



Knight Frank report reveals that 28 of 33 London boroughs failed to meet housing targets



The New Homes Review reports that 9 out of 10 new build homes have defects or 'snags'



Homes England provides £3.4m funding for 121-apartment Havant Civic Campus scheme

04.19

# HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



## PRIDE & JOY

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James Parker

# FROM THE EDITOR

The recently growing movement to build tall residential buildings using timber has taken a severe knock following the Government's response to Grenfell (and perhaps has not been helped by the sad loss of Notre Dame's timber roof and spire). The Ministry of Housing reacted in a undoubtedly blunt fashion following the Hackitt report, banning all 'combustible' materials in the external walls of new towers over 18 metres.

Whether or not simply banning materials which can burn – rather than immediately putting the focus on issues around Building Regulations – is the best way forward, is up for debate. The Hackitt report is proposing a new regulatory framework, and the Government's due to respond later in the year, but has the ban already sounded the death knell for timber?

As many timber aficionados will tell you, it's eminently possible to construct multi-storey buildings entirely from timber, as evidenced in several recent projects. Mjøstårnet is an 85.4 metre, 18-storey mixed use building just completed in Brumunddal, Norway, as the world's tallest timber building. The part-resi scheme shows what can be done, albeit in a country full of forests and already well used to large-scale timber building. It's constructed of big glulam trusses, with a CLT (cross-laminated timber) core, including lifts and stairs.

The project took the title from a student accommodation building in Vancouver – Brock Commons Tallwood House; which featured a ground-breaking timber 53 metre structure, albeit with a concrete core. The UK has also been pushing the envelope in residential timber multi-storey buildings, with Waugh Thistleton architects' Dalston Works in London claiming the 'world's largest CLT building' title in 2017. Long before that, Stadhaus in Hackney – a hotbed of CLT adoption – was the first tall all-CLT apartment block, completed in 2009.

Despite all this innovation, the Government's actions are being interpreted as a major obstacle for building with timber in tall UK buildings. The ban permits only materials with a Class A1 or A2 rating in the external wall – and the failure to exclude CLT has been perceived as a de facto ban on its use in external walls above 18 metres.

CLT is great for modular housing application, which is why it's been eagerly taken up by organisations like Legal and General and Swan Housing Group, who have invested in modular housebuilding factories. There is controversy around the sensitive issue of fire performance, obviously thrown into stark focus post-Grenfell, although timber wasn't a factor. Many, including of course the timber lobby, believe the material's charring properties can even make it safer than steel in certain cases. Others believe that research proves CLT is not the panacea, even if only used on internal walls and floors. Surely a national testing programme is needed to clear this up once and for all?

*James Parker*

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## ON THE COVER



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**HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER**



**PRIDE & JOY**

The McAvoy Group expects its 400 home development in Northern Ireland, explaining how the off-site methods used have helped to reduce the build programme

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# Nine out of 10 new builds have defects, report finds

A total of 91 per cent of new build homes in the UK have defects or 'snags', and almost 40 per cent fail to meet their original completion deadline, according to a survey by the New Homes Review (NHR).

The survey, conducted between 1 November 2017 and 31 October 2018, did however reveal that 65 per cent of buyers of new builds were satisfied with the condition of their property.

The survey found that 75 per cent of snags and defects were resolved in a timely manner, and 63 per cent of the properties were completed on time.

Location was the most important reason for choosing the property, and being close to family and friends, which was ranked third in the firm's previous report, has slipped to fifth.

There were mixed views when new build homeowners were asked about the service provided after they moved in. 49 per cent were "unsatisfied," and 33 per cent said they were "completely satisfied." The NHR believes this shows that builders and developers need to continue to work on the after sales service, which is often handled by the developer or builder's head office rather than the on-site team.

Kate Hughes at New Homes Review commented: "Builders and developers play a huge role in delivering people's dreams, designing houses that people want to live in. Many of them are also trying to improve the service that they provide to homebuyers. The NHR report shows that there are improvements since 2017, but there is still more to be done, in particular around snags and defects which is still very high at 91 per cent. While the majority are resolved in a timely manner, it will be an unbelievably frustrating time for the 25 per cent that are not."

"What is clear from the NHR survey is that home buyers have very high expectations, and that better communication on any delays or issues would be better for everyone involved in the process," Kate added. "The homebuyer would be better informed and feel more in control, and it would be easier for the builder or developer to be open about the issues, many of which can be out of their control."

# Most London boroughs failed to meet housing needs targets in 2018



Most of London's boroughs (28 out of 33) failed to meet their targets for housing need during 2017-18, and 20 boroughs delivered less than half of the units required, according to a report.

Knight Frank's London Residential Development Report (H1 2019) also revealed that house prices declined by 0.6 per cent in 2018, although adding the caveat that performance differs greatly by borough as markets are increasingly localised.

It was reported that there were 20 per cent fewer dwellings added to London's housing stock during 2017-18, while delivery remains well above the pre-crisis average. Knight Frank commented that the construction and planning pipeline suggests that delivery may fall further.

Delivery of Shared Ownership via Section 106 was shown to have more than doubled in three years, and was reportedly likely to increase further as land values adjust to new GLA policies.

Also revealed in the report was that construction costs have risen 14 per cent in three years which, along with economic uncertainty, is exerting pressure on land values.

Patrick Gower, residential research associate at Knight Frank commented: "The market faces structural challenges that are suppressing long term sales activity, including stretched affordability, tighter

mortgage regulations introduced in the wake of the financial crisis, and patchy house price growth – though reports, including the latest RICS sentiment survey, indicate January was a stronger month than November and December.

"These factors, and a challenging policy environment, have also weighed on residential construction. Upward momentum in annual housing delivery that had continued unabated since 2012-13, reversed in 2017-18, with the number of dwellings added to total London housing stock, including conversions and change of use, falling 20 per cent year on year."

# Over 10,000 new homes registered in February



The number of new homes registered by the UK's housebuilders and developers in February reached 10,721, NHBC's latest figures have revealed.

This represents a 7 per cent decrease on the same month in 2018. This year 7,550 were registered in the private sector (9,080 in 2018), with 3,171 in the affordable sector (2,495 in 2018).

For the rolling quarter between December and February 34,199, new homes were registered compared to 34,723 a year ago – a decrease of 2 per cent. During this period there were 23,105 new homes registered in the private sector (26,562 in 2017/18: -13 per cent) and 11,094 in the affordable sector (8,161 in 2017/18: +36 per cent).

However, despite the slight decrease overall in registrations, half of the 12 UK regions experienced some growth in this period, including London (+17 per cent), the north west (+11 per cent) and the south east (+9 per cent).

Commenting on the latest figures, NHBC chief executive Steve Wood said: "Continuing the trend from January we are seeing strong numbers in the affordable sector, but an understandable drop in the private sector amid the ongoing Brexit uncertainty."

# Brokenshire highlights need for planning reform

Housing Secretary James Brokenshire set out what the Government is doing to tackle the housing shortage and improve the quality of new homes at the Home Builders Federation (HBF) policy conference.

Addressing the audience, Brokenshire emphasised the need to reduce planning delays, increase the capability of local planning departments, improve procedure to accelerate the end-to-end planning process, and reform the planning system.

Richard Beresford, chief executive of the NFB, welcomed the speech, believing that it indicates housing may be returning as a priority for the Government.

He said: "The housing crisis is the greatest challenge to social equality that we have in the UK. The Government must prioritise it. By building more and understanding how we physically get more quality homes built, we can make really positive changes to our communities."

Rico Wojtulewicz, head of housing and planning policy at the House Builders Association, also commented: "When Ministers utter the words 'planning reform,' the industry gets quite excited. Getting permission to build is a painful, slow and desperate process, especially for SMEs."

## London Mayor releases £200m extra funding for affordable home building

£200m of extra funding has been announced by the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan to counter what he described as the "low level of funding" from Government. Khan said this lack of funds is driving housing associations to use market sales to subsidise new affordable homes.

Partly blaming the continuing Brexit negotiations, Khan said that the funding will be offered to help housing associations to switch homes from market sale or shared ownership to homes for rent and social or immediate rent levels, which are lower than market rent.

City Hall has also stated that the extra money will enable the housing associations to "commit to their future plans, sign construction contracts, and begin development without further delay."

The support received by individual housing associations will reportedly depend on the schemes in their pipeline and those underway, and is only available for homes starting in this calendar year.

Sadiq Khan has called on Government "at the very least to match this funding" by providing extra investment for housing associations to deliver their planned schemes.

He said: "At City Hall we are building record numbers of new social rented and other genuinely affordable homes. We must not let the Government's chaotic mishandling of Brexit undermine our plans."

"That's why it is right we push our funding to its very limits to keep housing associations building more affordable housing through the ongoing uncertainty – and it's even more important given the Government totally failed to address my concerns when I recently raised them."

## Brownfield land for 1 million homes identified

An updated analysis of the potential brownfield land available for housing has been published by The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), which has called for a halt to the "unnecessary loss of our countryside and green spaces."

In its State of Brownfield 2019 report, the organisation revealed that every local planning authority now has a register of brownfield land, and this showed that enough suitable land is available for more than 1 million homes, representing over 18,000 sites and over 26,000 hectares.

The CPRE's report also showed that more suitable land has come forward over the last 12 months, with one in seven homes on up to date brownfield registers being on sites identified in the last year. The CPRE commented that this shows that brownfield is a "perpetually regenerat-

ing resource," and one which has the potential to provide a steady pipeline of development opportunities.

The majority of sites identified are reportedly available to build on now, as 59 per cent of the total identified housing has been shown to be deliverable in the next five years, with 63 per cent of newly identified sites also meeting this definition.

In light of this research, the CPRE has called on the Government to implement a 'brownfield first' policy to help prioritise brownfield over greenfield, as well as support local authorities to establish a more rigorous list of opportunities.

## Crest Nicholson announces new CE

Peter Truscott is to join the board of Crest Nicholson as chief executive, succeeding Patrick Bergin, the housebuilder has revealed. The changeover will follow the cessation of his contract with Galliford Try, which is expected to take place in September 2019.

Patrick Bergin agreed to step down from the group chief executive role and from the board at the company's Annual General Meeting on 26 March 2019, and will reportedly not stand for re-election.

In the interim, Chris Tinker, currently chairman of Major Projects and Strategic Partnerships and board director, will become interim chief executive. He will be supported by chairman Stephen Stone, who became the firm's non-executive chairman on 1 April 2019.

Stephen Stone commented: "We are delighted to welcome Peter to Crest Nicholson. We announced last year that we were shifting strategy from growth to cash generation with a strong emphasis on partnerships and other joint ventures, to de-risk the portfolio while delivering more homes."

"Peter is highly experienced at delivering a broad range of housing needs to customers working with local authorities, Housing Associations as well as private homebuyers. This, together with his operational and public company experience, will bring strong additional expertise to our team."

Stone continued: "We are extremely grateful to Patrick Bergin for his dedication, time and commitment to Crest Nicholson over the last 13 years, both as group finance director and latterly as chief operating officer and group chief executive, and we wish him well for the future."



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## Yourkeys founder named Young Entrepreneur of The Year

The founder of Yourkeys, Riccardo Dawson, at just 28, won the Young Entrepreneur of The Year award at the 2019 Best New Business Awards.

Dawson, originally an architect, switched careers to become sales director for Shape, a mid-sized builder of new homes. It was there he witnessed, first-hand, the “painful and convoluted sales process for all parties” which led him to coin the phrase “The house buying process is not exactly broken, it just doesn’t work.”

While architects are not typically known for their entrepreneurial spirit, Dawson nevertheless set about “trying to revolutionise an outdated industry, and put the consumer back at the helm of buying the most important asset of their lives.” His self-confessed obsession of identifying things that were poorly made or did not function correctly, was the catalyst to him trying to solve that particular problem by creating the

Yourkeys platform, that “radically changes the way new-build houses are sold and bought,” said Dawson.

All stakeholders use one central operating hub, with the buyer being fully involved in the entire buying process. This means that all communication between the developer, estate agent, mortgage broker, buyers conveyancing solicitor, sellers’ solicitor and surveyor, is “completely transparent, with everyone updated at every step of the process through visibility of the sales progression.” This streamlined journey automates many of the repetitive tasks, thus reducing costs and making the process a lot less stressful. Furthermore, the main benefit to housebuilders is to reduce the time it takes to reach exchange of contracts to just 21 days, compared to the industry average of 63 days. “This results in a dramatic decrease in the number of sales that collapse and helps to reduce the £1bn of resulting wasted

costs to UK housebuilders,” said Dawson.

His view is that the ‘Prop-Tech’ sector has “mainly been tearing lumps out of the estate agency business,” largely in the form of the digitisation of classified advertising and the homebuying process through online agents i.e. Zoopla, Rightmove and Purplebricks.

Realising this, Dawson saw there was a tremendous opportunity to disrupt the new-build sector through “revolutionary digitalisation, the way Google, Amazon and Airbnb truly disrupted their industries.” While admitting his vision is “pretty ambitious,” he believes Yourkeys has a huge global opportunity to become the leader in this space, through “dominating new-build property transactions.”

Since the firm’s launch in October 2018 it has already secured 24 housebuilder clients including Kier, Shape, Howarth and Joseph Homes. It is also in ongoing discussions with a further 27 housebuilders including Galliards, Bellway, Redrow and Barratts.

Thought to be the only company offering a sales progression platform, specifically aimed at new-build house developers, Yourkeys is confident of securing over 100 housebuilders by the end of the year. This impressive traction since launching just six months ago means Yourkeys is set to “finally kick the new-build property buying process into the 21st century.”



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## Persimmon to introduce retention for defects



Persimmon has revealed it is to become the first major UK housebuilder to provide a homebuyer's retention as standard policy.

The firm has revealed that it will be writing into its standard contract that 1.5 per cent of the total home value (equating to around 6 per cent of the build fabric costs) can be withheld by the buyer's solicitor until any faults identified at the point of key release are resolved.

The average amount withheld, based on the company's current selling prices, is reported to be approximately £3,600 per home. The housebuilder has instructed its legal advisers to start work on drawing up the detail of its new standard contract and expects the policy to be fully in place by the end of June.

Dave Jenkinson, CEO of Persimmon, commented: "Persimmon is listening hard to all of its stakeholders, and we hear the message that we need to continue to raise our game in customer care."

He continued: "The initiatives we have already announced, including the action taken to deliver greater accuracy of anticipated moving in dates by adopting a more targeted approach to the phasing of sales on specific sites and the improvements and investments that we have made in our customer care team, operations and technology over the last few months are beginning to take effect. We are now accelerating the pace of change through the introduction of a contracted retention which will give homebuyers far greater satisfaction at the completion of a purchase."



## Bellway set to achieve 5 per cent apprentice target in 2019

Bellway is reportedly set to become one of the first major British housebuilders to achieve '5 per cent Club' status when it reaches its apprenticeship target this year.

In 2018 the company became a member of the 5 per cent Club, an employer-led organisation whose members pledge to work towards having five per cent of their workforce on a formal apprenticeship, student or graduate development scheme within five years.

The company has pledged to meet this challenge, and with 140 apprentices now on its books and more being recruited, the housebuilder says it is set to hit that target in 2019.

Greg Allsop, head of sales for Bellway London, commented: "At Bellway we have taken a lead in employing apprentices and injecting youthful talent into our company."

"We have also partnered with the Collab Group, an organisation of large further education colleges which deliver high quality apprenticeships to national employers such as ourselves. The partnership ensures consistency and quality of training for our apprentices across the country."

"The aim of the 5 per cent Club is to employ five per cent apprentices by 2023. Because we have been so proactive in apprentice recruitment, we will certainly achieve our five per cent target in 2019."

## McCarthy & Stone retains five-star rating for 14th year running



McCarthy and Stone has achieved a five star customer satisfaction rating for a record 14th consecutive year, in an independent survey by the Home Builders Federation (HBF).

The company is reportedly the only housebuilder of any size or type to achieve this award for this number of consecutive years, which encompasses every year the survey has been run.

Five stars are awarded when more than nine out of 10 customers would recommend a company to a friend in the annual survey carried out by the HBF. It covered 1,330 purchasers of McCarthy & Stone's homes in 2018 and McCarthy and Stone achieved a combined customer satisfaction score of 92.5 per cent.

The housebuilder believes the HBF award recognises the company's commitment to maintaining consistently high standards of build quality and delivering excellent customer service over the long-term. There is particular emphasis on a developer's commitment to guiding home buyers through the purchasing process, including the provision of post-sales support.

Stewart Baseley, executive chairman of the Home Builders Federation, commented: "Getting a positive endorsement from the people who buy and live in the homes they build has to be the number one priority for a successful home builder."

He continued: "A five-star rating demonstrates quite clearly that the processes and culture put in place to achieve this are being implemented effectively across the business. Delivering such high levels of customer satisfaction should provide customers with real confidence in the company and the homes that they build."





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## Midlands housebuilder supports national tree planting initiative

Trees have been donated by Davidsons Homes in support of The National Forest. The donation of 20 trees is intended to help the charity to reach their goal of planting 9 million trees, and there are now less than 34,980 left to go.

For more than 25 years The National Forest Company charity has been working to create and grow the National Forest across 200 square miles of central England. The forest spans across parts of Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire and aims to link the two ancient Forests of Charnwood and Needwood.

Davidsons Homes currently has two developments close to The National Forest: Tudor Rise in Ashby de la Zouch, and Spires View in Blackfordby.

The housebuilder intends to further its

pledge to The National Forest by encouraging its staff to get involved and providing an official map of the National Forest to each household moving into the two developments between April and December 2019.

Stephanie King, sales director for Davidsons Homes, said: "It's very important to us to support the communities in the areas that we're building in and the beauty of this project is that everyone can get involved. Hopefully others will pledge a tree or two and The National Forest will reach its goal which we can all enjoy for years to come."

## Millwood tops national poll of customers



The overall highest score in the In-house Research national survey of new home buyers has been awarded to Millwood Designer Homes.

The annual scores revealed Millwood ranked highly in every category in the survey of 51 housebuilders and developers across the UK, with the company coming top of the NET Promoter Score – a "benchmark for customer service across multiple industries."

Millwood scored a 95.4 per cent satisfaction rate, and 100 per cent of respondents said that they would be happy to recommend the housebuilder to a friend.

The rankings are based on the results of telephone surveys, in which individual customers who were contacted gave feedback about their buying experience.

Nick Stonley, managing director of Millwood Designer Homes, commented: "This is a fantastic set of results, which everyone at Millwood is extremely proud of. Customer service is of the utmost importance to our business and it is wonderful that the team's hard work and efforts have been rewarded. We are delighted to be recognised in this independent national survey, against many of the top developers and housebuilders, and receive such wonderful praise directly from our customers. We plan on keeping up the good effort, in order to maintain these excellent results next year!"

## Students recognised for housebuilding vision



Students at a Scottish university have been rewarded for their ideas about the future of the housebuilding industry.

CALA Homes, in partnership with Heriot-Watt University (HWU), has awarded five third-year students from the University's Construction Project Management and Quantity Surveying courses with a paid internship as part of this year's CALA Student Partnership Award.

The internships, which will take place this summer, will allow the successful students to work alongside CALA's team, while also seeing if their creative ideas can be put into practice.

The winners were announced on 21 March by Tracey Ashworth-Davies, HR director at CALA Group, and David McGrath, managing director at CALA Homes (East), at the University's Edinburgh campus.

Scoring 48 students on the posters they showcased during last month's presentation day, a panel of CALA and University staff shortlisted 10 finalists from each of the two subject categories.

Easton Arthur and Melanie Fecker took first and second place respectively for Construction Project Management, while Liam Keeble was first for Quantity Surveying, and Claire Saville and Benjamin Kratz were joint second place.

Runner-up prizes on the day went to Susanna Ford, Niamh Doyle and Neil Finlay from Construction Project Management, and Lewis Mulholland and Gillian Smith from Quantity Surveying.

Professor Fiona Grant, director of Learning and Teaching, School of Energy, Geoscience, Infrastructure and Society at Heriot-Watt University, said: "The quality of the solutions provided demonstrated the ability of the students to fully appreciate the disruptors of the future and the impact this will have on how people will live their lives, not to mention the skills required to deliver the homes of the future."



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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

## COMMENT

# WILL THE GOVERNMENT'S BIODIVERSITY MEASURES BE A NET GAIN OR LOSS FOR HOUSEBUILDERS?

Brian Berry of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) discusses the Government's recently announced plans to support biodiversity growth through housebuilders, and how these should be configured so as not to hinder SME builders

**T**he global loss of large numbers of different species of plants and animals is now said to be a crisis that equals, if not surpasses, climate change. Tackling this, quite rightly, is a key priority for the Government, and it set out a 25-year environmental plan, with ambitious targets to tackle this, last year. The Government has identified the planning system as a way of increasing biodiversity and is seeking to introduce a principle of 'net environmental gain' for new development. It is critical, however, that this is done in a way that doesn't negatively impact upon housing delivery, particularly for smaller scale housebuilders, which will struggle to absorb any extra costs or delays.

Proposals that were confirmed by the Chancellor in the 2019 Spring Statement would mean that any new housing development in England would have to demonstrate a 110 per cent 'net gain' in biodiversity. This would mean that housebuilders would not only have to mitigate for any biodiversity lost (such as hedgerows), but also increase biodiversity by 10 per cent. This can either be achieved onsite, off-setting offsite or through paying a tariff (likely through Section 106). The tariff would be set at a high rate to incentivise housebuilders simply paying the tariff to avoid the first two measures.

The net gain or loss of biodiversity would be measured by the 'Defra metric,' which enables ecologists to calculate any losses or gains by assessing a habitat's distinctiveness (where it is

high, medium, or low-value to wildlife), condition (whether it is a good example of its type), and the extent the habitat occupies. If the planned changes receive a 10 per cent higher Defra score than the previous score, then it would have achieved the necessary 'net gain'.

We know that FMB members are already doing their bit to try to maintain and increase biodiversity – for example by putting in bird boxes, lifting fences so hedgehogs can crawl underneath, or building in bat bricks. Having an arbitrary target of 110 per cent to achieve, which will require expensive surveys and consultancy to achieve, could seriously hamper the smallest of housebuilders, just as they are starting to grow

HAVING AN ARBITRARY TARGET OF 110 PER CENT TO ACHIEVE COULD SERIOUSLY HAMPER THE SMALLEST OF BUILDERS



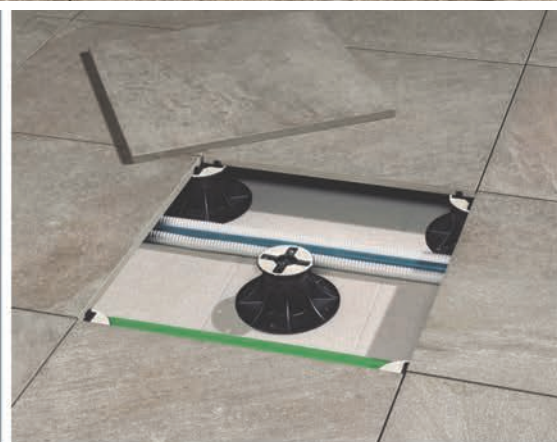




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again after a significant downturn.

Our most recent House Builders' Survey, which asks SME housebuilders what the major barriers to building more homes are, found that planning was the second highest barrier, with over half (51 per cent) saying this was a constraint on their ability to increase the supply of new homes. When

asked what the most important cause of additional cost was, 'excessive information requirements' was the top reason as small firms lack the in-house expertise that large consultancies have so must rely on expensive consultants, who can charge thousands of pounds for a survey.

The Government's impact assessment

for this policy assumes that housebuilders will be able to pass on 90 per cent of the extra costs to the landowner, however this simply won't be the case for many small housebuilders. Many of our members have told us that it has been extremely difficult to pass on the costs of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to the landowner, and many have just absorbed the costs themselves. This has an impact on supply, as 62 per cent of respondents to our survey indicated that there were sites they would otherwise be interested in but believed to be unviable because of Section 106 or CIL. So, there is a risk that the cost of these new measures will fall to the builder, who is already under a lot of pressure financially.

The Government consultation looked at exempting small sites from this policy and this is something they should seriously consider. However, if this is not possible, the Government should do a full impact assessment on the ability of small sites to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, the cost of doing this, and then make provision for supporting small housebuilders financially. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in new housing development is critical but it can and should be done in a way which doesn't disproportionately hamper the smaller housebuilders.



## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

# Apex delivers on Tooting airspace

**F**our two-bed penthouse apartments have begun construction on the unused airspace of Marion Court, a five-storey residential block on Tooting High Street in south London.

Developed by Apex Airspace (Apex), and available on the government's Help to Buy scheme, the apartments will range in size from 672 ft<sup>2</sup> to 916 ft<sup>2</sup>.

The specifications will include floor-to-ceiling glass windows, maximising the flow of light in the living spaces while providing panoramic views across London. Two of the apartments will also have 'wrap-around' terraces.

The apartments will be constructed off-site, and once created, they will be transported and positioned on top of Marion Court by crane in days, intending to cause minimal disruption to the residents living below.

A range of upgrades will also be carried out to the existing building as part of the development. This includes newly renovated communal areas, a new entrance, new fire alarm system and signage, upgraded refuse and recycling, new cycle racks and a new lift.

The development has been made possible through funding from Homes England. This, alongside a partnership with the Greater London Authority, has seen Apex secure £19m in recent months to roll-out new developments in London.

Arshad Bhatti, CEO at Apex Airspace said: "We are committed to creating sustainable and closely-knit communities. Improving the use of existing assets and infrastructure has become a central feature to our success, as we add maximum value to our developments for both existing and new residents.

"Our pioneering model, which doesn't encroach on the green belt in any way, should serve as a blueprint for other boroughs. Innovative solutions like ours are essential to addressing the chronic shortage of homes in the capital."



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# Havant Civic Campus receives funding for 121 apartments

A £3.4m funding deal has been agreed with Havant Borough Council by Homes England for a development in the town. The funding has been awarded through the Government's £450m Local Authority Accelerated Construction Programme, and is intended to enable the development of new homes on the Council's surface car parks at the Civic Campus.

The council plans to use the funding to accelerate the delivery of 121 apartments prioritising the use of modern methods of construction. Located in Havant town centre, the one hectare surface level public car park adjoins the council offices and is close to Havant railway station.

The existing parking would be relocated through the construction of multi-storey parking on neighbouring surface car parks.

Havant Council reportedly has aspirations to regenerate the town centre, and the acceleration of new housing at the Civic Campus follows the development of Havant Plaza, which includes public sector facilities, leisure, homes for key workers and commercial office space.

Councillor Tim Pike, deputy leader of Havant Borough Council and Cabinet Lead for Finance and Regeneration, said: "We are delighted to receive this funding from Homes England that will kick start Havant Borough Council's regeneration plans.

"The civic campus site has great potential. Its transformation will be a game changer for our borough, delivering new homes, construction jobs and economic growth. I believe it is the start of a regeneration programme that will deliver future prosperity right across our borough."

**"THE CIVIC CAMPUS SITE HAS GREAT POTENTIAL – ITS TRANSFORMATION WILL BE A GAME CHANGER FOR OUR BOROUGH, DELIVERING NEW HOMES, CONSTRUCTION JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH"**



# 55 homes set for Somerset village

A 55 unit residential scheme from Acorn Property Group has been granted full planning consent after the completed purchase of a 5.5 acre site in Wedmore, Somerset.

The £20m Cross Farm development, designed by Barton Willmore, and in partnership with Wedmore Parish Council, will feature one and two bedroom apartments and one, two, three and four bedroom houses, of which over 43 per cent will be affordable.

Since agreeing to buy the site, Acorn has worked with the council to draw up "viable detailed plans" and following completion on the land. Work on site is due to start imminently.

Situated in the heart of the village of Wedmore, the development is a short walk from the local shops, amenities and the village school. The new homes will also enjoy views of the Mendips and Cheddar Gorge.

Robin Squire, regional managing director of Acorn's Bristol office commented: "Local interest has already exceeded expectations and we very much look forward to getting construction underway on these exciting high-quality homes which help address local housing needs."







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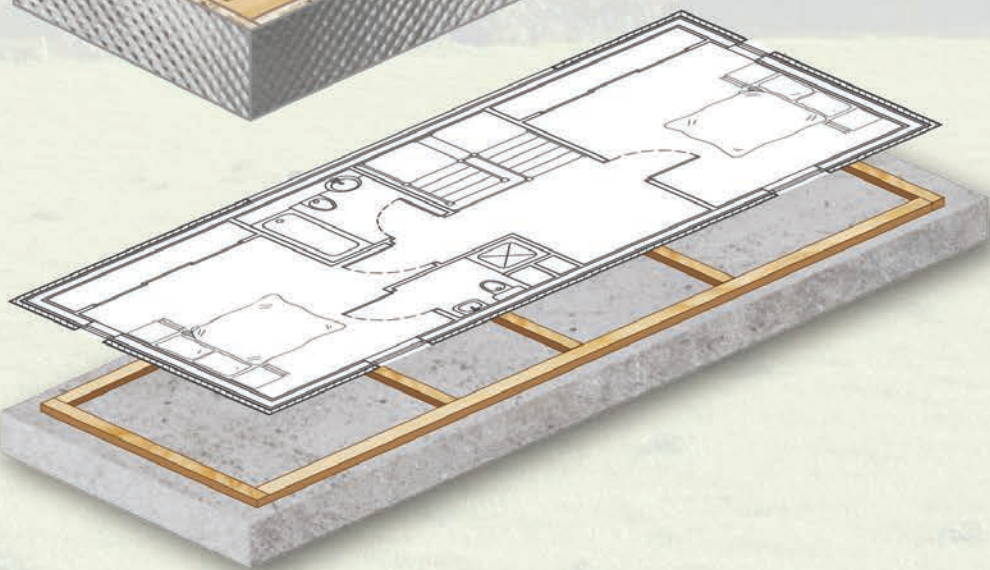
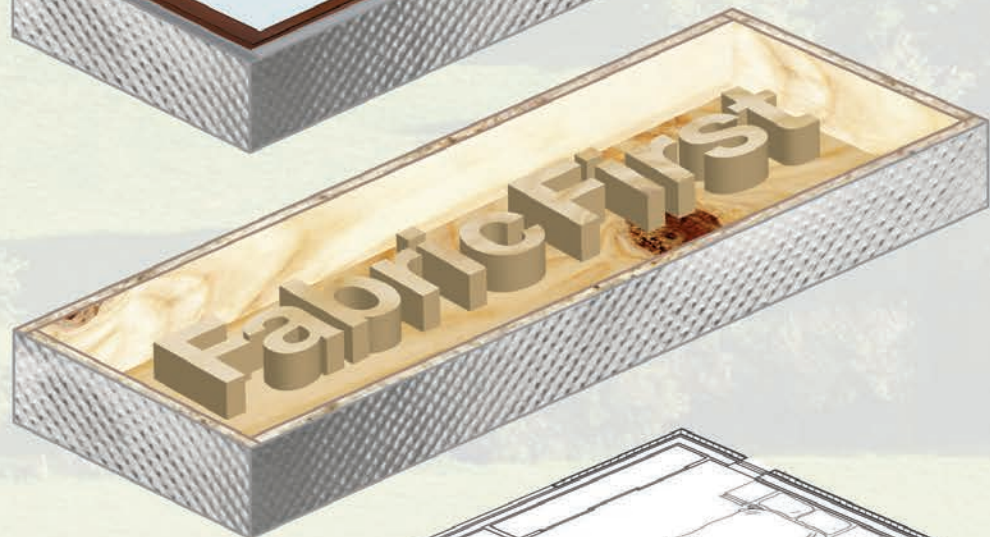
#### THERMAL PERFORMANCE



#### ENERGY EFFICIENCY



#### SPEED OF CONSTRUCTION





## Three is the magic number for new modular housing scheme

An innovative combination of three reflective, low emissivity wall construction membranes from Protect Membranes has been used to deliver the magic formula for a flagship affordable housing scheme in Swansea on behalf of Gwalia Housing /Pobl Group, delivering thermal efficiency benefits and reduced heat loss. Based on the former Four Seasons Social Club site, the development is made up of 41 timber frame properties, offering a mix of one, two and three bedroom homes that provide a modern living space in keeping with local architecture.

Appointed by main contractor Morganstone,

timber frame specialist Seven Oaks Modular Ltd constructed the wall panels offsite in their factory, followed by delivery and installation on-site. Installing Protect's reflective membrane solution helped Seven Oaks Modular to reduce material waste during manufacture and value engineer without severely impacting labour cost. The timber frame panels incorporated Protect TF InterFoil, a vapour permeable, reflective membrane installed on the cold side of the insulation, with the foil facing into an airspace to deliver low emissivity performance. This was combined with Protect TF200 Thermo, a reflective, external breather membrane and



Protect VC Foil Ultra, an internal vapour control layer on the warm side of the insulation to help create a radiant barrier. This system achieved the client's target U-value of 0.19W/m<sup>2</sup>K and achieved important insulation savings, with a reduced thickness of PIR needed for the 140mm stud without increasing the overall wall footprint.

Warren Rowlands, Senior Designer at Seven Oaks Modular commented, "The use of Protect's full reflective membrane system enabled us to not only value engineer this project but ensure a robust solution that provided affordability to the client. The innovative application of membranes offering low emissivity within unventilated cavities was easy to incorporate into our timber frame panels at the factory, ensuring the structure retained thermal efficiency and met our target U-value."

For details of how Protect products can be incorporated into both modular or traditional build, whether residential or commercial, email [info@protectmembranes.com](mailto:info@protectmembranes.com).

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## On The Level modular wet rooms address ageing population needs

There's no denying that the population in the UK is ageing. The Office for National Statistics estimates that by the year 2066 there will be an additional population, roughly the size of London, who are aged 65 years and over.

With increased pressure to respond to the national housing crisis, the construction industry will have to think outside the box if it is to provide bespoke living spaces for our ageing population. There will be over 350,000 additional older people with complex needs by the year 2025, requiring more than 71,000 extra care home beds, and developers will need to embrace modular off-site construction to meet demand.

For nearly 20 years, On The Level have offered home owners and developers expert advice on accessible showers to meet the needs of the UK's ageing demographic. We have worked to very specific requirements for users and have a wealth of experience solving real-life problems; from managing a step upon entering the shower to struggling with a slippery floor, navigating living environments can be treacherous and stressful for the elderly. Our modular wet rooms provide high quality,



easy-access, user-friendly spaces, accessible to all.

Living requirements change as people get older and as mobility becomes more challenging traditional bathroom layouts aren't always safe. Our step-free, level access wet rooms provide practical, functional spaces, accessible to wheelchairs, mobility beds, and those with carers.

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## CASE STUDY

# The joy of modular



Joymount in Carrickfergus, Northern Ireland, is a 40-home social and affordable housing development under construction for Clanmil Housing Association. Raymond Millar, construction director at contractor The McAvoy Group, explains how the company embraced modern methods of construction to reduce the build programme by around 60 per cent.

Located adjacent to a Northern Ireland conservation area, the Joymount development for Clanmil Housing Association is set to provide 40 new affordable and social homes for rent to the area using a new offsite housing solution.

When completed, Joymount will provide eight one- and two-bedroom apartments for “couples and families,” 17 two-bedroom apartments for older people, three detached bungalows, and 12 two-bedroom family homes. Each element in this mix of tenures has been specifically designed to fit its intended resident type, and to be future-proofed to meet changing needs.

Designed by Knox Clayton Architects and constructed by The McAvoy Group, the new homes are being manufactured and fitted out at the Group’s production centre in Lisburn, which is on the other side of Belfast from Carrickfergus, to the south west.

The project is said by McAvoy to be the first offsite affordable housing scheme constructed in Northern Ireland, and according to the firm, the company’s housing solution will reduce the build programme by around 60 per cent to 40 weeks.

The £4.7m contract is being delivered as a single phase, following the manufacture of the apartments and houses at the Group’s Lisburn Factory, with the apartment modules arriving onsite first.

## GETTING STARTED

The McAvoy Group, based further west in Dungannon, has been providing offsite solutions and interim modular buildings for nearly 50 years, and as such was well-placed to undertake the project – though Joymount is the company’s first offsite residential scheme.

According to Raymond Millar, construction director at the Group, Clanmil Housing Association reached out to the company to “explore how offsite construction could be used to deliver new housing more efficiently, and in less time.”

He continued: “McAvoy had designed a prototype house at its factory in Lisburn, which was very similar to the standard house types that are developed by Clanmil, so there was a good fit.”

Millar says the key driver for the project was to cut the waiting list for affordable housing locally – sharing the rest of the





UK's housing challenges, statistics have shown that Northern Ireland currently has around 24,000 households in a state of 'housing stress.' The two organisations agreed that modern methods of construction can help tackle this crisis – by speeding up the housing associations' development pipeline.

Once the partnership began, the next stage was for the housing association to look at potential sites to trial the approach. The Joymount site was identified as being the one most suited to offsite delivery of the Clanmil HA's project, because of the similarity between the association's typical homes and McAvoy's prototype. In addition, the Group was confident that the apartment blocks that would form part of the Joymount development could be 'modularised.'

#### PLANNING

When they were first approached, Millar told *Housebuilder & Developer* that the local community had been "very receptive" to the project, recognising the need for more affordable housing. He said that there "has been very positive feedback to date, and the community has engaged well," which he believes is in part due to McAvoy's commitment to work under the Considerate Constructors scheme, as part of the company's policy to "promote best practice in its site activities."

A brownfield site, the location previously accommodated a factory unit and a former supermarket, both of which had been demolished prior to the Group taking possession. Beyond the removal of these buildings, McAvoy was responsible for site preservation and enabling works, which included the remaining clearance of the site before construction could begin. The extensive remediation involved removing contaminated ground, sub-structure investigations, and levelling the site ready for foundations.

The site already had planning for a mixed affordable housing scheme to be built using traditional in situ construction. The Group was then able to develop an offsite solution for the whole scheme that fit into the existing planning consent.

Millar reports that this was challenging, as it involved later engagement in the process than was ideal. "Typically, early engagement at the initial design stage is crucial to optimise efficiency for offsite manufacture," he explained. "Overcoming this challenge on Joymount demonstrates the flexibility of McAvoy and its offsite housing solutions."

Millar reported that the historic nature of the site raised further challenges: "The Joymount site is subject to a number of planning conditions relating to the history of the site." It contains some of the remains of the wall to the old orchard

**"TYPICALLY, EARLY ENGAGEMENT AT THE INITIAL DESIGN STAGE IS CRUCIAL TO OPTIMISE EFFICIENCY FOR OFFSITE MANUFACTURE"**



belonging to Joymount House, part of which is scheduled for protection under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objectives Order (Northern Ireland) 1995. McAvoy is undertaking works to preserve this historic wall.

Millar continued: “The development site is also located within an Area of Archaeological Potential identified for the historic settlement of Carrickfergus, and is close to the 12th century Carrickfergus Castle. Assurances were required to ensure that any archaeological remains within the site were identified and protected or recorded in advance of the construction works.”

#### LAYOUT & DESIGN

There are two entrances into the site. One for the apartments, which are constructed as four blocks – one three-storey and three two-storey – to the east of the site, and one on the west side, by the row of terraced houses (which run along the south flank).

Along the north edge of the site are the three detached bungalows designed “specifically for individual families with complex needs.” These bungalows (up to 115.7 m<sup>2</sup>) will provide a mix of either three or four bedrooms.

Millar told *Housebuilder & Developer* that McAvoy has worked with the occupational therapists for each family to design the layout of the homes to meet their specific requirements. Features include wheelchair-accessible kitchens with adjustable worktops, occupational therapy stores in each home for the storage of equipment, sensory rooms, and carer bedrooms.

Overall, McAvoy has manufactured 111 steel-framed building modules for the scheme in its offsite factory, and the

homes are currently being installed onsite, complete with bathrooms, kitchens, partitions and glazing.

Each of the new homes across the site have been designed in accordance with the Lifetime Homes and Secured by Design standards. The homes have been specified with more secure than normal locking mechanisms and handles for windows and doors, non-removable glass to the windows and patio doors, and wider doorsteps to accommodate wheelchair access.

Adjustments have been made to beams in the terraced homes to allow a hoist to be installed as well as platform through-floor chair lifts if required in future.

The homes’ design is intended to reflect its location, and as such draws inspiration from the historic buildings nearby. Materials such as slate roofing, white render and timber windows have been selected with this in mind, and are in keeping with the Conservation Area.

Each residence will benefit from timber-framed double glazing. The homes are required to achieve a ‘B’ energy rating and, according to Millar, “more precise factory construction processes, less material waste and high levels of insulation help reduce heating costs and energy consumption.”

#### THE OFFSITE PROCESS

After being manufactured at the Group’s offsite production centre, the residences are being transported by road as steel-framed modules to the site, where they are craned into position.

The terraced homes (73.4 m<sup>2</sup>) are constructed using four modules, the two-bed apartments (64.8 m<sup>2</sup>) consist of two modules. The one-bed apartments (up to 60 m<sup>2</sup>) comprise three modules to suit their



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orientation in the building design, and the bungalows have up to six modules.

The detached bungalows have a steel-framed post and beam point loaded system with a timber floor. The apartments are constructed from the same system, but with concrete floors to provide additional acoustic performance above and below each apartment. The terraced houses use a light gauge steel-framed system with a composite floor. The central cores for the apartments, which accommodate the stair towers, lift shafts and circulation areas, are also manufactured offsite.

As there are two different offsite housing systems on this scheme, two types of foundations were used. These were traditional poured concrete strip foundations for the terraced houses, and pad foundations for the apartments and bungalows to accommodate the point-loaded steel-framed system.

On the buildings' exteriors, the facades are rendered and the roofs have cement-fibre slate tiles – a requirement of planning. As for the roofs, they will be tiled on site. "This work could have been carried out in the factory, but the orientation of the modules and roof layouts would have needed to change," explained Millar. "As the project already had planning consent, the client was keen to avoid any delay to starting construction of the new homes, so the decision was taken to tile the roofs on site."

The construction director cited the "pace of the residential supply chain" as one challenge that this new process introduces, one that is reportedly faced by many offsite housing manufacturers.

"Lead times are often much longer than those required for offsite manufacture for other sectors such as healthcare and education," Millar explains. He argued however that "the growing demand from the offsite sector for greater speed and shorter lead times from suppliers of domestic products will address this as the offsite housing sector becomes more mature."

### SUCCESS SO FAR

The construction director holds the company's offsite methods as one key reason for the development's success so far, and argues that the method holds many benefits in the current economic context: "The greater certainty and predictability of offsite manufacture is helping to address the rising cost of building materials, the shortage of skilled labour in the construction industry in Northern Ireland, and the uncertainty created by Brexit.

"Offsite manufacture has avoided delays caused by poor weather, particularly during the winter months, and it improves both quality and health and safety – with less impact on the environment."

He stated that the project has been a "tremendous springboard" for the Group's expansion into onsite housing. "It successfully demonstrates how offsite can be used for a number of different housing types in a single scheme – detached, semi-detached, terraced and apartments. It will also demonstrate how offsite can help reduce programme times."

Millar concludes: "It is fantastic to see such a progressive provider of social and affordable housing as Clanmil, who are looking at more innovative ways of providing high quality new homes more quickly to address the housing shortage."

### PROJECT TEAM

Client:  
Clanmil Housing Association

The McAvoy Group:  
Offsite manufacturer and  
principal contractor

Architects:  
Knox Clayton

Structural engineers:  
White Young Green

M&E consultants:  
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# Glass Act for High Rise Refurbishment Project

The first tower block to be built in Paisley, West Scotland, has undergone partial refurbishment, using ultra lightweight external cladding from Chromatics Glass Ltd.

George Court was built in 1959 and has been one of the most popular high rise blocks managed by Renfrewshire Council. The 15-storey, 40 metre high building, comprising 56 flats is a brick-based structure that underwent major refurbishment in the late 1990s, when external balconies were incorporated into interior space, external cladding was applied, new windows installed and a low-pitched roof added.

An examination of the structure identified an issue affecting the curtain walling running the full height of the building at each of the four corners where there are open vents into each living room with spandrel panels below. It was decided to replace the existing aluminium panels using Chromatics Safety Glass. Concrete Repair Ltd was the Main Contractor for the refurbishment of the project.

Not a toughened glass, Chromatics Safety Glass is a unique safety glass that achieves exceptional performance. Its extraordinary resilience is as a result of bonding together, at a molecular level, glass, a colour layer and metal, transforming them into a laminate that is both

light weight and shatterproof, as well as being visually stunning and having a completely smooth surface. An unrivalled depth of colour is achieved with 100 per cent opacity, no pin-holes and no risk of show through or colour variation often inherent with ceramic coatings.

At George Court a graphite grey colour scheme was selected. Because the colour is encapsulated between the layers of the laminated product, it is UV stable for at least 25 years and will neither fade nor discolour.

Replacing one cladding system with another can have implications in terms of load bearing but one of the principal advantages of Chromatics Safety Glass is its lightweight quality. The 6mm thick panels specified for the George Court contract weigh just 15.32kg per square metre, making them easier to handle, transport and install, thereby offering huge savings on installation costs. By using Chromatics Safety Glass, the weight of the cladding it replaced was reduced by more than half. The contract also involved replacing existing Styrofoam insulation with a non-combustible Rockwool product.

Chromatics Safety Glass is highly versatile allowing architects and designers complete creative freedom to bring style and resilience to a host of applications. Available in the full range



of RAL colours for use either externally as rainscreen, architectural cladding, curtain walling, or signage, as well as a range of internal uses that include feature walls, counter tops, balustrading and partitioning. It is also possible to replicate any traditional finishes, for example natural stone, wood, terracotta, porcelain, marble, ceramic, brick and metal surfaces.

Chromatics Safety Glass has been awarded an A2-s1-d0 fire rating.

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## BLANCO appoints new Marketing Manager

BLANCO UK has appointed John Robinson as Marketing Manager to take over the reins of the UK marketing and communications strategy. John joined BLANCO from Bathstore where he headed up the Marketing and Communication team for nearly five years, before which he was agency-side working with various major brands. As Marketing Manager, John is responsible for delivering effective B2B marketing strategies that continue to deliver BLANCO's growth, whilst developing and implementing consumer brand awareness plans. "I am really excited to be joining a globally-recognised brand with such a great reputation and am very much looking forward to making a difference at BLANCO" John commented.

[www.blanco.co.uk](http://www.blanco.co.uk)

## Vortice welcomes two new team members

Carl Freeman and Kim Ellis have recently been welcomed to the Vortice team. Carl has joined as Sales Manager for the London and South East area and brings a wealth of experience from working in both the electrical wholesaler and ventilation industry for many years. Kim joins as Technical CAD Manager from a building services consultancy where she was Senior AutoCad and Revit Technician. Kim is a key addition to the technical team, the role will include designing and quoting for various ventilation schemes including heat recovery designs for customers. Vortice supplies energy efficient ventilation systems for the domestic and commercial markets.

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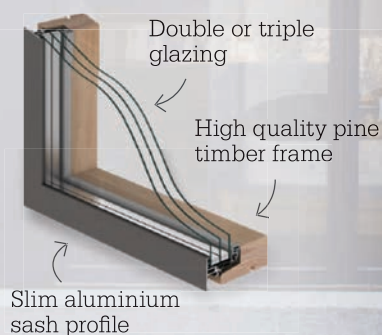
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## Bathroom support

**Closomat** can now offer a complete package to create a bathroom that can be easily and simply altered to accommodate assistive technology as the occupant requires. It can minimise- or eliminate- care support provision, optimising independence and dignity. The package can be accessed as a whole, or by individual components. The Closomat accessible bathroom focuses on the new look Vita range of wash & dry (bidet) toilets. A rail system can be added around the bathroom walls, onto which can be added, as required, a washbasin- static or height-adjustable, grab rails, support arms, changing bench and a shower seat. A complimentary X/Y track hoist system can be ceiling-mounted, or supported on slimline gantry legs, to facilitate transfer around the room- and beyond. The Closomat Vita range of wash & dry toilets look like, and can be used as, conventional WCs. They all feature integral washing and drying so, if required, or preferred, the user, or their carer, doesn't have to wipe clean with toilet tissue. The range encompasses the floor-mounted Palma Vita- the biggest-selling unit of its kind in the UK, the wall-hung Lima Vita and height adjustable Lima Lifter. A range of accessories enables tailoring of the toilet initially or retrospectively to each user's needs.

0161 969 1199 [www.clos-o-mat.com](http://www.clos-o-mat.com)

## Snows Timber takes brand new direction



**Snows Timber**, previously part of The Bradfords Group, has announced the completion of a Management Buy Out, led by Managing Director, Ian Church. Ian, alongside Craig Willoughby, Supply Chain Director, and Adam Cray, Finance Director had their bid for a management buyout approved by The Bradford's Group in January 2019 and have since been busy completing the deal. Ian Church, Snows Timber's Managing Director, said: "In our customer service proposition, we aim to be the very best in our sector. What excites us the most is the fact we are now truly independent."

01604 340 380 [www.snowstimber.com](http://www.snowstimber.com)

## New recruit reflects ongoing growth



**Rhodes & Partners** has recruited graduate engineer Michelle Kiboi, in a move designed to help the company with its growing workload. "We're delighted to welcome Michelle as a member of our team and we know she'll make a very valuable contribution to the business," explains managing director, Nick Ribbeck. "Although we already have a considerable wealth of expertise, we firmly believe in attracting fresh new talent at graduate level, and providing those people with good opportunities for training and development. We've found that this allows us to balance the range of ages across our workforce, and benefit from a great combination of the fresh new ideas which younger employees bring, and the experience which our senior staff contribute."

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# DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY BATHROOM DESIGN

With an ageing population, dementia is on the rise in the UK. Stuart Reynolds of AKW discusses how housebuilders can act on this to create bathrooms that are dementia-friendly, promoting both dignity and safety.

**T**he number of people with dementia in the UK will increase to over one million by 2025 and over two million by 2050. There are a variety of issues for those with the condition, including memory loss, 'fuzzy' thoughts, disorientation, struggling to follow conversations or instructions, and mood and personality changes. High surveillance is needed in the bathroom in particular, however it is possible to create 'dementia-friendly bathrooms', using a person-centric approach to design.

Listed below are the major dementia challenges that can be overcome with good design.

## VISUAL CONFUSION

Consistent flooring shades are crucial as a person with dementia can interpret a change in floor colour as a step, leading to trips or falls on a level surface. Dark colours can seem like gaping holes and a speckled effect can appear to be flecks of dirt. Ultimately, a light, uniform colour, anti-slip flooring is best.

Incorporating contrasting colours in bathroom walls and fixtures can help users with dementia to effectively define and locate separate sections of the room, such as the shower and toilet areas. For example, contrast should be used to help differentiate a grab bar from a wall and the toilet seat from the pan. A minimum LRV (light reflecting value) of 30 points of difference between colours is needed.

Sufficient light levels are needed in the areas where specific tasks are undertaken. This means that a mix of task-specific lighting and increased overall ambient lighting will ensure the bathroom is sufficiently lit. People with both sight loss and dementia have been shown to benefit from increased light levels in the bathroom of 600-700 lumens per m<sup>2</sup> for general lighting and 700-800 lumens per m<sup>2</sup> for task lighting.

Mirrored surfaces can be another danger. For a number of people with dementia, the reflection of their faces can make them think another person is in the room with

them. To overcome this, it is wise to fit a roller blind above the sink, so the mirror can be covered when necessary.

## REDUCED SAFETY AWARENESS

As dementia progresses so too does the loss of safety awareness, making those with the condition especially susceptible to scalding:

- Thermostatically controlled taps and showers are very important additions, ensuring safe and stable temperatures
- Exposed pipework should be avoided, and only low surface temperature radiators and towel rails installed

## LESS STABILITY

People with dementia are twice as likely to fall as their peers, as a result:

- Avoid sharp edges on any products installed in the bathroom and avoid the use of floor-standing furniture
- Replace the bath with a level access shower to reduce trip hazards and include a shower seat to reduce the likelihood of falling when showering
- Choose PET plastic shower screens rather than glass ones

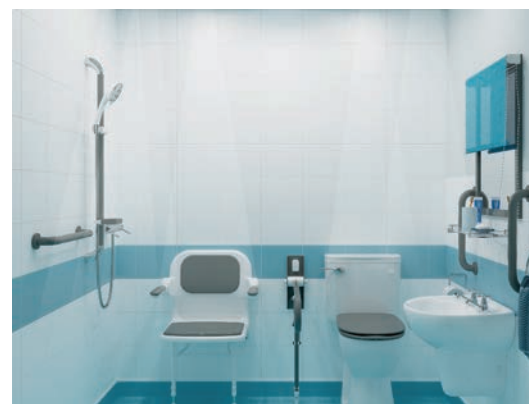
## MEMORY ISSUES

Short-term memory loss and forgetfulness can of course have a negative impact. For example, the risk of flooding if a tap or the shower are left on after use are significantly increased. Because of this:

- Include flood-proof plugs in the basins and opt for showers that have an auto shut-off function
- Use dementia-friendly showers that automatically shut down after 30 minutes of use, to avoid accidental overflows

Retro memory is also something to consider. People with dementia have a good long-term memory, and so are more familiar with fixtures and fittings that are from the past:

- Incorporate traditionally designed fixtures and fittings, such as cross-headed taps and a conventional toilet flush rather than modern push-button devices
- Install basins that are large enough to accommodate a toothbrush mug, to



make sure users feel that the items in the space are as familiar and comfortable as possible.

## INDEPENDENCE THROUGH DESIGN

A dementia-friendly bathroom is not just about highlighting risk areas and resolving issues, but it is about promoting independence. With a well-designed bathroom space, a person's wellbeing and confidence are boosted, enabling them to engage more readily in day-to-day activities in a high-risk space. With a little time and investment dementia-friendly bathrooms have the potential to promote independence, as well as to help reduce accidents in new homes across the UK.

Stuart Reynolds is head of product and marketing at AKW



## Grass Concrete Hits the Roof

Hitting the roof was the obvious next step for **Grass Concrete Ltd**, a company with proven credentials for environmental construction products.

The new Grassroof® is an overlay paving system that can be applied to new or existing flat roof structures. Grassroof® can be used as an extensive or simple-intensive paving layer, or as a base layer for intensive roof designs. Grassroof units interlock together and can be laid either directly onto the roof membrane or via a foil backed polystyrene underlay.

A key element in simplifying the installation is the use with a Regarm moisture retaining blanket. The specification of Regarm will enable the omission of a soil layer reducing the volume of heavy bulk materials during installation.

Grassroof® with a simple "leave and lay" format incorporates sedum turf; no soil is required, and these succulent plants can store moisture. When installed, the lightweight system weighs as little as 4.39kg/m<sup>2</sup> providing an easy to install and maintain green solution.

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## We'll be working our Grey back to you!

2019 has got off to a good start for **Freefoam Building Products'** customers, with the addition of Square and Ogee gutter in the popular Anthracite Grey colour option, to help them gain market share in a growing sector. Designed to complement the existing Round and Deep gutter systems and manufactured to Ral No. 2016 the ranges offer an exact match to door and window systems, giving customers the range to satisfy the growing demands of homeowners and developers. The choice of colour for windows, doors and roofline is now on average nearly 30 per cent of sales, with some window companies seeing sales of over 50 per cent in colour - and growing. Homeowners buying high end grey windows and doors do not want the standard white roofline - they want everything to match. Which is why Freefoam made a strategic move into manufacturing the complete roofline range in Anthracite Grey. Freefoam's approach is to help every company in the supply chain sell more and grow faster than the competition. Freefoam customer, Alan Sutherland of General Building Plastics explains: "There's been an increasing demand for colour, but the biggest growth has been in the last three to four years. Greys are the most popular now, particularly anthracite grey. Most customers want a full suite of colour matched products, which Freefoam does very well!"

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Deceuninck tops Google search



Deceuninck now tops organic Google searches for heritage windows. Search engines are dynamic, so rankings change frequently, but Deceuninck ranks top for ‘flush sash windows’ and appears on the first page for ‘heritage windows’.

Sales of Deceuninck’s Heritage Flush Window have skyrocketed since its launch, and now account for over 22 per cent of total Deceuninck sales. Part of the Heritage Window Collection, the Flush Window combines beautiful, heritage-style looks with top energy, security and weather performance, and comes in 26 colourways from stock.

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## Flamco celebrates three millionth Flexvent sale



HVAC component manufacturer **Flamco** is celebrating the sale of its three millionth Flexvent air vent valve in the UK and Ireland in the past ten years.

Selling around 300,000 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 Flamco's website or go to YouTube and see a presentation on the installation of a Flexvent.

[www.youtube.com/user/flamcogroup](http://www.youtube.com/user/flamcogroup) [www.flamcogroup.com/uk/en](http://www.flamcogroup.com/uk/en)

## LG introduces R32 Monobloc heat pumps



LG has developed a high quality, air to water heat pump range under its Therma V branding. Thousands of these units have been installed up and down the country. The latest introduction to its popular range, operating on the low GWP R32 refrigerant available in 5kW to 16kW 1Ø and 12kW to 16kW 3Ø, in a wide operating range of between 10-135Hz and water temperatures up to 65°C

without an electric backup heater, is the LG Therma V R32 Monobloc range. It comes with an energy label rating of A+++ - ready for September 2019 ERP changes. To find out more about LG's new Therma V R32 AHP, and other LG products and services, visit the website.

[uk.aircon@lge.com](mailto:uk.aircon@lge.com) [partner.lge.com/uk](http://partner.lge.com/uk)



## Housing chiefs draw on local expertise

Drainage engineers from **Lanes Group Plc** have carried out a comprehensive programme of drain rehabilitation to renew pipes serving homes in Plymouth. Teams from the Lanes Plymouth depot uses the full array of their pipe renovation services to complete the project on behalf of the city's largest social housing landlord. A CCTV drainage survey, also carried out by Lanes Plymouth, had revealed multiple defects in drainage pipes serving the 12 homes in Pembroke Street, Plymouth. Plymouth Community Homes was keen to ensure the pipes were rehabilitated, and that the repairs were high quality and would provide a long-term, cost-effective solution. Wayne Clemens, Lanes Plymouth Operations Manager, said: "We have the expertise and resources here in Plymouth to carry out significant drainage renovation projects. If necessary, we can also call on national service teams, such as our lining division in Manchester. In this case, though, we had all the resources we needed here in Plymouth to get the job done."

[www.lanesgroup.com](http://www.lanesgroup.com)

## New Wilo Stratos-MAXO launched in UK



The new **Wilo Stratos-MAXO** pump, designed and introduced for use in large residential projects and light commercial ones, has been launched in the UK. It is the first pump to feature an intuitive user interface – that makes installation and operation easier than ever before. It offers the highest system efficiency on the market, thanks to the optimised and

innovative energy efficiency functions such as 'Multi-Flow Adaptation' and 'No-Flow Stop' along with an outstanding EEL ≤ 0.17. Visit the Wilo website for more information.

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# PIPING HOT

Underfloor heating combined with air source heat pumps can provide housebuilders and property developers with flexible and efficient heating solutions, as Paul Wakefield of Grant UK explains.

**E**venly distributing heat upwards into a room, an underfloor heating system maintains optimum room temperatures while also helping the heat source, such as an air source heat pump (ASHP), to work as efficiently as possible.

Underfloor heating provides a pleasant heat throughout the room, leaves walls free for furniture and can add value to a property. It is also easy to install.

Modern underfloor heating systems are straightforward to work with and can be supplied as packs, which are specifically suited to meet a property's requirements. Some underfloor systems have very low profiles – being just 15 mm in finished floor height, which is beneficial in a number of ways. Firstly, the system can be installed without requiring significant changes to a room's infrastructure, and such low profile systems are also ideally suited to first floor installations.

Underfloor heating is often not considered for due to certain perceptions, whether it be lengthy installation times or difficulties with laying pipework. In today's marketplace, there are exciting products that have been designed with the engineer in mind, and which serve to dispel these misconceptions and help make underfloor heating a viable option for many homes.

For example, some underfloor heating systems utilise self-adhesive panels that are compact in size, into which the pipework loops are clipped and a self-levelling compound then laid over the system. The floor can often be walked on the day after laying the compound, and the heat source can be introduced after three days. Such systems make installation extremely quick, reducing the time spent onsite.

One advantageous feature that is not present in all retrofit systems is a system that does not require overboarding, which makes for a simpler installation as the final floor finish can be laid directly on top of the dry screed. Systems that are simple to lay, quick to install and can be completed by a single operative often prove to be the most practical for housebuilders.

Alongside the supply of the underfloor pipework, components and controls, some suppliers will also provide design assistance, including initial system heat loss calculations used for quotation purposes

through to full working drawings to complete a package offering. This level of support delivers bespoke assistance which can help ensure that the installation is completed as smoothly as possible.

## HEAT PUMPS

Combining heat pumps with underfloor heating is proving to be a popular option. Thanks to legislation, heat pumps are becoming even more efficient. The 2014 EU Fluorinated Greenhouse Gas (F-Gas) Regulations is designed to phase out the use of hydrofluorocarbons, with the introduction of a series of targets designed to limit the use of gases which have the highest Global Warming Potential (GWP).

Heat pumps using R32 refrigerants should be considered, because they have a GWP that is considerably lower than other typical heat pump refrigerants such as R410. They will thus comply with the upcoming legislative targets, future-proofing the product.

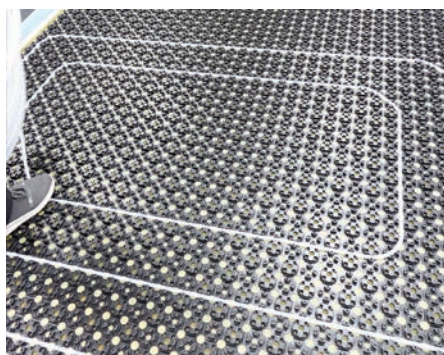
In addition to having a lower GWP figure of 675, R32 is a single-component refrigerant, which means it has no temperature glide. Refrigerant blends that have two or more components exhibit temperature

glide but as R32 only has one molecule in its formation, its saturated liquid and vapor temperatures are the same. By removing the risk for the refrigerant to suffer from glide, the system can recharge and recycle with greater ease, making it more efficient.

Single phase, DC inverter driven ASHPs that incorporate in-built weather compensation and a base tray heating element to prevent ice formation are some of the leading products currently available. With simplified electrics, built-in features as standard, and easily accessible components, heat pumps today are simple to work with.

Ideally, the chosen heat pump should be exceptionally efficient, have compact footprints and operate with low noise levels. It will therefore have minimal impact on its surrounds both aesthetically and acoustically, something which is of great benefit to end-users. Furthermore, heat pumps are often also available with significant guarantees which reflect confidence in the products and deliver greater peace of mind to the homeowner.

Paul Wakefield is managing director of Grant UK



Solid floor refurbishment research released



**Kingspan Insulation** has published a new white paper assessing how different floor insulation specifications can impact cost and floor-to-ceiling height in home refurbishments. The report is based on research from leading consultants — Currie & Brown. It shows that Kingspan Kooltherm K103 Floorboard can provide a cost-effective option for insulating solid floors without reducing headroom. The research looked at Kingspan Kooltherm K103 Floorboard, which has the lowest thermal conductivity of any commonly used insulation (0.018 W/m·K), and expanded polystyrene (EPS) insulation with a thermal conductivity of 0.038 W/m·K.

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

Energy consultant selects Thermoblock



When the founder of the Complete Energy Consultancy set about designing a brand new home for himself and his family, he identified **Marmox Thermoblock** as the ideal means of tackling thermal bridging around the floor/wall junction of the near-to-zero carbon construction solution. Richard Britten commented: “Although I hadn’t used Marmox Thermoblocks before, they are the ideal solution for tackling cold-bridging around the perimeter and where the internal block walls sit on the beam-and-block floors.” Each length of Thermoblock is comprised of ultra-high performance XPS insulation, encapsulating miniature columns of concrete, while the top and bottom are covered by alkali resistant glass-fibre mesh, retaining a surface of fibre reinforced polymer concrete to facilitate bonding.

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**Norcros Adhesives** offers a wide range of tile adhesives and surface preparation products for the fast-growing housebuilding sector. Norcros Adhesives has demonstrated that its products are able to meet the most demanding goals, which is why the company now has an exclusive arrangement with Barratt Homes – the UK’s number one housebuilder – on its entire range of tile adhesives. Norcros Pro-Gyp Base Fast Track Sealer allows fast track fixing to anhydrite screeds. This product is a system solution which enables tiling to be carried out on to anhydrite screeds at a much higher humidity level (95 per cent) than the standard requirement of 75 per cent RH, which can generally be achieved within seven days of laying the screed instead of the standard minimum requirement of 60 days for a 50mm thick screed. As part of its one-stop shop to cover all stages of the flooring or tiling process in house construction, the full range of levellers from Norcros Adhesives includes products for different applications. Norcros Pro 30 Fast Track Eco Levelling Compound is the newest addition to the range and contains recycled crushed glass, replacing quarried sand. It is suitable for a large number of different substrates.

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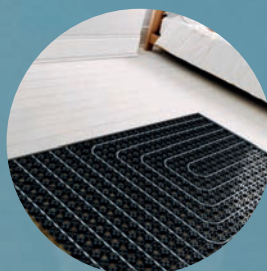
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## New shower tray ranges for all sectors



**Saniflo**, producer of macerators and pumps, has introduced a comprehensive collection of shower trays to its Kinedo portfolio of trays, enclosures and shower cubicles. The new ranges will complement the Kinerock tray which was successfully launched last year.

Some four further collections are now available to suit all styles, tastes and budgets. These come in a range of sizes and colours; some are cuttable and there is a range of surfaces from a luxurious stone finish to smooth white. Each carries a 10 year warranty. All the new trays can be installed in raised, recessed or flat installations. A brand new Kinedo Shower Tray brochure is now available for download.

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## Order bespoke wetroom shower tray



A new pioneering facility on **Abacus'** website allows a trade customer to create, design and order a bespoke wetroom shower tray in minutes. This can be done by logging into the dealer log-in portal's home page in the usual way. Delays over CAD design are an old, painful memory and customers will receive a quote instantly. The process involves choosing a drain type, a tray depth and size, and then the location. A quote is produced immediately; this can be saved or orders can be placed then and there. With super quick delivery, the new system is designed for today's customer demands.

[www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk](http://www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk)



## P C Henderson Release New Husky Soft Stop Sliding Door Hardware

**P C Henderson** is pleased to announce the launch of its latest innovative hardware solution to the market. The company's new Husky Soft Stop product caters for sliding doors weighing up to 100kg and comes complete with dual soft close and open – providing a next generation product to the company's existing Husky sliding system. P C Henderson's existing Husky sliding system has become renowned in the industry as a reliable, cost effective sliding door solution for interior applications. The company has built on this success by developing Husky Soft Stop – a far superior version of the product boasting a built in dual soft close and opening mechanism. The system comes pre-assembled and is concealed within the track upon installation – providing an extremely minimalistic finish. Purposefully developed in five kit variants for different weight ranges, the product is tuned to ensure optimum performance and smooth operation every time – whether operating a 10kg or 100kg door. Husky Soft Stop is available for wooden and metal doors, providing dual soft close and open for doors weighing up to 80kg and soft close only for doors weighing up to 100kg. The kit is supplied with everything required to hang a sliding door – only the track must be specified separately – providing customers with the freedom to cater for any opening width.

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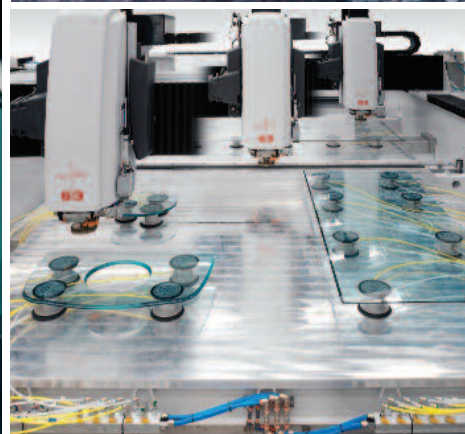
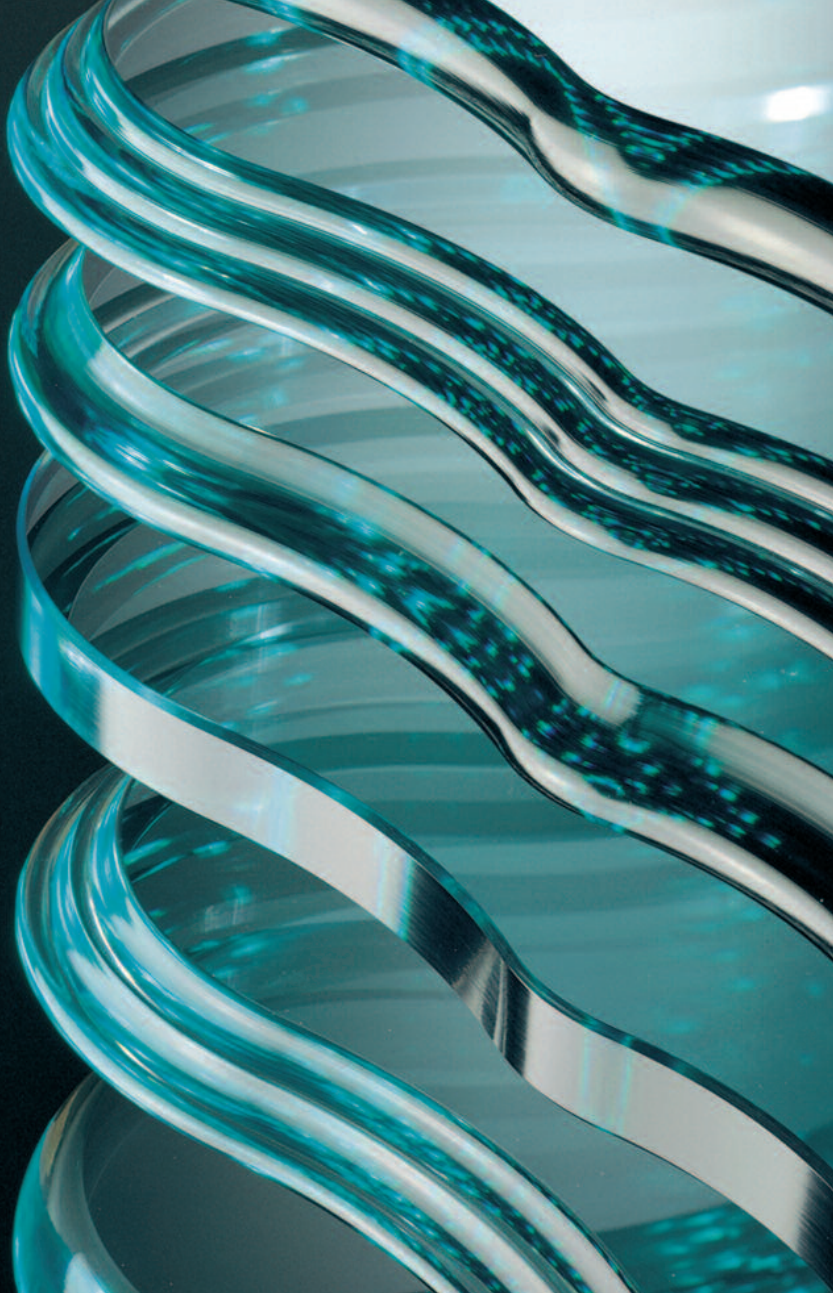


Featuring the Portfolio Black and Light Grey Two Stile in the SoundSecure doorset system.

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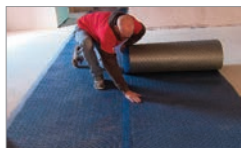
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[www.firmanglass.com](http://www.firmanglass.com)

## Amazing time and cost savings with BAL



Preparation time was reduced dramatically with the use of BAL's new floating uncoupling mat – Flexbone 2Easy – on a prime redevelopment in County Durham. The 200m<sup>2</sup> problem screed to be tiled had two days of preparatory work scheduled before installation could even begin, but this was reduced to just half a day using BAL Flexbone 2Easy. The use of BAL Flexbone 2Easy floating uncoupling mat alleviated the need to abrade and prime the screed, as the only preparation required was a quick sweep of the surface. The mat was simply rolled out onto the screed, with the self-adhesive mesh bonding the mat edges together. Roll ends were secured with BAL AquaDrain ST-10 tape.

01782 591100 [www.bal-adhesives.com](http://www.bal-adhesives.com)

## EnCore Rigid Loc added to Expona Family



Polyflor is pleased to announce the launch of a brand new product format, the Expona EnCore Rigid Loc collection. This exciting new hybrid product has an expertly engineered premium rigid SPC (Stone Polymer Composite) construction with exceptional stability making it ideal

for installation over existing subfloors. Expona EnCore Rigid Loc offers a flooring solution that caters for both commercial and residential interiors. The rigid construction gives the floor exceptional stability and its acoustic foam layer reduces impact sound by 19dB, exceeding UK building regulations whilst also providing comfort and warmth underfoot.

0161 767 1111 [www.polyflor.com](http://www.polyflor.com)

## SWF introduces fixed Taylors Spindle



Steel Window Fittings (SWF), a **Steel Window Association** member, is pleased to announce the launch of its 'Taylors Spindle.' New to Steel Window Fittings, the Taylors Spindle, which can be used with the company's B850 and B860 door handles. The Taylors Spindle is used to fix the handle so it cannot operate in an up or down lever-lever motion and becomes fixed. The handle can be fixed in either a horizontal or vertical position and used on doors that do not require a latch or lock mechanism. The new Taylors Spindle is easy to fit; the spindle base is first fitted to the door, the sprung cassette is then removed from the handle baseplate and then the handle is fitted over the spindle and fixed to the door.

[www.steel-window-association.co.uk](http://www.steel-window-association.co.uk)

## Out with the old and in with the new



Homeowners are starting to think about making those changes around the home that have been niggling away during the winter. Big decisions like a kitchen or bathroom makeover are normally tempered with thoughts of disruption, debris, dirt and inconvenience.

They can now have a kitchen makeover in a day which will also save all the hassle, time and general chaos that a traditional kitchen refit brings. Unique products are now available that are durable and hardwearing with the same quality, look and feel of traditional heavy Quartz but are, in fact, only a few millimetres thick. These worktops fit over the existing surface like a glove, giving a stunning new surface that is comparable to its heavier counterpart. For more information on **Granite & TREND Transformations**, visit their website.

[trend-transformations.co.uk](http://trend-transformations.co.uk)

## True or False?

# DUALFLO WATER SOFTENERS ARE POWERED BY TINY HAMSTERS

**Dualflo**™  
Powered by Harvey Water Softeners



## FALSE

Of course not, we prefer to use more reliable, 24/7 technology - so it doesn't sleep through the day! Powered by water pressure, it is non-electric, maintenance free and its twin cylinder design provides softened water 24/7. Dualflo Water Softener is the trade brand of the UK's No 1 Water Softener manufacturer - Harvey Water Softeners. It protects homes from limescale and completely eliminates any existing scale.

\*No hamsters were harmed in the making of this ad.

Find out why so many developers  
choose Dualflo Water Softeners, call:

# 01483 910 136



EXPONA®

# EnCORE

## RIGID LOC

ACOUSTIC LUXURY VINYL FLOORING



LESS TIME FITTING  
MORE TIME ENJOYING



Faster Installation

When it comes to designing the ideal home interior scheme, aesthetics are just as important as practicality. Expona EnCore Rigid Loc offers a flooring solution that caters for both. The rigid construction, acoustic layer and use of 5Gi click-locking technology provides superior performance in a quick to install floor covering all in a stunning collection of 12 faithfully replicated wood designs.

Find your new floor at [polyflorathome.com](https://polyflorathome.com)

## QUICK & EASY TO INSTALL

Due to its rigid construction, Expona EnCore Rigid Loc lays beautifully over most even subfloors, this means less subfloor preparation, less disruption in your home and even more time enjoying your new floor.

## Commodore Kitchens Completes Fifth Phase of Aura Installations

A leading contract kitchen specialist, Commodore Kitchens, has completed the installation of more than 250 kitchens across five phases for Countryside Properties' Aura Development in Cambridge.

Located in the sought after area off Long Road in a the Trumpington area of the city, the prestigious residential development is close to the city centre and offers a mix of apartments, duplexes and townhouses, all finished to an extremely high standard. Commodore Kitchens' installations are an integral part of that aspirational specification, with high-gloss handle-less units and modern laminate worktops in the apartments, and veneered oak

units along with granite worktops in the larger properties. All kitchen installations feature high-specification appliances and benefit from Commodore Kitchen's complete design, fabrication and installation service.

Commodore Kitchens has been involved in the project since 2011 and worked closely with Countryside Properties' interior design team to develop the design for the kitchens aligned to the tastes of target buyers and the spatial flow of each property. The completion of phase Five marks a major milestone in the development, with further phases expected to be announced this year.

Commodore Kitchens' design director, Darren Mahoney explains: "There are numerous different kitchen designs and styles across this development depending on the property style and price point but, by working consistently with the developer across all five phases, we've been able to create a sense of synergy and deliver consistent quality for every kitchen."

"Neutral colour palettes are lifted by a mix of high shine, neutral, reflective and natural materials to create stylish and tactile kitchens that complement the interior look and feel while creating a sense of luxury that has been



very appealing to buyers."

The Aura development continues a long-standing relationship between Commodore Kitchens and Countryside Properties, a residential developer with a 60-year track record. The scheme was a RIBA Regional Award winner in 2018 and also won a commendation in the Civic Trust Awards in 2019. Follow Commodore Kitchens on Twitter @CK\_Kitchens\_.

01375 382323

[www.commodorekitchens.co.uk](http://www.commodorekitchens.co.uk)

## CEDIA is your source for Home Technology Professionals.

Digital entertainment plays a huge part in the modern lifestyle and is something that can be truly astounding when experienced in the correct environment. Dedicated and convertible entertainment spaces need careful thought and professional design to perform well, and ultimately impress the homeowner.

CEDIA Members represent the finest custom design and installation of home technology in the world. Partnering with a CEDIA member guarantees you peace of mind, and the expertise needed to ensure that not only does the entertainment space perform as required, but that your aesthetic design is not compromised.

CEDIA has released accredited CPD material specifically addressing the design aspects of



entertainment spaces: the CPD is tailored to help builders and developers understand how to help clients choose and specify rooms, as well as the design principles needed for a dedicated entertainment space, and the importance of working together in the early stages of a project. The Designing Home Cinemas and Media Rooms CPD course is available now on request: please contact [cpd@cedia.co.uk](mailto:cpd@cedia.co.uk) to request a seminar.

CEDIA is your source for Home Technology Professionals.

We offer a number of accredited courses, as well as other resources to help educate builders and developers about the opportunities that the integrated home can offer, both including and far beyond entertainment spaces. You can learn more about what's possible in the latest articles, blog posts, case studies, and more by visiting our website, or Find a CEDIA Member in your area by visiting our "Find a Professional" search engine on our website.

01480 213 744 [cedia.org](http://cedia.org)





## New 37.5° Technology – climate control fleeces



These new styles from **Snickers Workwear** deliver AllroundWork warmth and cooling comfort. Not only will you stay warm with these new 37.5° Technology Fleeces, you'll look and feel cool too. With styles for both professional tradesmen and women, they excel at ventilation and moisture transport to keep you working comfortably wherever you are on site. The 37.5° Technology fabric in the Fleece is a very quick-drying material that captures and releases moisture vapour – like your sweat – for superior coolness and dry working comfort. After all, keeping a balanced work temperature is not just about staying cool and in great shape, it's a matter of your wellbeing and job safety.

[www.snickersworkwear.co.uk](http://www.snickersworkwear.co.uk)


## The Solid Gear OCEAN safety shoe



**Solid Gear** continues to modernise PPE footwear with a safety shoe that looks and feels more like a trainer. Combining a lightweight athletic look and superb safety features, the new OCEAN safety shoe is ideal for workers who are constantly on the move. The shoe's midsole is made of a

poured PU rather than a traditional injected PU to give a more cushioned feel underfoot, while the thick rubber outsole provides a high level of anti-slip protection and durability. With an eye-catching style, the shoe's BOA comfort fastening delivers a better overall fit making it easy to take the shoe on and off.


[www.solidgearfootwear.com](http://www.solidgearfootwear.com)




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**DURATION**  
WINDOWS

FIT Show stand no F15



## A customer-focussed solution to testing

Wintech Testing & Certification have been one of the market leaders in the testing and certification of fenestration products over the past 25 years. Due to the increasing demand on fabricators and systems companies to supply products which comply with stringent industry standards, Wintech are able to offer a customer-focussed solution to testing and certification. From their testing laboratory in Telford, Shropshire, they carry out the required testing for windows and doors, including BS 6375 cyclic and weathertightness testing, PAS 24:2016 security testing and a range of glass testing services, as well providing UKAS-accredited testing services in accordance with the CWCT and other European and North American Standards for curtain walling and facades. With the ability to cater for a variety of window, door and facade mock up sizes and configurations, Wintech have the flexibility to test several samples at any one time. Wintech will be on Stand H3 at the FIT Show to answer all your queries.

01952 586580 [www.wintechtesting.com](http://www.wintechtesting.com)

FIT Show stand no H3

## AluK reveals C70S at FIT



AluK will be revealing a brand new 70mm window system at the FIT Show – complete with pre-inserted gaskets. This is thought to be the first time that an aluminium window system has been available in the UK with the gaskets pre-inserted.

AluK's specialist design team have created a great

looking, cost effective new window which satisfies with ease all the key thermal, acoustic and performance criteria laid down by commercial specifiers. For instance, thermal performance of the C70S is between 1.0W/m<sup>2</sup>K and 1.3W/m<sup>2</sup>K, a 50mm glazing option allows for improved acoustics and a max sash weight of 150kg for tilt before turn windows, and wind and water tightness levels are class leading.

01291 639739 [www.aluk.co.uk](http://www.aluk.co.uk)

FIT Show stand no E10

## Housebuilder & Developer website



The Housebuilder & Developer (HBD) website is an online provider of past and present products and news items for the housebuilder and developer. [hbdonline.co.uk](http://hbdonline.co.uk) is a one-stop source for all the latest press releases providing any visitor with access to information about products and services that they may require. From the website, you can find links to digital issues that have live

links to advertisers' sites, as well as daily email alerts to keep you as informed as possible.

[www.hbdonline.co.uk](http://www.hbdonline.co.uk)

## Comar 9P.i High Performance Window, Door & Framing System

After extensive research and consultation with key supply partners, Comar Architectural Aluminium Systems deliver the Comar 9P.i High Performance Window, Door and Framing System.

Research indicated that a thermally efficient future-proof facade system was required, with off-site manufacture and value engineering solutions that actively seek to reduce material content.

Comar 9P.i High Performance framing offers two options of construction, ladder frame or mitre frame. Comar 9P.i windows and 9P.i doors can be hung directly from the frame, reducing the need for additional outer frames, creating a truly integrated solution.

Building typologies differ from refurbishment to new build, so Comar 9P.i has profiles widths from 78mm, 100mm and 120mm creating greater design flexibility.

There are three levels of thermal performance, standard, multi-chamber and multi-chamber thermal foam, creating U-values of between 1.6 to 1.0 for a typical grid size with opening vents.

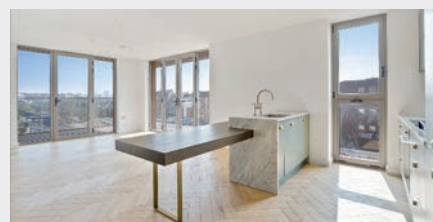
Comar 9P.i has slim 65mm sight-lines to meet that architecturally demanded aesthetics are

achieved. Glazing lines are flush, maintaining consistent lines for a sleek external facade providing straight interfacing with walls, internal floors and partitions. Consideration is also given for plaster-lines with profiles to cater for differing situations. Comar 9P.i windows can be open-in or open-out side, top or bottom hung and a tilt and turn option, offering unobtrusive ventilation. Comar 5P.i Vertical Sliding Windows and Horizontal Windows can also be integrated into the Comar 9P.i framing.

Glazing sizes have been catered for up to 62mm meaning that future requirements for high performing acoustic or triple glazed projects can be specified.

Comar 9P.i. The Next Generation of Framing Systems, includes:

- New Comar 9P.i & Comar 9P.i high performance window and door suite.
- Value Engineered: Windows and Doors hang directly from Comar 9P.i Framing, reducing metal content
- Fast-track fabrication, off-site construction.
- British Standards BS 6375, PAS 23 and PAS 24
- Security approved Secured by Design
- Dual colour options with all finishes: anodising with a 35-year guarantee, polyester



powder coating, a 25-year guarantee with RAL colours from Interpon and Syntha Pulvin

- Value engineering opportunities creating cost efficiencies
- Low-rise thresholds and wide doors to cater for DDA
- Up to two storey facades, with 3000mm spans at 1500mm centres
- Low U-values 1.6 – 1.0
- High span mullions and transoms
- Slim 65mm, sight-lines
- Flexibility: Profile width 80mm, 100mm & 120mm
- Three options of thermal performance, standard, multi-chambered, thermal foam
- Flush glazing seamless opening vents
- Glass lines on one plane
- Integrates with existing Comar 5P.i windows and Comar 7 Doors
- Flexible fabrication mitre frame construction or ladder frame construction

020 8685 2318 [www.comar-alu.co.uk](http://www.comar-alu.co.uk)

FIT Show stand no E30





## SHOW PREVIEW

## KEEP FIT AT THE NEC

FIT Show is the UK's only dedicated event for the window, door, glass and conservatory sector, taking place at the NEC from 21 –23 May.

**F**IT show offers installers, builders, fabricators, architects and specifiers the chance to connect with the latest products, suppliers and innovations all under one roof across three days.

Set to be the biggest yet, FIT Show 2019 will host over 300 brands from across the window, door, conservatory and glass industry to showcase their products, services and the latest innovations and technology. Expect a showcase of glass, hardware, PVCu, aluminium, timber, flat glass, machinery, rooflights, sealants, garage doors, fire resistant glazing, smart home technology and much more.

## KEY EVENT FEATURES

A whole host of new features have been developed including a 'Timber Trail' in conjunction with Wood Window Alliance and its members, a 'New Products Trail' designed to take you straight to the products that are most relevant to you, and an 'Installer Trail' which will take you straight to the brands that have offers exclusively for you.

## TUNE IN

Tune into the campaign with the likes of FIX Radio, On The Tools, Trades Talk and numerous trade counters – the show is running a series of incentives and giveaways for installers and tradespeople.

The organisers are also excited that Makita will be exhibiting at FIT Show 2019. As well as showcasing their world-renowned power tools to FIT Show visitors, they'll also be running an exclusive Makita DAB Radio (DMR109) giveaway throughout the show, with 18 up

for grabs.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

It can be tough to take time off the tools, and that's why the event organisers are packing as much as possible into the FIT Show 2019 learning programme. From CPD certified content, through to practical product demonstrations and advice on running your own business, the show will be tackling key fenestration industry issues, all delivered by quality speakers and industry experts.

## COULD YOU BE A SUPPLIER TO HEATHROW?

Heathrow Airport is set to make its FIT Show debut. The airport will utilise the event as a platform to secure key elements of its supply chain to deliver its ongoing 'Heathrow Quieter Homes Scheme.'

FIT Show has been identified by Heathrow as a vital tool to meet with systems houses, fabricators and installers all under one roof across three days – all of which are needed in order to deliver its ongoing project. Could you be a supplier to Heathrow?

## DON'T MISS OUT

February was the show's biggest ever month for visitors pre-registrations. People are getting wise to the benefits of registering early, so make sure you're one of them!

Pre-registering early for FIT Show 2019 could bag you a prize as you will automatically be entered into a draw to win prizes such as free parking, tickets to the gala dinner, branded workwear and much more. Register now to ensure you don't miss out!



To pre-register now, visit:

**[FITSHOW-VISITOR.REG.BUZZ/REGISTER](http://FITSHOW-VISITOR.REG.BUZZ/REGISTER)**

Find out more about the 250+ brands who are exhibiting, and what's on at:

**[FITSHOW-VISITOR.REG.BUZZ/WHATS-ON](http://FITSHOW-VISITOR.REG.BUZZ/WHATS-ON)**



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WEB: [www.jamesjones.co.uk/ewp](http://www.jamesjones.co.uk/ewp) EMAIL: [jjj-joists@jamesjones.co.uk](mailto:jjj-joists@jamesjones.co.uk)



**James Jones  
& SONS LIMITED**  
TIMBER SYSTEMS DIVISION



# BREAK OUT OF THE WHITE BOX

With the demand for quality rising, it is increasingly hard to stand out as a developer. Lulu Greenhalgh-Jones of Carpenter Oak explores how housebuilders can use timber to break out of the new development 'white box.'

**T**he market is not short of developments of neat new build homes where every single one almost identical to its neighbour. But what if the houses you are building are not like any others in the area? Where does that place your development in the market? Character and charm have their own value and present buyers with a choice that rivals what is already on the market.

Developers and housebuilders who are embracing this trend for sustainability, natural materials, craftsmanship and innovation are now cleaning up in the new build market. They are actively being sort out by home buyers who are specifically wanting a home with features that make their home feel bespoke, pioneering and essentially, just different. This set of inspired developers are selling houses faster than their competitors, without having to go into a war on price.

With the current awareness of the environment and sustainability, as well as the healthy homes trend which is showing no signs of slowing down, people are increasingly interested in trying to incorporate natural materials into their homes as well as supporting traditional British craftsmanship.

Introducing a timber frame such as oak, douglas fir or glulam frame into your build creates high-value features such as vaulted ceilings, exposed beams, handmade pegs and the glorious smell of sustainability sourced timber and that all adds to the sale value. These features will appeal to a market of people who want to buy quality,

traditional homes, but with all the benefits of a new build.

Because the frame is encapsulated in a shell containing high R-value insulation and an airtight membrane, the exterior of the building will conform to or even exceed most planning considerations. It also means you'll deliver an efficient home. That said, it is key to make the figures stack up and part of that is working with a framing company who understand the commercial pressures on a development and are able to support your marketing activity with collateral that educates the house buyer on the product.

Something many forward thinking and commercially savvy developers are considering is that you can raise the attractiveness and value of an entire development by having a number of select oak framed feature properties within the mix of housing. They are also introducing timber features such as walkways, arches, seating and play areas into the public space.

An excellent example of how this has worked well is the RIBA Stirling prize-

winning Accordia housing development in Cambridge. Accordia offers urban living in a variety of innovative houses and apartments with a balance of timber features in both private and public spaces. Traditional gardens are replaced with open spaces such as courtyards, roof terraces and large balconies, each enhanced with the beauty of quality natural materials.

This example shows it possible to create high-density housing and demonstrates that volume housebuilders can deliver high-quality architecture and really set themselves apart from the competition.

Practically speaking, what are the other advantages of a structural timber frame? Modern methods of construction mean that over 80 per cent of the construction happens offsite, so the overall time onsite is minimal. Timber construction is also cost-effective, efficient, sustainable and highly desirable, making it a serious competitor.

If you choose a company who hand-make the timber structural frames, then you can not only blend timber with any contemporary materials you desire such as glass or steel, but also choose almost any wrap or exterior finishing method that works for your site. Your build then becomes highly flexible, cost-effective and responsive to planning requirements, not to mention customisable to the needs of your site and buyers.

Timber has come far in the last 50 years and now is the time for the next phase of developers to step out of the shadow of the millions of white boxes and respond to the market demand for new builds with a soul. The only question is will you also break out of the white box to join the few inspired industry pioneers?

Lulu Greenhalgh-Jones is head of marketing at Carpenter Oak

**PEOPLE ARE INCREASINGLY INTERESTED IN TRYING TO INCORPORATE NATURAL MATERIALS INTO THEIR HOMES**



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For further information please contact Gary Gooch or Nick Whittle on **01403 782600** or email **info@targettimber.com**

Target Timber Systems Ltd, 29 High Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9PP

## Structural retaining walls made easy with AG



AG, a manufacturer of innovative concrete products, is launching a brand new structural retaining wall block in response to growing demand within the housing sector and beyond for a double-sided product that lends itself well to machine installation. The state-of-the-art Vertica® Double Sided Block (DSB) is as versatile as it is aesthetically pleasing, making it the ideal choice for finishing walls, completing the final course on a standard Anchor Vertica® (MacWall®) but really comes into its own for parapet walls, and small barrier extensions as well as stop end blocks. Available in a broad range of warm earth-tone colours and natural textured finishes the variety offered by Vertica® Double Sided Block means that it can be adapted to suit any environment.

0121 747 0202 [www.ag.uk.com](http://www.ag.uk.com)

## StrongFix – improved support from Norbord



Sometimes, even the simple task of hanging a picture or a mirror on an interior partition wall has been fraught with difficulty due to the common challenge of a weak plaster-board substrate. That is no longer a problem thanks to **Norbord's SterlingOSB Zero**

StrongFix. Specifically designed for dry lining applications, SterlingOSB Zero StrongFix is a precision engineered oriented strand board (OSB) with a special groove machined into the edge for metal C-studs at 600mm centres. SterlingOSB Zero is made from several layers of softwood strands, carefully layered and bonded under heat and pressure with a strong zero-added formaldehyde resin to create a strong board.

[www.sterlingosbzero.com](http://www.sterlingosbzero.com)

## Building for the Future with H+H

**H**+H Celcon Foundation Blocks are being used in a major development in the North West. Jones Homes, a local regional housebuilder, is transforming a site once home to a local college in Horwich, Bolton. Forty homes are currently being constructed by main groundworks contractor Matthews & Leigh Civil Engineering in Phase One of the development which is expected to comprise of 139 two, three and four-bedroom homes aimed at families and first-time buyers once complete.

Developer Jones Homes often work with Matthews & Leigh so allow them to make the decision on which supplier to use and the new development at Rivington Grange is no exception.

H+H Foundation Blocks were of particular benefit for the site at Rivington Grange as Jones Homes design each of their homes with a 150mm cavity, which requires a durable foundation block that is up to the job. Matthews & Leigh chose to specify H+H Celcon Foundation Blocks (340 x 215 mm) in 3.6N strength for the two storey homes and 7.2N strength for the three storey homes.

Aircrete is growing in popularity as a masonry material however the perception remains that aircrete blocks cannot be used below DPC level, which means that dense aggregate blocks are



needlessly specified, adding to the overall costs of the project. H+H Celcon Foundation Blocks are fully load-bearing and capable of supporting buildings up to three storeys tall.

There are many advantages for house-builders, not least their ease of use. Requiring only a single leaf of blocks, a solid aircrete block can be laid onto a strip of poured concrete to match the thickness of the wall. This method also requires no mortar at the perpendicular joints; instead they can be butted against each other.

There are also significant cost benefits to be gained from making the switch to aircrete. A

recent study by independent consultancy firm Calfordseaden found that specifying aircrete for foundations alone could reduce total build costs by almost 25 per cent. This is achieved through aircrete's naturally quicker build speed which leads to reduced labour costs and the solid construction means that fewer materials are needed.

Additional benefits of using BBA certified H+H Celcon Foundation Blocks include improved thermal performance which exceeds current UK Building Regulations, superior resistance to sulfate attack and protection from fire and frost.

H+H prides itself on the levels of customer service it offers, regardless of the size of the order. Alan was frank about the reasons why he continues to use H+H: "If we weren't satisfied with the level of customer service, we wouldn't use them. We've been with H+H for over three years now and the relationship just gets better each year.

Matthews & Leigh have been on site since February 2018, laying the foundations for the new properties. There has already been keen interest from prospective buyers with nearly 90 per cent of plots in Phase One already reserved.

01732 886444 [www.hhcelcon.co.uk](http://www.hhcelcon.co.uk)



## Bricks, blocks & cement

Concrete Block Association  
Tel: 0116 2325165  
[www.cba-blocks.org.uk](http://www.cba-blocks.org.uk)

## Building regulations

Building Energy Performance Ltd  
Tel: (029) 2085111  
[www.beppltd.co.uk](http://www.beppltd.co.uk)

## Building products & services

Everbuild Building Products  
Tel: 0113 200 9494  
[www.everbuild.co.uk](http://www.everbuild.co.uk)

## Coatings, sealants & paints

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Tel: 0208 997 2448  
[www.1stfoldingslidingdoors.co.uk](http://www.1stfoldingslidingdoors.co.uk)

## Doors & windows

Garador Ltd  
Tel: 01935 443791  
[www.garador.co.uk](http://www.garador.co.uk)

## Electrical and Mechanical Design Consultants

BEM Services Ltd  
Tel: 0115 7788227  
[www.bem-services.co.uk](http://www.bem-services.co.uk)

## Construction software

Integro Construction Software  
Tel: 0117 916 7880  
[www.getbuildingworks.com](http://www.getbuildingworks.com)

## Finance & Insurance

Premier Guarantee  
Tel: 0800 107 8446  
[www.premierguarantee.com](http://www.premierguarantee.com)

Moody Venture Capital  
Tel: 01277 351860  
[www.mvcfinance.co.uk](http://www.mvcfinance.co.uk)

## Fires & fireplaces

Poujoulat UK Ltd  
Tel: 01483 461700  
[www.poujoulat.co.uk](http://www.poujoulat.co.uk)

## Glass & glazing

Structural Glass Design Ltd  
Tel: 0333 577 7177  
[www.structural-glass.com](http://www.structural-glass.com)

Whitesales  
Tel: 01483 271371  
[www.whitesales.co.uk](http://www.whitesales.co.uk)

## Landscaping & external works

Muck Truck UK Limited  
Tel: 01566 777140  
[www.mucktruck.co.uk](http://www.mucktruck.co.uk)

Wykeham Mature Plants  
Tel: 01723 862406  
[www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk](http://www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk)

## Oak products

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IMMENSE STOCKS

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BARN FRAMES, FOR RE-ERECTION

ANTIQUE BUILDINGS LTD

Tel: 01483 200477  
[www.antiquebuildings.com](http://www.antiquebuildings.com)

## Plasterers & ceilings

Plaster Ceiling Roses  
Tel: 0161 408 2882  
[www.plasterceilingroses.com](http://www.plasterceilingroses.com)

## Pumping stations


JT Pumps  
Tel: 0844 414 5800  
[www.jtpumps.co.uk](http://www.jtpumps.co.uk)

## Roofing & cladding

Freefoam Building Products  
Tel: 01604 591 110  
[www.freefoam.com](http://www.freefoam.com)

Kemper System  
Tel: 01925 445 532  
[www.kemper-system.com](http://www.kemper-system.com)


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