porcelain does

PROTECTING OUTDOOR SURFACES OFFERS MANY BENEFITS – AND THE NEW BREED OF SEALERS MAKES TREATMENT COMPLETELY FEASIBLE

require protection – but for different reasons. While most matt porcelains are stain-resistant, they can still be marked during the fixing process. This is often caused by grouts or joint sealing compounds, which have an oily resin that can be very hard to remove. In order to prevent this, a sacrificial seal should be applied before fixing.

Protecting outdoor surfaces offers many benefits – and the new breed of sealers makes treatment completely feasible, whatever the weather and whatever the finish. In terms of the 'seamless surface' it's a must. And having reassessed this area – armed with a new arsenal of eco-treatments – maybe it's time to look at other external surfaces too?

Richard Osborne is director of LTP Ecoprotec

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Are Your Properties Ready For Electric Vehicles (EVs)?

The number of UK motorists purchasing an Electric Vehicle (EV) in 2018 set a new record, and with these rapidly growing numbers comes increasing demand for EV charging points to be incorporated into homes and new builds.

To meet demand from home builders for cost effective EV charging solutions, Rolec EV, the UK's leading charge point manufacturer, has developed a unique charging concept called WallPod: EV Ready.

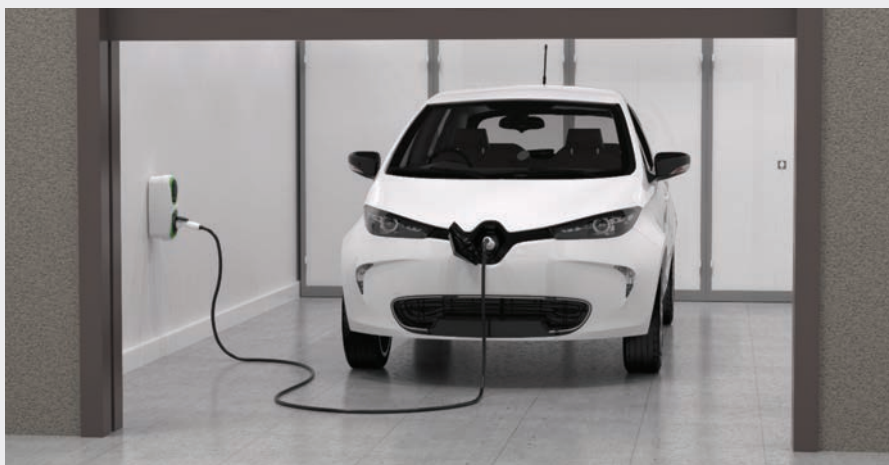
This unit is installed on the home to provide an IP65 rated 13amp domestic socket complete with an RCBO providing both fault current and overload protection.

WallPod: EV Ready can then be used as both a Mode 2 EV charging point and a domestic socket for items such as electrical garden equipment, pressure washers, maintenance tools, etc.

Available in a variety of colours, as well as with bespoke branding options, prices for the WallPod: EV Ready unit start at just £79.

The unique selling point of WallPod: EV Ready is that it can be quickly and easily upgraded to a full Mode 3 fast EV charger, or smart EV charger, at a later date by simply purchasing an upgrade kit that is installed into the unit itself.

Tim Waitt, Rolec EV's Business Development Manager, commented: "Planning regulations



throughout the UK are now increasingly calling for EV chargers to be installed on new developments, including new home builds.

"WallPod: EV Ready is proving to be the ideal choice - and has already experienced huge demand from many national and regional home builders."

Kieron Alsop, Managing Director of Rolec EV, commented: "Our WallPod: EV Ready unit has a prime place in today's market. Not only does it have built-in fault and overcurrent protection, it is also IP65 rated, flame retardant, corrosion

resistant, UV stabilised and BSI safety in the home certified.

"There can be little doubt, residential developers - both now and into the future - need to consider the provision of EV charging units in all new homes as the take-up of electric vehicles continues to rise.

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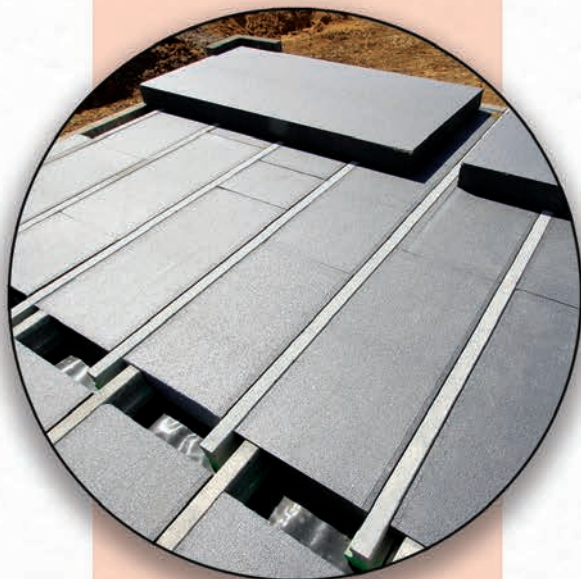
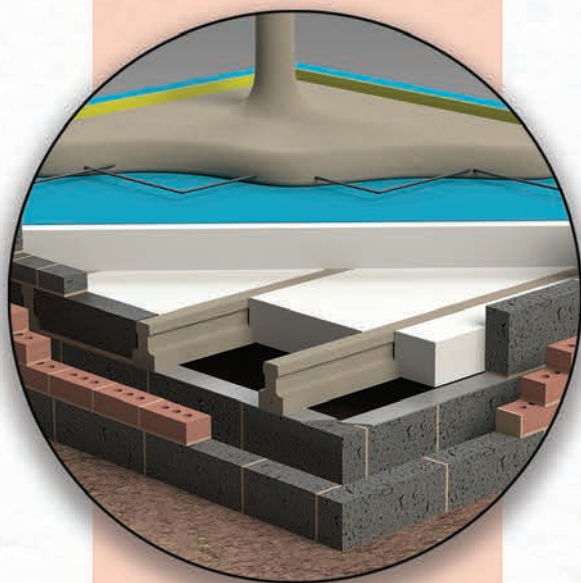
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McAvoy unveils prototype built entirely offsite



The McAvoy Group, one of the UK's leading offsite construction specialists, has unveiled a prototype house at its factory in Lisburn to demonstrate the potential of its new modular housing solution and latest innovations for the residential sector. Designed and

engineered by McAvoy in collaboration with Queen's University Belfast and Todd Architects, the prototype house has been manufactured and fitted out entirely offsite to showcase a number of new innovations in offsite housing. It is now available for viewing by developers and housing providers at the Group's Lisburn site.

www.mcavoygroup.com/housing

RAG features record recommendation numbers



The 2019 edition of F. Ball's industry-acclaimed recommended adhesives guide (RAG) now includes a record number of adhesive recommendations for over 6000 branded floorcoverings from over 200 leading international manufacturers.

Every adhesive recommendation is stringently tested and must be endorsed by each individual floorcovering manufacturer before it can be included in the RAG. Available on the F. Ball website (where it is constantly updated throughout the

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www.f-ball.co.uk

Milbank launch revolutionary 'WarmFloor Pro'



Milbank Concrete Products based in Colchester, North Essex, are one of the UK's leading manufacturers of precast concrete products with a focus on exceptional customer service. Milbank Concrete Products have recently launched their new and improved

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