



The Social Network: Patrick Mooney wonders whether the social housing agenda is going backwards



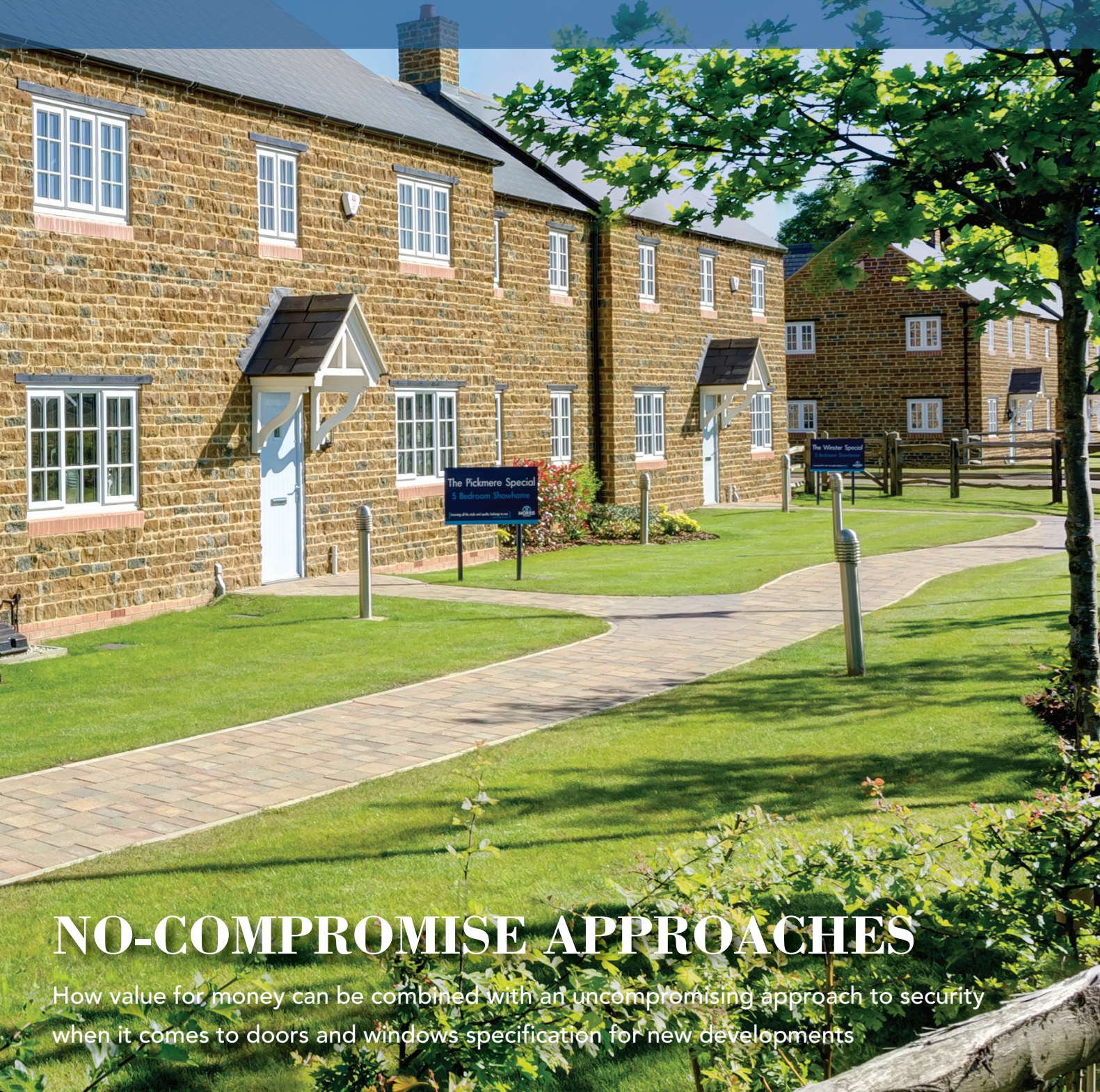
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Show Preview: The social housing sector gathers in Manchester in June to discuss all the hot topics

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James Parker

FROM THE EDITOR

Climate change has returned to centre stage, rightfully occupying the vacuum left by the Government's failed attempt to leave the EU in April. There now seems to be a genuine sense of momentum building, which has recently been spurred by the Government's climate watchdog the Committee on Climate Change.

The CCC has told the Government to make the UK's net zero emissions goal for 2050, which is required to ensure it hits the Paris Agreement carbon targets, into law. While the CCC thinks the increase in cost that would result need only be 1-2 per cent of GDP per year, it says a much tougher policy approach is needed from Government, including a bigger focus on construction's contribution.

"Current policy is insufficient for even the existing targets," the CCC warned, adding that a net zero greenhouse gases target of 2050 "will only be deliverable with a major strengthening and acceleration of policy effort." Rarely has the often called-for 'joined up approach' been required, plus a real sense of urgency, says the CCC. "Challenges across sectors must be tackled vigorously, and in tandem."

As a country we have made big strides on carbon reduction thanks to investment in renewable generation, waste processing and generally across industry, but regrettably homes are one area where we still have a long way to go. Admittedly this is largely about upgrading (or failing to upgrade) existing housing stock, rather than new build. In February, the CCC reported that numbers of residential loft, cavity and solid wall insulations were way below the Government targets. Only 'low carbon heat' was ahead of target – and that excluded heat pump installations which were just above half of what was required.

While thousands of UK residents may be going vegan and flying less on a weekly basis, driven by genuine concern about damage to our planet, the construction sector has a disproportionately high carbon take. Including construction and emissions in use, it's estimated that buildings make up around half of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. This means that buildings are the biggest problem we have to fix, and that the sheer size of the task cannot be an excuse for apathy.

You have to wonder why clients are still permitted to leave all the lights on in already energy-hungry giant glass buildings? Would it be an idea for credible and proven sustainability certification such as BREEAM to be made a legal requirement in certain sectors, rather just than left to the whims of enlightened clients? You have to also ponder why such blatantly good ideas as the Code for Sustainable Homes and Zero Carbon Homes left by the wayside. Particularly when they are still used as best practice by many clients, and the national agenda has moved back onto this important ground.

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ON THE COVER

05.19

HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



NO-COMPROMISE APPROACHES

How value for money can be achieved without compromising on approaches to security when it comes to doors and windows specification for new developments.

Victoria Park in Banbury,
Morris Homes.
Image courtesy of
Nationwide Windows Ltd.

Government steps in to fund ACM cladding remediation



The Ministry of Housing is to inject £200m to speed the removal and replacement of aluminium composite cladding (ACM) from nearly 170 privately owned high-rise buildings, following delays in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire.

The Government announced that it will be funding the removal, a step which it says has been taken “after private building owners failed to take action and tried to offload costs onto leaseholders.”

Building owners will have three months to access the new fund, and the Government will “look carefully at those who fail to remediate and consider what further action can be taken.”

The latest figures reportedly show that 166 private buildings are yet to start works on removing and replacing ACM cladding, along with 23 in the social sector.

Housing Secretary James Brokenshire MP commented on the announcement: “Although temporary measures are in place to ensure people living in these buildings are safe, too many owners are treating this as a permanent fix. Others are trying to pass on the costs to residents by threatening them with bills running to thousands of pounds.”

He added: “While some building owners have been swift to act, I am now calling time on the delay tactics of others. If these reckless building owners won’t act, the Government will.”

In its statement, the Government also noted its appreciation for the work of campaign groups Grenfell United and the UK Cladding Action Group, who it says have “campaigns prominently, outlining the challenges in getting private building owners to fund the replacement of cladding on their homes.”

Framework formed to hit zero carbon goal by 2050

A framework has been set up by the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) to bring the UK construction and property industry to net zero carbon by 2050, in order to meet the ambitions of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Offering “principles and metrics that can be integrated into tools, policies and practices,” the framework aims to “build consensus in the industry on the path to decarbonising buildings.” As part of this, it recommends guidance for developers, owners and occupiers targeting net zero carbon buildings, setting out key principles to follow and summarising how the goal can be measured and evidenced.

Two main approaches to net zero carbon are suggested in the framework:

- Construction – the embodied emissions associated with products and construction should be measured, reduced and offset to achieve net zero carbon
- Operational energy – the energy used by the building in operation should be reduced, and where possible, any demand met through renewable energy. Any remaining emissions from operational energy use should be offset to achieve net zero carbon.

The next decade will reportedly see the “scope and ambition” of the framework increased to boost action, with extra conditions to be introduced including minimum energy efficiency targets and limits on the use of carbon offsetting.

In the longer term, the two “scopes” for construction and operational energy will be combined into a wider approach for net zero whole life carbon, covering all the emissions associated with the construction, operation, maintenance and demolition of a building.

The Net Zero Carbon Buildings Task Group has supported this framework, bringing together over 180 experts and stakeholders from across the built environment value chain, and supported by 13 leading industry bodies.

Peter Tse, business manager of task group member BSRIA, commented: “BSRIA is proud to be involved in the development of this essential net zero carbon buildings framework definition, along with the other built environment experts and stakeholders. The framework vitally provides clear definition of net

zero carbon buildings and direction towards a zero-carbon future.

Tse concluded: “This framework challenges the construction and property industry to reassess the way buildings are designed, constructed and run, which requires a cultural change. A verified net zero carbon building for operational energy is based on in-use energy, instead of modelled energy, demonstrating a building’s performance is at net zero carbon.”

Weather is a factor in hike in registrations



In total, 37,672 new homes were registered in the UK during the first three months of 2019, a 3 per cent increase year on year.

The National House Building Council (NHBC) figure’s show that the affordable and rental sector registered 10,831 new homes in the period, up 36 per cent from 2018, while the private sector was down by 6 per cent to 26,841.

At a regional level, London saw a 58 per cent increase compared to the same quarter last year, up to 5,625 from 3,549 new homes, boosted by a number of large schemes being registered at the start of this year.

According to the NHBC, the overall increase, while notable due to uncertainty around Brexit, is partly due to the low levels seen in the corresponding period last year when the ‘Beast from the East’ caused disruption on sites across the country.

Commenting on the figures, NHBC chief executive Steve Wood said: “We are pleased to report good numbers for the start of the year, although we do need to bear in mind the situation 12 months ago when freezing conditions caused major hold-ups in registrations as well as build-rates across the bulk of the UK.

“Although Brexit uncertainties are impacting consumer confidence and causing some dampening of new-build and second-hand sale markets, housing remains an attractive asset class for inward investors, which does cause us to be more optimistic about Build to Rent.”

Mayor Khan awards councils share of £10m building fund



Local authorities in London are to receive a share of the Mayor's £10m Homebuilding Capacity Fund.

Sadiq Khan's new fund is intended deliver City Hall's 'Building Council Homes for Londoners' programme, its first dedicated specifically to housebuilding. Through the programme, plans worth more than £1bn were agreed last year, with 27 London boroughs targeted to start building 11,000 new council homes at social rent levels by 2022.

Thirty London LAs will receive up to £650,000 from the new fund, to be spent on the delivery of more council and affordable homes, as well as masterplanning and planning.

Successful bids include a project to increase the pipeline of council-owned land in Ealing, a new Housing Delivery Hub in Newham, and a joint bid between Barnet and Harrow to develop a town centre planning brief.

The Mayor commented on the move, criticising the Government's handling of the housing crisis: "London's local authorities have seen their budgets slashed year after year through Government cuts. This has hit services across the board – and has severely hampered their ambitions to building more affordable homes."

He continued: "This funding won't reverse all those cuts – but it will help councils boost their teams to go much further than they otherwise could. We are going as far as we can, and it is now imperative for the Government to give us significantly more investment and greater powers so we can build all the homes Londoners need."

The Homebuilding Capacity Fund is being funded through the Business Rates Retention Pilot that saw the capital retain 100 per cent of the increase in business rate receipts above the Government's baseline during the financial year 2018/19.

PM hopeful Raab criticised for housing reform calls

Former Housing Minister and rumoured candidate for Prime Minister Dominic Raab has called for "radical" housing reforms, prompting criticism from the housing sector.

Attacking the "Conservative failure" to stand up to developers and tackle the housing crisis, Raab told *The Telegraph* that a new Help to Buy scheme, that would exempt landlords from capital gains tax when they sell their property to existing tenants was one way forward.

Raab's other suggestions included releasing more Government land – with councils being given more power to sell sites to smaller developers, plus designing by tender after outline planning permissions received, fewer impositions on councils who fail to get enough homes built, scrapping stamp duty on homes worth less than £500,000, digitising land registry records, and finally, more support for modular housing.

Richard Beresford, chief executive of the National Federation of Builders (NFB) criticised Raab's comments, responding: "I don't remember Dominic Raab having any of these ideas when he was Housing Minister."

"The revolving door used to usher in a steady stream of housing ministers is unlikely to get any rest, so how likely is it that these ideas will be implemented?"

Resi sector sees upturn in contracts in March

Contracts amounting to £1.8bn were awarded in the residential sector in March, Barbour ABI reported in the latest edition of the Economic & Construction Market Review, up by 8.3 per cent on February.

Of the total contracts awarded in March, the research revealed that the residential sector accounted for 31.6 per cent, followed by commercial and retail with a 16.1 per cent share, and then hotel, leisure and sport with a 13.6 per cent share.

Residential unit numbers were also reported to increase, up by 2.1 per cent on February, at 10,066 units.

The largest residential contract reported was the £100m Ten Broadway development at New Scotland Yard in London, which will see Multiplex Construction Europe Limited deliver a total of 246 luxury apartments in a 20-storey building.

Overall construction contracts awarded in March 2019 reached a total value of £5.3bn, which is a 1.2 per cent decrease on February, but 0.6 per cent higher year on year.

Private housing workloads prop up growth in construction sector in Q1

Private housing workloads are propping up growth in the UK construction sector, but supply is still falling short, according to the RICS UK Construction and Infrastructure Market Survey for Q1 2019.

A net balance of 21 per cent of private housing contributors reported a rise in workloads, compared to 20 per cent in Q4 last year. While it is the strongest sector in the industry, this is reportedly lower than pre-referendum, with RICS suggesting 'political uncertainty and tax changes' have 'subdued growth' in recent years. To back this up, it stated that in the four quarters preceding the referendum vote, 37 per cent more respondents were reporting stronger growth in this area.

In the public sector, growth in activity slowed across housing and non-housing. Workloads in infrastructure were also down this quarter, with +11 per cent of respondents reporting a rise, down from +18 per cent in Q4.

Looking across construction as a whole, growth in workloads slowed across nearly all sectors this quarter. At the headline level, 9 per cent more respondents reported a rise in workloads, the lowest net balance in six years.

81 per cent of surveyors cited financial constraints as an issue, the highest reading recorded by the RICS in five years. Prolonged political and economic uncertainty was another issue reported, with only 13 per cent more respondents expecting to see workloads, employment and profit margins rise in the coming 12 months.

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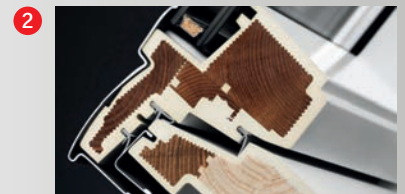


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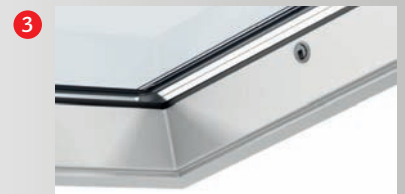
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Funding for property & geospatial startups announced

The Government has announced funding for seven property and geospatial start-ups through its Geovation Accelerator Programme, which awards grants to help Ordnance Survey and HM Land Treasury make better use of their data.

Over the next 12 months, the start-ups using location, land and property data in their products and services are to receive a range of resources, including access to experienced software developers, geospatial expertise from Ordnance Survey, property expertise from HM Land Registry, and mentorship on business proposals and investor relationships. They will also receive up to £20,000 in funding.

The chosen companies are as follows.

Firstly, within the 'PropTech' track:

- DronePrep, which uses location data to open up new low-level airspace access possibilities by connecting drone pilots to landowners to share and agree flight information
- Winston, a 'digital concierge' supporting the home of the future
- Property-Markets, the 'people's property investment marketplace'
- RenKap, an online marketplace working to alleviate the housing crisis by scaling the delivery of affordable homes.

The second set of companies are within the 'GeoTech' Track:

- Digital-Field, which provides digital solutions for better land management to improve soil health and food production, and reduce environmental impacts.
- The Future Fox, which creates software for communities to "transform their neighbourhood" and for planners to create "better places, faster, with artificial intelligence"
- Watchkeeper International, using geospatial technology, IoT (Internet of Things) systems and secure cloud services to provide clients with real-time monitoring and alerts for security incidents, natural disasters and supply chain disruptions.

Alex Wrottesley, head of Geovation, explained further: "We offer a founder-friendly environment, great mentors, high-quality workshop content and, almost

uniquely, a dedicated software development team in house, who work hand in hand with our companies to build and release their first products.

"This is something very few accelerators can offer, and it means the businesses joining us can move faster and further than they otherwise would have been able to. We're very much future focused and are looking forward to meeting and working with the next group of programme members and being a part of their story and them ours. We can't wait to begin working with them."

NFB unveils new Major Contractors Group

The National Federation of Builders (NFB) has announced the formation of its own version of the Major Contractors Group, a "dynamic forum" of over 30 contractors.

The lobbying forum, consisting of firms with turnovers greater than £40m will reportedly have access to "exclusive" meetings and events in the Palace of Westminster, with the aim being to provide Government with an understanding of larger construction businesses, while also enhancing the broader commercial environment for its members.

The group is open only to NFB members, who will meet parliamentarians, ministers and key decision makers to discuss and attempt to influence policy issues that are crucial to their businesses. It will be led by a board which will set the agenda that defines policy, contract terms, payment best practice, the impact of technology, skills, and the impact of Brexit.

Mark Wakeford, joint managing director of Stephnell and chair of the new group, commented: "We are really proud to launch this group, which will give larger NFB members the opportunity to talk to the people who devise policy that ends up influencing their very own businesses."

He concluded: "The group will challenge many of the sector's misconceptions and be a talisman for best practice and future proofing the sector."

The first meeting of the Major Contractors Group board will take place in June, with its main forum planned for 11 November 2019 at the Palace of Westminster.

Modular housing firm confirmed to deliver London scheme to help homeless



A group of London boroughs has chosen a modular homes provider to build homes for the homeless.

Following a competitive procurement process, the Pan-London Accommodation Collaborative Enterprise (PLACE) has selected Extraspace Solutions to provide modular homes for the project.

PLACE's units are set to be built on vacant 'meanwhile' sites earmarked for development in the long term, but which would otherwise remain underused over the short-to-medium term.

The value of the contract is around £40m, with Extraspace Solutions to supply 200 homes for the temporary accommodation of homeless families by 2021.

The manufacturer will design and build PLACE's modular housing units, which will purportedly "have the quality of permanent housing," with the added benefit that they can be relocated to a different site when required.

Eleanor Moloney, Extraspace Solutions lead designer, commented on the announcement: "We are thrilled to be helping to deliver this exciting initiative, showcasing modern modular solutions in the residential market. This scheme will combine innovative design with a community feel. Our precision-manufactured modular houses will deliver the quality of permanent homes, meeting the London Plan's space standards, and can be relocated to the site of most need."

Developed by the London Housing Director's Group and supported by the umbrella body London Councils, PLACE is hosted by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Several boroughs are looking into suitable locations for PLACE accommodation, and it is expected that the first site will be confirmed later this year.

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Manchester housing provider wins award for Tameside regeneration



Onward Homes has received the Neighbourhood Transformation Award at the UK Housing Awards for its part in regenerating the Hattersley and Mottram Estate in Tameside, Greater Manchester.

The social landlord was commended for its 'wide-ranging' strategy to regenerate the estate, which included the delivery of a broader mix of housing, reversing the population decline, delivering sustainable community facilities, bringing in private investment, and engaging the community.

For the first time since the estate was built in the 1960s, Hattersley's population is growing, with an eight per cent increase since the regeneration project began in 2006. Satisfaction levels among residents have also risen, from 70 per cent in 2008 to 89 per cent by 2014.

Andrew Brown, regional director of Onward Homes, commented on the award: "We are proud to have won this award which recognises all the hard work, not just of Onward Homes, but of everyone living and working in Hattersley and Mottram.

"We have been privileged to work with the community for the past 13 years, and this win is just as much for them as it is for us."

Onward Homes' reported that its approach to regenerating the estate has now been adopted as a best practice guide for housing estate regeneration.

Midlands construction Mentor of the Year named



Karen Ryan has been awarded 'Mentor of the Year' at the G4C Midlands awards.

The award recognises individuals who have shown a commitment to developing the future leaders of the industry, and who have invested their time in nurturing people to help them reach their full potential.

During her 15 years at construction partner Stepnell, Karen was reportedly instrumental in implementing the company's trainee and apprenticeship scheme, as well as chairing the Midlands Construction Training Group, which helped other firms to upskill and train their workforces.

"It was a huge compliment to be nominated for this award by my colleagues and receiving the award is an honour," she commented.

"We've had so many young people join the business 15 years ago who are still with us now. I've seen them progress into senior positions, grow as professionals and have their own families."

Karen concluded: "These people are the life blood of the business. It's built on investing in the next generation and that's what Stepnell is all about. When I started there was less than 100 people, now there's around 450, but the ethos of supporting staff and helping them grow is still the same."



Scottish Housing Minister opens Aberdeen development

A new 67-home affordable housing development has been officially opened by Scottish Housing Minister, Kevin Stewart MSP.

Constructed by Stewart Milne on behalf of Hillcrest, 52 of the development's homes are available to those on Aberdeen's housing list, they comprise two bedroom cottage flats, three bedroom semi-detached and terraced houses and two bedroom flats. In addition, 15 of the properties are mid-market rent, made up of one and two bedroom flats.

The Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, and MP for the Aberdeen Central constituency, visited the Countesswells development to view the homes and meet delegates from the organisations involved in their development.

During Stewart's visit to the site, he also met with newly housed tenants, who discussed with the Minister the difference that the new homes had made.

The new homes have been created through an investment of £9,110,754, including £721,050 from Aberdeen City Council's allocation from the Scottish Government's affordable housing investment programme. £4,080,960 of the development funding was provided courtesy of a charitable bond.

The development marks the completion of the first of three phases, which are set to bring a total of 137 affordable homes to Aberdeen, with a further two phases of development planned nearby. The second phase will commence in April 2019, and the third in July 2019, and both are expected to be completed in early 2021.

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Bellway supports local bowls club by donating clubhouse in Kent

Peninsula Bowls Club is celebrating the grand opening of its new home, which has been built and paid for by housebuilder Bellway in Hoo St Werburgh, Kent.

The new clubhouse pavilion is located off Bell's Lane, opposite Bellway's Nightingale Rise development, and was officially unveiled by club chairman Dave Moore and Bellway Kent managing director Chris Moore in front of many of the club's members and guests.

Peninsula Bowls Club invited its members for the grand opening to see the official ribbon cutting ceremony outside the new clubhouse pavilion, and to enjoy refreshments provided by Bellway.

Dave Moore, chairman of Peninsula Bowls Club, said: "What a wonderful occasion it was to officially open our new home alongside many of our members and guests last week.

"The new clubhouse looks marvellous, I

think everybody had a great time exploring the new premises while enjoying some good company.

"I would like to thank Bellway on behalf of everyone at Peninsula Bowls Club for their hard work in completing this project and providing this fantastic new pavilion for us to look after for generations."

Bellway is building a collection of one to four-bedroom homes at its Nightingale Rise development off Bell's Lane and had vowed to deliver a brand-new clubhouse for the bowls club since it purchased the adjacent piece of land in Hoo in 2016.

Managing Director of Bellway Kent, Chris Moore, said: "We were overwhelmed by the turnout last week for the grand opening of the club's new home, which has been years in the making. I believe it was well worth the wait given the vast amount of positive feedback we have received about the new building.

"A special thank you goes to all our contractors, sub-contractors and the planning team who have put so many hours into this project and have worked tirelessly to ensure everything about the new facility is right, and delivered on time for the club to start their new season in their new home.

"We hope that this will encourage even more members to visit the club and try their hand at bowls, and that the clubhouse will take pride of place in Hoo for many years to come."



Prototype homes launched to address 'changing customer needs' in Bishopton

Two new prototype homes have been revealed at Taylor Wimpey's Dargavel Village development in Bishopton.

Launching the prototypes was Local MSP and Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work, Derek Mackay, along with representatives from Taylor Wimpey.

As part of the developer's research programme, titled Project 2020, the prototypes are aimed at addressing changing customer needs, including allowing individuals to adapt their homes to their requirements. The homes are also intended to demonstrate greater build efficiency and deliver advances in reducing energy consumption.

The developer launched the Project 2020 Design competition in 2016, in partnership with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The two-stage competition invited architects from across the globe to design new house types that

were innovative, cost-effective, capable of mass production, and would appeal to future customers and their changing needs.

With over 100 entries from 14 countries, it was the 'Infinite House,' designed by Open Studio Architects, that impressed the judging panel most. It is designed to deliver a flexible approach which enables inhabitants to customise their home to specific living requirements, such as easy expansions in the roofs, larger windows strategically designed to increase daylight levels, and options to use different materials to fit the exterior of the building as required.

The 'Infinite C' house type at Taylor Wimpey's Dargavel Village development will reportedly be 'Gold Compliant,' with the developer saying it is "significantly more advanced" than the current 2015 building standards. In addition, the 'Infinite C' has been constructed using closed panel timber frame, incorporating high perform-



ance insulation and increased renewable energy technology.

In total there are nine prototype units which are being built across West Scotland, Manchester and Oxfordshire, where Taylor Wimpey's regional teams will review different build methodologies and new technologies and suitable materials. Each region is trialling a different method of construction.



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INDUSTRY MOVERS



John Reed

Beal Homes

John Reed, an “experienced housebuilding executive,” has joined the board of fast-growing Beal Homes.

Reed recently retired from Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes. He joins as a non-executive director and brings to the business considerable board-level experience of the housebuilding industry, as well as extensive knowledge of the residential property market in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, where Beal operates.

A qualified accountant, Reed joined Barratt in York as finance director in 1989 and was promoted to managing director of the Yorkshire East Division in 1999. From 2006 to 2016 he was northern regional managing director for Barratt and David Wilson.

Beal chief executive Richard Beal said: “We’re delighted to welcome John to the board. He brings enormous knowledge, expertise and connections that will benefit the business as we enter our next phase of growth.

“We’re delivering progressively larger and more ambitious developments, so John joins us at an ideal time, when his experience will help to inform our strategic development going forward.”

Reed has become one of four non-executive directors of the East Yorkshire-based business, led by non-executive chairman and founder John Beal. The others are Wayne Bowser, a former North of England regional director for HSBC, and leading local solicitor and businessman Simon Lunt.



Brian Dowling & Nicola Gooch



Irwin Mitchell

In its latest round of partner promotions, national law firm Irwin Mitchell as promoted two real estate lawyers to partner level.

Brian Dowling, who will be based in the firm’s Southampton development team, has been made partner in real estate, and Nicola Gooch in the Gatwick office will be a partner in Irwin Mitchell’s planning team. Following six other partner promotions at Irwin Mitchell, 43 per cent of Partners at the firm are now female.

Adrian Barlow, national head of real estate said: “We are proud to announce the promotion of Brian and Nicola who are talented lawyers. They have both made a strong contribution to Irwin Mitchell and demonstrated excellent work for their clients, and I’m delighted to congratulate them on their success. Investing in our people is essential as we continue to grow our national real estate offering across the UK, from the seven of our UK offices that offer legal services to the business community.”

Irwin Mitchell’s national real estate practice now has over 30 real estate partners, offering “the full range of commercial and residential legal advice.”

ilke Homes

British modular homes specialist ilke Homes has set up its own national development team to offer housing “end-to-end” – from land purchase through to planning and delivery. The team will be headed up by Ben Miller.

ilke Homes’s new land development offering will be operational from this month, and will cover mixed-tenure developments. Miller is setting up the new team and will make further appointments in the coming months. He joins from Crest Nicholson, where he was managing director of the developer’s Midlands business. In his new role at ilke Homes, Ben’s target is to add a further 1000 homes per annum to the company’s current output.

This Land

Four property industry figures – Susan Freeman, David Meek, Jeremy Miller, and Richard Steer – have been appointed as non-executive directors by This Land, the development and investment business aiming to “transform housebuilding in the UK.”

Freeman is a property lawyer, while Meek has over 30 years senior executive and board experience in Tier 1 global financial institutions. Miller has served as non-executive director and chairman for a range of property and finance businesses, and Steer is known for having spearheaded growth of property consultancy Gleeds.

The board is led by chairman Steven Norris.



Will Seamer

Montagu Evans

Planning and development consultancy Montagu Evans has appointed viability specialist Will Seamer to the position of partner.

Seamer specialises in preparing financial viability assessments for developers and landowners in support of planning applications, justifying the level of affordable housing and other planning benefits that developments can support.



Alex Freeman-Laverack

Jones Homes

Alex Freeman-Laverack has been appointed as land buyer for Jones Homes Yorkshire. He is tasked with researching the planning history of sites, preparing and submitting planning applications and undertaking viability assessments. He previously worked as a development consultant and has a first-class BSc Honours degree in planning and development.

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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

DON'T SCRAP PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), explains why permitted development rights should be reformed, rather than abolished entirely – in response to Labour's plan to do the latter.

The Labour Party recently announced that if elected to Government it would scrap permitted development for conversions of commercial into residential buildings without the need for planning permission, blaming these rules for the creation of 'rabbit hutch homes'. While the FMB does not endorse substandard quality housing being built through this mechanism, we believe scrapping it would be throwing the baby out with the bath water and would lead to fewer new homes being delivered, and derelict commercial properties remaining empty.

Since 2015/16, around 46,000 homes have been built using permitted development and the Government rightly points to this as an example as a success of this policy. Permitted development has been another tool in its box to reach their target of delivering 300,000 new homes a year by 2022. It is highly unlikely that these homes would have been built as quickly going through the traditional planning route.

Furthermore, it is estimated that as many as 300,000 to 400,000 new homes could be created by making use of empty spaces above shops on our high streets. The FMB's 'Homes on our high streets' research report looks at a number of high streets across the country from Bishop's Stortford to Motherwell, which have been transformed by converting empty retail spaces and converting them into residential spaces. In order to revitalise high streets across the country, we need to replicate these case studies on a large scale, and permitted development rights will be a critical way of stimulating these changes.

The relaxing of permitted development rules governing domestic properties have also made it easier for home owners to extend their homes without having to worry about the planning application process. These rules have proved popular among builders and homeowners, as they give people the opportunity to add a space to their house (eight metres for detached houses and six metres for an attached home). So, we

need to be careful to not make all permitted development synonymous with poor quality.

Since Labour's announcement we've had members contacting us telling us what a shame it would be if permitted development rights were to be scrapped. They have told me of old, empty and sometimes derelict commercial buildings that have been given a new lease of life and turned into much needed residential accommodation. One member informed me of a large office block he turned into social housing. This is the positive side of permitted development that we haven't seen reported in the press.

However, it is not right that in some cases permitted development is leading to 'rabbit hutch' flats, which are too small and have no windows. We stand with the Labour Party on strongly condemning the use of these rules as a loophole to build tiny uninhabitable homes. This is not something the FMB would ever support and our members would not be involved in such projects.

However, if Labour is going to put even more pressure on the planning system by removing some permitted development rights, then it must also think carefully about how planning departments are resourced. The planning system is the second biggest barrier reported by FMB members, with 51 per cent reporting this as the major barrier to them delivering more homes. When asked to assess the biggest cause of delay and cost, the top reason is inadequate resourcing of planning departments. We would be interested to hear how Labour plan to tackle this.

So, it is clear that permitted development rights have led to more homes being built, derelict high streets being transformed, and homeowners adding more space to their properties without the stress of a planning application. However, it is not right that these rules are used to build substandard housing. That is why we believe reform of permitted development is the right approach, rather than abolition.

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WHAT WILL THE REAL IMPACT OF BREXIT BE ON CONSTRUCTION?

Jerald Solis, business development and acquisitions director at Experience Invest, discusses the likely effects of Brexit on the construction industry, and the measures that could be taken to ease them.



The revised Brexit deadline – now set for 31 October 2019 – may have given the UK Government some extra breathing space, however it remains to be seen just how Westminster will be able to manage the country's withdrawal from the EU. The lack of political consensus has meant that businesses are none the wiser when it comes to understanding just what Brexit will mean for their respective industries.

Fortunately, sectors like construction have proven resilient in the period following the EU referendum. Indeed, according to the Office for National Statistics, in November 2018 – with less than six months to go until the original Brexit deadline – the total value of construction output exceeded £14bn. This is the highest it has been since monthly outputs were first recorded in 2010.

What's more, investment has not dried up. Public and private capital flows into infrastructure and housebuilding projects have created plenty of new opportunities for developers, ranging from the upgrade of existing transport networks to new-build housing complexes.

Yet, despite the strong performance of the construction industry, there are still a number of obstacles preventing businesses from reaching their full potential, and the majority of these stem from Brexit. So what are the challenges the construction industry could face in the immediate future?

WHAT COULD BREXIT MEAN FOR THE INDUSTRY'S WORKFORCE?

High on the list of concerns for many construction companies will be their continued access to skilled workers from across the EU. After all, the industry relies very heavily on overseas talent – according

to the ONS, one in four (28 per cent) of construction workers in London are from the European Union.

Should freedom of movement come to an end, it is unlikely that the UK will be able to satisfy its need for skilled labour through domestic workers alone. This doesn't just concern construction – all eyes will inevitably turn to the Government to see how it will continue to support a skilled workforce across different industries.

There is some speculation that the government will apply its Tier 2 visa regulations to EU workers, as is currently the case with non-EU workers residing in the UK. Alternatively, new visa schemes might be considered to lessen the restrictions on current and future migrants plying their trade in the construction industry.

Regardless of what transpires, there is vital need for businesses hiring skilled EU workers to understand what their visa status will be as a consequence of Brexit. Failing this, we could see a shrinking workforce in the construction industry.

ENSURING COMPANIES CAN ACCESS BUILDING MATERIALS

Along with new restrictions on the free movement of people, Brexit could present new challenges when it comes to accessing construction products and materials.

The UK construction industry has long relied on imported materials, particularly from within the EU's customs union. According to Build UK, more than £10bn worth of construction products are imported from the EU each year, representing nearly 15 per cent of all products used in the sector.

Should the UK's membership of the customs union come to an end, so will the free movement of goods. Losing tariff-free access to the single market could see construction companies facing import duties and limits on quantities of imported materials – ultimately increasing the operating and construction costs of developers.

In order to Brexit-proof the supply of materials, the Government must work on establishing a fair future relationship with the EU that protects trade. At the same

time, it must offer construction companies comprehensive advice about how to prepare for likely Brexit scenarios, ensuring they can put into place a long-term strategy when it comes to accessing building materials.

WHY BREXIT CANNOT OVERSHADOW LONG-TERM CHALLENGES

Addressing aforementioned issues must remain a priority not just to see the UK through Brexit, but also for the long-term future of the sector. After all, a skills shortage and reduced access to materials could create a knock-on effect on an even more pressing issue – the national housing crisis.

Given the current imbalance between supply and demand, it is estimated that between 240,000 and 350,000 new homes must be put on the market in England alone in order to restore balance. However, the Government's current approach to ramp up housebuilding has so far been the subject of criticism.

In 2017/2018, the total housing stock in the country increased by around 220,000, falling short of the volume needed to ensure that there is ample supply to meet housing needs.

So as we head towards the new Brexit deadline, addressing the housing crisis must remain a national priority. This must necessarily start with diverting more attention and resources towards the construction sector, supporting current and future talent, and putting in place strategies to minimise the disruption from Brexit.

I firmly believe that the future of the construction industry looks bright. The sector has performed well since the EU vote, and continues to deliver valuable infrastructure and new-build houses. Demand for property is strong, and there is no sign of this slowing down anytime soon. Going forward, the industry must work hand in hand with government to ensure that construction companies can continue their projects whilst also being positioned to plan in the long-term. In doing so, the UK will be able to meet the evolving infrastructure and property demands of the population.



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Patrick Mooney, news editor
of Housing, Management &
Maintenance

LOOKING AT
1969 MAKES
ME THINK
HOW LITTLE
WE APPEAR
TO HAVE
ACHIEVED IN
INTERVENING
DECADES

THE SOCIAL NETWORK

HAVE WE TURNED THE HOUSING CLOCK BACK?

Patrick Mooney takes a look back over the past five decades and suggests that the UK housing sector, rather than progressing, may have actually regressed.

Fifty years ago the country was going through some pretty momentous times under the beleaguered premiership of Harold Wilson – a backdrop that does sound incredibly familiar! The swinging sixties were coming to an end, but huge changes in society and pop culture were reflected in the news of the day.

The Kray Twins were starting life sentences for murder, troops were deployed onto the streets of Northern Ireland at the start of The Troubles, the voting age was reduced from 21 to 18, the Sun newspaper was launched as a tabloid and a TV documentary about the Royal Family attracted more than 30 million viewers, but was then banned by the Queen.

On a more light hearted note, the year 1969 saw The Beatles release their final album *Abbey Road*, while their final gig on top of the Apple Records building was broken up by the police, the first episode of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* was broadcast on our screens, and regular transmissions of colour TV programmes began on the BBC.

It was also a notable year for the housing sector, with a number of events or developments taking place that still resonate with us today. They make me think how little we appear to have achieved in the intervening five decades.

HOUSING NEED IN THE HEADLINES

Consider the following news stories from 1969, and compare them to our current situation:

- The housing charity Shelter released a report claiming there were up to three million people in urgent need of rehousing, because they were living in damp, overcrowded slum conditions.
- The Chancellor of the Exchequer Roy Jenkins introduced Mortgage Interest Relief at Source (MIRAS) to encourage home ownership; it allowed borrowers tax relief for interest payments on their mortgage.
- Work on the Castle Vale estate in Birmingham was finally completed. It was one of the largest

housing estates in Europe, consisting mostly of council houses and low-rise flats as well as 34 tower blocks, the first of which was occupied in 1964. At its height, the area had a population of around 20,000 who had mainly been moved from the inner city slums of Aston and Nechells.

- Some 378,320 homes of various types and tenures were completed across the country, with 185,000 of them built by councils and just 7,410 built by housing associations. Private builders accounted for 185,920 of the total and therefore had built 49 per cent – the same as councils contributed.

HAS ANYTHING CHANGED?

If we scroll forward to the present day, it is remarkable to think that Shelter recently published a report in which they recommend that 3.1 million new low-cost or affordable homes are built over the next 20 years to ensure those on low incomes can be properly housed. They have done the sums, and can demonstrate that with lower rents, the new housing actually pays for itself.

SO WHAT ELSE LOOKS FAMILIAR?

Well instead of MIRAS, we have its modern day equivalent in the form of Help To Buy, which allows mainly first time buyers to purchase new homes with the state's support – in the shape of equity loans of up to 20 per cent (40 per cent in London), on a purchase price of up to £600,000.





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In effect the state has replaced the bank of mum and dad.

Brought in to prop up the ailing housing market after the banking and financial crash of 2008/09 and to make house buying 'more affordable,' the Government expects the scheme to have supported the sale of up to 360,000 homes by 2021, at an outlay of around £22bn. This is an enormous level of subsidy from the taxpayer and many experts believe it has simply stoked demand and pushed house prices higher.

The scheme's existence has certainly coincided with bumper profits for the volume housebuilders, with firms like Persimmon doing particularly well. Their profits topped £1bn in 2018, assisted by it selling 7,970 homes through the Help To Buy scheme.

HOUSE BUILDING FAILS TO HIT THE HIGH NOTES

Sadly the large-scale building of council housing is currently a thing of the past. While massive developments like Castle Vale are no longer seen as the solution due to their size and the concentration of challenges, they do allow for infrastructure and community facilities to be planned and delivered at scale.

English councils completed just 2,630 new homes in 2018, out of a total of 164,160 dwellings built across the whole country. This is less than half of the number of properties we achieved back in 1969. While housing associations weighed in with an additional 27,460 affordable homes, these figures are a drop in the ocean when

compared to the level of need.

The lifting of the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap was a welcome step, which councils had long called for. But the Government estimates this will only release funds for up to 10,000 new council homes a year. While this is a significant number, it is a relatively small contribution to the estimated 100,000 social homes a year which are needed.

In the meantime more dramatic actions are required to help bridge the gap between demand and supply. In the interim this could possibly come through the use of modern methods of construction, as well as buying properties on the open market, or converting unsold shared ownership properties into housing for rent.

HOMELESSNESS REMAINS A BLIGHT

The charity Shelter launched a £1m campaign called 'Face the Facts' in 1969, aimed at getting the Government to change its definition of homelessness to include the hundreds of thousands of people living in appalling conditions.

The official figure for homelessness at the time stood at just 18,689, which was based on the numbers in temporary accommodation. This vastly under-estimated the true scale of the problem.

This month we are marking the first anniversary of the Homelessness Reduction Act coming into force. Most councils are positive about the act in principle. But their prevention, support and re-housing services are being overwhelmed by the increasing levels of demand and

the extra money from Whitehall is wholly inadequate.

Nearly two-thirds of councils have reported increases in the numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation since last April, with one third reporting "significant" increases. There are now over 80,000 homeless households in need of temporary accommodation and other forms of support from local authorities. This number includes over 123,000 children.

A recent survey by the New Local Government Network found that more than two-thirds of English councils believe they do not have sufficient funding to fulfil their legal duty to prevent homelessness – a figure that rises to 86 per cent in urban areas. Overall the LGA says that for the majority of councils, the act has not changed the underlying issues relating to housing.

A MAJOR CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR

Of course one thing that is very different from 50 years ago is that we did not have the Right to Buy to contend with. Introduced in 1980, this policy has overseen the wholesale sell-off of hundreds of thousands of council homes.

There are two massive problems with the policy – councils were not given the means to replace the sold properties, so the stock of low rent homes inevitably declined, forcing many vulnerable families into the private rented sector with less security of tenure and paying higher rents for the privilege.

Secondly many of these RTB properties are now being let back to councils at extraordinarily high prices, and are being used to house families who would otherwise be homeless. This amounts to a huge waste of public resources as private landlords exploit the shortage of housing in many parts of the country. London councils in particular are being badly hit by this problem.

It may seem hard for us to imagine a world when Brexit does not dominate everything else, but it will come soon and we need to be working on the housing solutions now. Transferring a large chunk of the Help To Buy billions of pounds over to council house building and providing the resources to tackle homelessness would be a good start. Let's hope the Chancellor is listening to the lobbying from Shelter, the CIH and the LGA, or the next 50 years could see us grappling with exactly the same problems that we were, back in 1969.

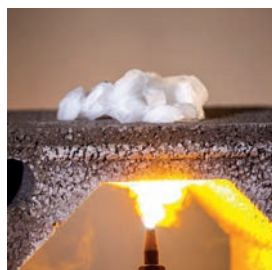
OF COURSE, ONE THING THAT IS NOW VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE SCENE 50 YEARS AGO IS THAT WE DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO BUY TO CONTEND WITH



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NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Go-ahead for Swan Housing and Urban Catalyst's £1bn Purfleet scheme

The green light for a £1bn regeneration project called Purfleet on Thames has been given, set to deliver up to 2,850 new homes in Purfleet, Essex, along with a new town centre with shops, restaurants and new public spaces such as local parks and access to the new riverfront.

Submitted by Purfleet Centre Regeneration Ltd (PCRL), a joint venture between Urban Catalyst and Swan Housing Association, the plans were unanimously granted outline planning permission by Thurrock Council's Planning Committee on 25 April.

As well as the homes and town centre, the proposals also include a 1,000,000 ft² film, TV and create industries complex, which together with other commercial uses proposed are intended to create over 2,000 new jobs for local people. Alongside these, the railway station and transport facilities are set to see improvements, and a new health centre and two new schools are planned.

Approximately 50 per cent of the homes will be built using modular construction in order to increase the pace of delivery and quality.

John Synnuck, chief executive of Swan Housing Association, commented on the announcement: "Last night's approval of our plans for the regeneration of Purfleet reflects both our long-term relationship with Thurrock Council, which is at the heart of PCRL's delivery strategy, and our engagement with the local community.

"We will now all work together to create a thriving environment that provides much needed new homes and services, alongside significant employment and educational opportunities for the local community."



58 new homes for Harrietsham

A 58-home development in Harrietsham, Kent, is due to open to the public this month, made up of three and four-bedroom homes. Located at Bluebell Walk, off Ashford Road, the developer Bellway Kent has opened a sales centre on the site.

Detailed plans for the scheme, based on the former Mayfield Nursery site, were approved by Maidstone Borough Council last year.

Mark Harrop, sales director for Bellway Kent, commented: "Bluebell Walk will be ideal for people commuting to nearby towns or London – with frequent train services from Harrietsham railway station to London Victoria. And, of course, Eurostar services to Paris, Lille and Brussels are within easy reach, along with easy links to the M20 motorway."

He added: "We'll be releasing the first plots at Bluebell Walk for sale when the development opens in May."

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Legacy Wharf to play major role in Stratford regeneration

A collection of one, two and three-bedroom apartments from Bellway are being built at Legacy Wharf, off Cooks Road in Stratford, London.

The Legacy Wharf development includes commercial and retail premises, as well as amenities including landscaped podium gardens, a gym and a concierge service for residents.

The new homes will be within walking distance of one of London's largest shopping centres, world-class sporting facilities and strong transport links.

Following the success of the area, reportedly in part due to the 2012 Olympics, Homes England announced a £78m investment this year to bring a further 1,500 new homes to the area.

Emma Hamlett, sales director of Bellway London, commented: "Stratford is thriving, and this is definitely the time to buy into this fast-regenerating area and all it has to offer.

"Legacy Wharf offers a great opportunity for first-time buyers and central London commuters to get their feet on the housing ladder in a fantastic location."

THE LEGACY WHARF DEVELOPMENT INCLUDES COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL PREMISES, AS WELL AS AMENITIES INCLUDING LANDSCAPED PODIUM GARDENS, A GYM, AND A CONCIERGE SERVICE FOR RESIDENTS



Milton Keynes to receive new canalside homes

Campbell Wharf is to bring 383 new homes to Milton Keynes, made up of 51 houses and 332 apartments. Work is underway on site, with the first completions due at the end of this year.

The development from Crest Nicholson is situated on Grand Union Canal, and alongside the homes, it will feature a 111-berth marina and new businesses, including a waterside pub, cafe and restaurant, providing access to previously unused parts of the canal.

Campbell Wharf is the first residential development on the Grand Union Canal, and benefits from convenient access to the town, as well as green open spaces and views over the water. The development is located 15 minutes from Milton Keynes Central and The Hub, with nearby restaurants and amenities such as the Milton Keynes Snow Dome and a cinema.

Marcus Evans, sales and marketing director at Crest Nicholson Regeneration, commented: "We've noticed a growing number of people leaving the capital to live in Milton Keynes thanks to its easy commute, as well as businesses moving to the area with many of their staff choosing to follow their job and live in Milton Keynes. We anticipate this will continue over the coming years and Campbell Wharf is well placed to appeal to this growing market."



Fire sprinkler boxing and FSC® compliance – Ignorance is no defence

Social housing providers and contractors involved in concealing fire sprinkler pipework, as part of ongoing tower block fire protection upgrades, could be inadvertently contravening compliance and sustainability policies, as non-FSC® certified plywood boxing is still available in the UK.

As these products are manufactured from wood, contractors should be purchasing only FSC® or PEFC certified products, as required by the government's 'Timber Procurement Policy' (TPP) guidelines, as well as the latest edition of the Timber Procurement Advisory Note (TPAN) from Defra.

Extracts from Defra's guidance on compliance with the TPP states:

Government procurers and their suppliers should have documentary evidence to show the timber supplied is at a minimum from legal and sustainable sources. This evidence should include full chain of custody from the forest source(s) to the end user. Suppliers and buyers must check evidence to verify its validity.

Also, The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has stated, 'If you don't know where your timber and paper come from, you could be part of the problem.' The FSC's procurement factsheet



provides clear recommendations on procurement procedures and compliance checks that should be made:

- Check that delivery notes and invoices clearly identify the FSC certified products and includes the supplier's FSC certificate code. In addition Encasement advises that to be confident of compliance, always ensure that the individual product description for every item listed is identified specifically as FSC® compliant.
- Specify FSC certified materials when placing your order and let your supplier know that you need them to make an FSC claim on

their sale documents.

- Source from an FSC certified supplier. All FSC certified organisations are included within the FSC certificate database at <https://info.fsc.org>

Encasement's Managing Director, Martin Taylor, explained: "The best way for HAs and LAs to enforce this is to explicitly specify the use of FSC Chain of Custody certified products as the default and diligently monitor the products used by contractors and suppliers. Ignorance is no defence, especially when guidance and information on procedures is readily available."

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Lewes 416-home development sees planning approval granted



Detailed plans for the landscape and appearance of North Street Quarter's phases two and three, in Lewes, east Sussex, have been approved by the South Downs National Park Authority.

North Street Quarter was given planning permission in May 2016 to regenerate a brownfield site in the historic town, providing 416 homes, 40 per cent of which are affordable, along with commercial space and local improvements.

The plans included outline permission for the whole scheme as

well as full planning permission for the first phase of the development.

Phases two and three comprise 178 homes, to be built in the western part of the scheme. The planning application for the appearance and landscape of this area deals with the architectural style and proposed materials of the buildings, as well as landscaping elements such as a new riverside walk, courtyards and planting schemes planned.

The proposals were shown to the public at an exhibition in October 2018, and feedback from the event helped shape the final plans. As well as providing housing, with 165 of the homes designated as affordable, and a new health hub, public parking and business space for creative industries, the scheme will complete the town's flood defences and open up the river to the public. As well as a riverside walk, a new footbridge will be created, and a slipway from which small boats can be launched.

Will Noton from North Street Quarter, joint owner of the scheme with Lewes District Council, commented: "Our team of architects and landscape professionals, together with planning advisers Vail Williams, have been working on the detailed plans for many months so we are delighted that the application has now been approved. We've worked with the local community throughout and are confident that North Street Quarter will bring many benefits to Lewes and its residents." He added: "We're now looking forward to appointing a developer to build this exciting scheme."

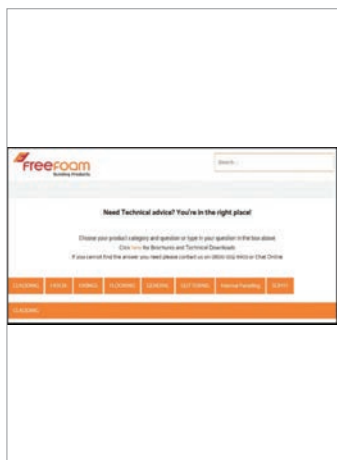
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Freefoam products are designed and manufactured to be easy to fit. However, as any building product supplier or home improvement installer will tell you, every project is different. Following customer feedback and online requests Freefoam Building Products are pleased to announce the launch of a brand new online feature – Technical Frequently Asked Questions.

The database covers a wide range of technical questions that customers and fitters have asked and find most useful. Quick and easy to access from a pop up box on every web page the tool allows site visitors to view a wide range of topics and issues covering the full Freefoam product range. From general fitting instructions and product information, to more specific fitting tips and examples of individual fitting situations the database allows users to filter by product range or simply type in their question. Accessible from PC, mobile and tablet the tool is instantly available to customers and fitters out on the job.

With the ability to add new questions and topics Freefoam are expecting the database to grow and develop over time, making it a live resource with valuable up to date information for all Freefoam customers.

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CASE STUDY

Rental gets upwardly mobile in Birmingham



Ground has been broken at Zone2 Broad Street, a 483-apartment for rent scheme in Birmingham. Named 'The Mercian,' the mixed-use project is set to become the city's tallest residential tower, with developer and operator Moda intending to offer a sense of 'hotel living' to the rental market.

THE DEVELOPER WANTS TO "REVOLUTIONISE" THE WAY PEOPLE RENT, PROVIDING A "SENSE OF SOCIETY"

The Mercian is a 483-apartment high-rise scheme, designed exclusively for rent, and intended to offer a 'hotel-style' experience through a host of on-site amenities.

Previously known as Zone2 Broad Street, the 42-storey skyscraper is planned as part of the regeneration of the Broad Street area of Birmingham, and when finished, it will reportedly be the city's tallest residential building.

Developed by Moda, the developer, owner and operator of the building, and backed by JV partner Apache Capital, the scheme is located in walking distance of the city centre and new HS2 terminal.

Alongside the development team, locally-based Glenn Howells Architects are the project's designers, and Irish construction firm John Sisk & Son has been appointed to build the scheme.

With work now underway, completion is expected in 2022, in conjunction with the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. As part of this, The Mercian will include multiple health and wellness amenities for its residents.

BREAKING GROUND

Planning was granted for the scheme at 212-223 Broad Street in December 2017, with Moda reporting that the project was approved unanimously by a Birmingham City Council, in 12 minutes.

The architect's initial designs indicate that the tower is intended to complement the surrounding architecture of the 'Ridge,' Birmingham's dedicated tall building zone.

Apache Capital Partners secured a £118m debt facility from Goldman Sachs help deliver this vision, with the 4.5-year facility including a 12 month extension option.

The 0.77 acre site chosen for the project was derelict brownfield land, once home to the former Click Club at Burberries, a venue which once hosted bands such as Blur and Primal Scream.

The site is also directly opposite Brindleyplace, Argent's award-winning

1.2 million ft² mixed-use commercial scheme, which accommodates over 10,000 workers within grade A offices, restaurants, cafes, bars and retail space around three public squares.

Ground has now been broken on the site, with an official ceremony undertaken to celebrate the site's past.

HOTEL LIVING

Across its 483 apartments, The Mercian will offer a range of sizes, from studios to three-beds. These will be offered with both flexible and long-term tenancies, in order to broaden the range of potential renters, and provide stability to those such as families.

A 60,000 ft² podium with over 30,000 ft² of dedicated communal space is planned as part of the tower, including a residents' lounge, dedicated health and wellness zones, co-working space, indoor/outdoor dining club featuring a demonstration kitchen, as well as a range of ground floor commercial spaces.

Among the various 'hotel-style' amenities on offer will be a 24-hour concierge, which will collect delivered parcels, help book cleaning and ironing, and ensure residents are safe and secure.

Continuing this theme, but with a technology-led approach to a more personalised feel, smart lifts will register when residents enter the building, and will be ready and waiting at ground level. Residents will also have access to "round-the-clock maintenance" through a 'MyModa' app, which will act as a key and allow users to control smart thermostats, report problems by taking a picture, and welcome guests through a virtual 'Skype-style' door buzzer.

Putting a focus on health and wellbeing, a 200m podium running track is to be installed in the development, reportedly one of the first in UK housing. Moda will also be working with hero, a digital wellness platform which will help track and improve the health and fitness of residents. Tenants will also have access to advice from Premier League football nutritionists and wellbeing coaches, and staff on site will be provided with "mental health first aid training."

In order to fulfil these quality of life aspects, Moda Living and Apache Capital will retain ownership of the property and operate the site, which they believe will ensure the creation of a "long-term community and investment platform."

Moda hope that such amenities at the scheme will appeal to Birmingham's "growing army of professionals," while the longer-term tenancies of three to five years offered "will give families peace of mind."

A 'REVOLUTION'

Located within five minutes' walk of Centenary Square, home of the International Convention Centre,



Symphony Hall and National Indoor Arena, and with Paradise Circus and Arena Central both in close vicinity, residents will gain from a host of benefits related to inner-city living when the project is completed. The site also benefits from Birmingham's tram network extension along Broad Street, and the nearby road being fully pedestrianised.

Tony Brooks, managing director at Moda Living, discussed the city's impact on the project, and vice-versa: "Birmingham is a key city for Moda – as the UK's fastest growing regional city and the number one city to relocate to from London. Our aim is to provide high quality housing to match the city's ambition and growth.

"Not only will this be a landmark building, it will also help raise the bar for rental in the city, offering unrivalled amenities and putting residents in control – offering flexible and long-term contracts. With a keen focus on health and wellbeing, the building includes a running track, landscaped terraces and shared spaces."

Brooks concluded: "As a long-term partner to the city, it's our responsibility to create social, healthy and connected communities."

With a focus on family-friendly tenancies and user-friendly convenience and amenities, Moda hopes to encourage renters to treat the whole building as their home, not just the apartment. As part of this, the developer wants to "revolutionise the way people rent," providing "a sense of 'society'" which it believes can change renting from what some may see purely as a necessity, into a lifestyle choice.

When complete, the developer hopes The Mercian will become a local landmark that "knits itself into the fabric of the city as a destination the local population can be proud of." If the development continues on its current track, all the signs are that it will succeed in this aim.

**AMONG THE VARIOUS
'HOTEL-STYLE' AMENITIES
ON OFFER WILL BE A 24-
HOUR CONCIERGE**

NO-COMPROMISE COMPOSITE DOORS

Adrian Pavey of Nationwide Windows & Doors discusses the advantages of composite doors for new build developments.

Specifiers and housebuilders have lots of choice when it comes to the different types of door materials on the market. Naturally however, product specifications and performance vary depending on where the doors are and what they are required to do.

Traditionally, one of the most popular materials to make doors out of is PVCu, which is highly weather resistant, has great maintenance free properties and offers value for money. In contrast, while as a nation we may have an emotional affinity

with the integrity of timber doors, they can require varnishing, painting and weather sealing many times over their life span.

While both PVCu and timber doors come with their own pros and cons, in recent years, there has been a trend towards building with what has been described as the 'no compromise' composite door. As the name suggests, composite doors are manufactured from a combination of materials.

For example, composite door skins can be made from impact-resistant fibreglass (thermoset GRP – glass reinforced polyester) and compression-moulded to offer detailed panel definition and an authentic woodgrain effect which will not expand, contract, bow, warp or twist. In such products, the stiles and rails may be composed of water-resistant polymers which are bonded to the skin and filled with an insulating core of 100 per cent CFC-free polyurethane, providing thermal efficiency nine times that of a timber door.

Key advantages of composite doors include:

- a safe, sturdy and robust entrance to a home

- an energy efficient choice with insulating properties helping reduce heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer
- low maintenance, requiring very little upkeep – just a quick wipe down with a damp cloth
- available with realistic woodgrain finishes, a wide variety of colours, and the option for glasswork inserts
- strong and resistant to wear and tear, easily standing the rigours of day to day use
- will not warp, chip, scratch, rot or discolour
- their long lifespan means they offer great overall lifecycle value.

End products must be tough, tried and tested, and offer high levels of both security and durability. Look for products that are UKAS accredited to BS:PAS 23 and BS:PAS24, and Secured By Design licensed (Association of Chief Police Officers).

It is also advisable that housebuilders and developers look to members of The Association of Composite Door Manufacturers (ACDM). This is the representative body focused on ensuring that composite doors, and all those involved in manufacturing and supplying them must maintain a high level of quality and credibility, and as such there is a minimum requirement to join the ACDM, based upon product performance.

When you choose a partner for your development's doors, choose a company who is committed to ensuring this innovative door continues its foothold within the UK's housing market.

Adrian Pavey is commercial director of Nationwide Windows & Doors

COMPOSITE DOOR SKINS CAN BE MADE FROM IMPACT-RESISTANT FIBREGLASS AND COMPRESSION-MOULDED TO OFFER DETAILED PANEL DEFINITION



Celebrating a significant increase in business



Designer Contracts, one of the UK's largest flooring contractors, is celebrating another record year. Latest end of year figures show a 15 per cent year-on-year growth with company turnover now in excess of £40 million and more than 300 employees working within the

business. Critical to the growth was a 25 per cent surge in volume from its central distribution facility in Kettering which maintains a constant £2 million stock level, recently boosted to £3 million to ensure stock levels remain high during the uncertainty of Brexit. Adding to the business' success, an ambitious 20 per cent growth was forecast for 2019 – which has already been exceeded – just five months into the company's financial year.

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

Apprentice Decorator of the Year: The Big 40



The Apprentice Decorator of the Year competition is back and bigger than ever, with the nation's best budding painters and decorators from colleges across the UK taking part. And it's a landmark year for the competition's sponsor **Crown Paints** as the company has now been

supporting the contest for 40 years. The company has a full calendar of activity planned to mark the milestone. Ben Deer, assistant judge and former Crown Paints Apprentice Decorator of the Year winner, said: "I'm looking forward to meeting the next crop of talented apprentice decorators over the course of the competition, and I'm excited to see what Crown has up its sleeve for the 40 year anniversary of its sponsorship."

www.crowntrade.co.uk/skills-training



Raising the standard

BAL are revolutionising the standard-set category with new adhesive technology; **BAL Flex One**. With its 'One' rapid-set technology, **BAL** have previously helped fixers with its rapid-setting products that provide significantly longer open and working times than all other rapid-set products but are still ready to grout in three hours. With ever larger tiles growing in popularity, complex designs required, possibly difficult or irregular backgrounds on-site and even hotter temperatures being experienced now in the summer months; the use of even improved rapid-set adhesives still may not provide enough open, working or adjustability time for a fixer. The new **BAL** technology is the first truly enhanced standard-set technology – developed from traditional standard-set chemistry as a basis. **BAL's** R&D team have developed an enhanced standard set adhesive with a long open time, excellent non-slip properties and may be grouted in as little as six hours. **BAL Flex One** provides a truly innovative technology that raises the standard.

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New Tech for the New-Build Sector

Collaboration: Yourkeys



It's 2025. Imagine selecting, customising and buying a new-build house online from start to finish from your favourite armchair.

Imagine a pleasant and transparent customer journey to follow, one that keeps you updated on every step of the purchase process, giving you peace of mind that you have complete visibility over the biggest purchase of your life. Fantasy or reality? More on that later!

Back to today and we probably all know someone who has had a disappointing and frustrating home buying experience. Lack of visibility and poor communication about what is happening are major contributing factors to many appalling customer experiences. Should it really be so dispiriting when buying, what is arguably the most important life purchase?

Case in point, a recent "Which?" magazine survey ranks buying a house as the most stressful experience in modern life, comfortably ahead of having a baby or even getting divorced. Clearly people feel very deeply about this experience and it's no wonder. The process is stressful, archaic, and has not changed materially in 75 years. Consider these damning statistics:

- 39 per cent of all house sales in the UK fall-through every year
- Only 5 per cent of successful sales do so in the expected timeframe of 28 days
- This equates to £1 billion of lost fees, marketing spend and admin time

For housebuilders this has a massive impact. Sales teams and agents spend 60 per cent of their time doing unnecessary admin functions, meaning less time actively selling and slower

conversion times.

Yet here we are in 2019, with technology appearing to be taking over our lives with an app for virtually everything you can think of, including a kitchen sink app (I kid you not). Yet where is technology when it comes to helping people to buy a house? Woefully absent historically, and not particularly surprising in a sector that invests very little in tech R&D. Yet there is finally a better way for people wishing to purchase a new build property using everyday technology: Yourkeys.

This is a super-easy online platform for new-build properties, where everyone involved in the sales process gets full visibility of the end to end purchase journey. Pick your dream new house, customise it the way you want, secure a mortgage offer, choose your conveyancer then negotiate with the housebuilder. Once the offer has been accepted, Yourkeys then accelerates the timeline by automating many of the 64 steps in the process and provides alerts and regular updates on the overall progress. Sounds futuristic perhaps, yet this is exactly what the online Yourkeys platform does and all from the comfort of your armchair.

Co-Founder Riccardo Dawson (pictured above) feels there are clear advantages to this approach. "For house builders, it will help to increase the number of units sold, by enabling developers to sell their properties pre-sale, off-plan some years ahead of development completion. All stakeholders in the process agree to complete their tasks in the allotted timeframe and traffic light alert notifications are then sent out automatically if any of those



timelines are breached. Yourkeys allows everyone to keep all parts of the puzzle together in one simple easy to access place and is the reason that exchange of contracts have been reduced to 21 days, rather than the industry average of 63 days. This is all about understanding the customer needs of buyers, house builders, and conveyancers, and streamlining the process to make things easier for everyone involved. Home buying made simple: finally!"

020 8088 2300 www.yourkeys.com

Drone Tech: AMP

If you were trying to get a flight out of Gatwick airport before last Christmas, my guess is you will be well familiar with how airborne drones had a massive impact on those particular holiday flight schedules. However, this is not the only impact drones have had. For many innovative house builders, they have also had a huge transformative impact on their approach to product marketing.

Today, high quality drones are a lot cheaper than they used to be with costs being driven down by huge advances in technology. Cost aside, the real driving force acknowledged by House Builders is that high quality aerial video and photography delivers a huge 'wow' factor which can act as a massive differentiator. Dramatic views of developments and the surrounding areas, allow prospective buyers to really see where they could be living from a whole new visual and emotional perspective. Matt Thompson from Make Homes sums up their use of aerial video.

"We see drone technology as a real asset to our business and not only during the construction process. Using drones in the post build phase to showcase our completed developments from the air adds a terrific new dimension to our marketing activity."

SO, WHAT'S THE CATCH?

No doubt soon, any House Builder will be able to order an inexpensive drone, load up an app on their phone and send a drone over their development to capture video footage. However, there are increasingly complex laws regarding the use of drones and also the requirement to take a test and register with the Civil Aviation Authority. Contravening any of these requirements could (and given Gat Gate, probably will) result in big fines and even imprisonment. So, remember that whilst smartphones have turned everyone into a budding professional photographer, getting great aerial photography (without taking down the local power lines and going to jail) is slightly different! Furthermore, getting footage is one thing but with professional production and editing it's the difference between viewing shaky home movies and booking your seat at the Oscars.

In summary, the use of drones should probably be approached in much the same way as learning to drive and then immediately tackling a potentially perilous mountain road. Sure, you could do it, but wouldn't you rather hire a professional driver to start with to show you how it's done?

Yourkeys Media can help - give us a call and let us show you our driving skills!

020 8088 2300
www.yourkeysmedia.com



AUGMENTED REALITY: AUGGD FOR CONSISTENCY

Hollywood style special effects in the new house build sector? You better believe it.

One of the largest builders in Australia (MJH) has found that an augmented reality (AR) app has massively boosted interest with their house buyers as they can view new-build house designs directly from their mobile devices. The app, which was developed by Auggd, a Yourkeys partner, provides the user with a full 3D render of a particular house design and allows the user to do a virtual walk-through of a display home which help to secure buyers to purchase pre-sale off-plan.

Brett Wilson, MJH's CIO states, "What we're trying to do is to display homes directly to house buyers by pushing this technology out to all initial sales leads. As the app brings the development to life, our buyers get a much richer visual experience of how a future property will look. This has resulted in a much faster sales turnaround. The effect of empowering customers to explore the range of home designs has had two impacts: First, it bridges the client's imagination gap during the home purchase process. Second, it minimises guesswork for the clients during the design phase. These factors have also resulted in bigger upsells and reduced reworks for the business."

What does this mean for the UK housing sector? Riccardo Dawson states "new technology is helping to provide greater choice and personalisation for house buyers, which in turn, smart housebuilders will use as a competitive differentiator." So, will it be lights, action roll em? Undoubtedly!

020 8088 2300
www.yourkeysmedia.com



Door closer enhances high-rise fire safety

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

0121 766 4200 www.concealeddoorclosers.com

Cromar – the dawn of a new era



Cromar are pleased to unveil their new, biggest ever catalogue! The new catalogue, launched at the beginning of April combines all of the Cromar Roofing range with the new AlphaChem Builders' range to create the companies biggest and best catalogue yet. Filled with key information on the products and eye-catching adverts all delivered with a fresh and clean design

celebrating a brand new era for the company. The catalogue has already been well received by their customers and is not only available on request but also available on the company website to download.

01977 663 133 www.cromar.uk.com

Award-winning home features CUPA PIZARRAS



The dramatic boomerang-shaped roof at an award-winning country house in Stirlingshire has been created using 900m² of **CUPA PIZARRAS'** Heavy 3 roofing slate. Architecturally impressive, the roof plays a dominant role in the design of this contemporary Scottish home, which in fact won the Individual New Build or

Small Development category at The Herald Property Awards for Scotland. Providing a first-class defence against the elements, this warm roof construction also introduces rooflights and dormers, maximising space and light – both design priorities for the homeowners.

020 3904 3001 www.cupapizaras.com/uk

Sustainable House benefits from Copper Rainwater System

If you are wanting a natural looking and eco-friendly rainwater system then Copper gutters and down pipes from the Yeoman Rainguard range, as chosen by the owners of a charming detached residence in North Yorkshire, are the solution.

With solar panels already in place the proprietors were keen to extend their sustainable ideas to a new rainwater system choosing a copper product for its natural attributes.

Yeoman Rainguard 125 x 70mm copper half round gutters along with 80mm dia. downpipes were expertly fitted to the property by local

contractor Robertson Building & Roofing Ltd of York.

Over time the bright finish will darken through natural oxidation to, eventually, a beautiful green patina. This attractive finish looks perfect against natural stone, timber and red brick facades.

The finish is not only pleasing to the eye but gives copper gutters and downpipes their own self-manufactured defence to corrosion, meaning a low maintenance lifecycle of over 50 years.

A copper rainwater system is also a perfect



choice for those, as in this case, wanting to harvest rainwater because it is a natural biocide which prevents the build-up of algae.

"We are very happy with what Yeoman Rainguard have supplied us and look forward to the system giving us many years of maintenance free service," commented the house owner.

0113 279 5854 www.rainguard.co.uk



THE WELLNESS CASE FOR ROOF WINDOWS

Samantha Smith of Fakro GB highlights the importance of including roof windows into projects to improve health and wellbeing.

A house is simply not complete without windows. They are the crucial element to providing natural light and ventilation into a home. Not only do they significantly contribute to health benefits, they can also be a key part of why a house is aesthetically pleasing.

However, choosing the right style of window for a house can be a daunting experience with many aspects to take into consideration, including the amount of natural light expected, sizing, insulation, regulations and the design of a room.

NATURAL LIGHT FROM ABOVE

For some, a loft is considered to be the best room in the house. It offers a space away from the rest of the household, and if the right roof windows are selected and installed with care, homeowners are offered unique views.

Roof windows offer a great solution if you want to increase the levels of natural light into a room. To optimise the positive effects of daylight entering a space, it is important to carefully plan where the roof windows will be installed.

For example, to understand how much natural light is recommended for each room, here is a general rule: habitable rooms usually have a ratio of 1:8 for light-to-floorspace. This equates to 12.5 per cent, however for other types of rooms the ratio is regarded to be 1:12 or 8 per cent of the floor space.

The correct amount of light in the room is calculated by the proportion of the surface of the glazing area to the total floor

space. And remember, if a window is situated at a higher level of the building, a greater level of natural light will flood into the room.

When specifying a project, larger roof windows can help to illuminate the room without the need to install multiple windows. It is suggested the glazing area



IN ORDER TO OPTIMISE THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF DAYLIGHT ENTERING A SPACE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO CAREFULLY PLAN WHERE THE ROOF WINDOWS WILL BE INSTALLED



should be at least 15 to 20 per cent of the total floor area for the brightest results.

WELLBEING

A lack of vitamin D can cause bones to become soft and weak, and this can lead to bone abnormalities. Although the human body creates vitamin D from direct sunlight while outdoors, it is equally important to maximise your exposure to natural light even when you are indoors.

Research has shown that exposure to natural sunlight can also have a powerful effect on an individual's mood. Changes in atmospheric light targets the pineal gland, responsible for the hormones serotonin and melatonin. The body produces more serotonin when exposed to a higher level of natural light, but also excretes more melatonin as the sun sets. Residing in dark rooms with unnatural illumination, or where

over-exposure to smart phones occurs, has been shown to interrupt sleep patterns.

IMPROVING VENTILATION

Ventilation is also vital within the home. Installing roof windows can help reduce the levels of airborne pollutants and moisture indoors – if rooms are not vented sufficiently, mould can develop and condensation issues may arise.

Some roof windows are equipped to help, with ventilation air inlets built in to maintain good air quality and thermal comfort. Poor ventilation can lead to potential health issues, including shortness of breath, headaches and fatigue. We all tend to spend a lot of time indoors, especially in the chilly winter months, so it is important to create a fresh and healthy environment throughout the year, contributing to a happier lifestyle and general wellbeing.

Comfort and warmth are large factors of our 'internal' lifestyles, so it is essential to control odours, regulate heat and condensation while generating opportunities to create a link to nature by letting the outside in.

TYPES OF ROOF WINDOWS

There are various styles of roof windows available across the UK market to suit

even the most unique structures. Not only should you focus on windows that can offer great value, their aesthetics are also a key factor. Both flat and pitched roof windows can be adapted to enhance a traditionally designed project. There is no simple way of choosing the right roof window – there's centre pivot, high pivot, balcony and top hung windows along with manual and electrically operated flat roof windows.

Roof windows can be made with multiple internal finishes to suit the location of the fitted window. As an example, a white polyurethane finish is often used in rooms with a higher level of humidity and moisture – e.g. a kitchen or bathroom. Alternatively, a PVCu window is often selected for its lower maintenance and weather resistance.

Products are traditionally manufactured from timber and aluminium cladding as standard, but the selection process does not end there. If you have a design in mind then it can be brought to life by choosing a bespoke window option. There are over 200 colours available from the RAL classic palette allowing your window to become a canvas to paint; the choice is endless.

Samantha Smith is marketing coordinator at Fakro GB

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GETTING ON TOP OF DOCUMENT Q

Jamie Johnson of IronmongeryDirect discusses the importance of door and window security in the context of complying with Approved Document Q

According to the Office for National Statistics, between January and September 2018 there were over 200,000 residential burglaries recorded by the police in England and Wales.

Although this figure is steadily decreasing year-on-year, when it comes to security it is vital that housebuilders ensure doors and windows are up to scratch. Burglary can have a huge impact on victims, both emotionally and financially, with the average cost of damage to buildings alone in incidents of domestic burglary estimated to be nearly £500, and the average cost of stolen items estimated at over £3,000.

WHAT IS APPROVED DOCUMENT Q?

In October 2015 Approved Document Q came into force which, for the first time,

introduced a security element to the Building Regulations in England in a bid to cut domestic crime.

Part Q applies exclusively to the new build sector (including existing buildings that are being converted into residential properties and new build home extensions, and sets high standards to make sure that easily accessible doors and windows withstand physical attacks from opportunistic burglars by being sufficiently robust and fitted with appropriate hardware.

‘Easily accessible’ is defined as a window or door of which any part is within two metres of an accessible level surface such as the ground or basement level, or an access balcony.

Some may be unaware that Part Q applies not just to common intruder entry points on the ground floor, but also those

up to two metres above a flat or sloping surface such as a balcony, garage or porch. It also applies to some roof-windows or skylights, particularly those installed on the top of single-storey extensions.

Part Q lists security requirements for such doors and windows, and calls for products to be manufactured to a design that, when tested, meets the security standards of PAS24:2012, or another standard that has equivalent or better performance. PAS 24:2012, published by the British Standards Institute, provides a method for testing and assessing the enhanced security performance requirements of external door sets and windows in the UK.

DOOR SETS

In 70 per cent of all incidents of domestic burglary, the intruder enters through a door, as opposed to a window.

A door set is defined as a complete door assembly consisting of door frame, door leaf or leaves, essential hardware and any integral side panel or fanlight. All easily accessible door sets providing access to a dwelling should meet the PAS 24:2012 requirements. Additional requirements include the following:

- Hinges which are accessible from outside of the building should not have removable pins
- Primary entrance doors require a door viewer or entry system, or a door chain or limiter
- Letterplates should have a maximum



- aperture of 260 x 40 mm and be fitted with a security hood to restrict hand or arm entry
- Door rails, stiles and muntins should be a minimum of 44 mm thick
 - Multipoint locking system should meet either PAS 3621, PAS 24 or BS 3621
 - There should be a minimum of 400 mm and a maximum of 600 mm between the two locking points
 - Alternative lock configuration could be a mortice lock conforming to BS 3261, BS 8621 or BS 10621 but with an external locking override and surface mounted rim lock conforming to the same standards.

WINDOWS

- Ground floor, basement and other easily accessible windows should meet the PAS 24:2012 requirements and have proven criminal reduction construction features. Further window requirements of Approved Document Q include:
- Frames should be mechanically fixed to the structure of the building
 - Any glazing which, if broken, would permit release of the locking device on the inside of the window should meet class P1A in accordance with BS EN 356:2000
 - Double or triple glazed units need incorporate only one pane of P1A glass.




A SECURE FUTURE

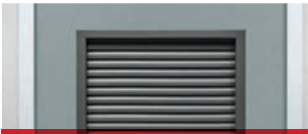
The introduction of Approved Document Q has been an important step in improving standards of product security and protecting new build developments. However, it is important for specifiers to take the time to understand the

regulations, as selecting products that fall short of the prescribed standards can end up being extremely costly in terms of both time and money.


Jamie Johnson is senior category manager at IronmongeryDirect




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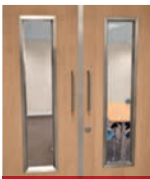


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Don't forget, sometimes there is a requirement for roof windows to meet the security requirements of approved document Q.

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Merchant cash advances (MCAs) are seemingly becoming the future as an alternative form of business finance. MCA is different to a loan not only the form that it takes, but also what is required to apply for one and the business circumstances to which it is best suited. When considering taking out a loan to assist with a company's cash-flow or to enable it to invest in essential expertise or equipment – what is normally expected? The likelihood is a lump sum, which is then paid back in fixed, regular instalments over a period of months or years. However, a merchant cash advance works in a very different way. It may entail receiving a lump sum in much the same way as a loan works, but there is no collateral or personal guarantee required to obtain it. Learn more at **Choice Business Loans** website today.

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Launch of void mounted centralised extract unit



Vortice Limited is delighted to introduce the new Vort Platt HCS, compact centralised mechanical ventilation unit into its range. Vortice understands that maintaining a good indoor air quality especially in student accommodation is paramount and has therefore launched the Vort Platt HCS to address many of these requirements. Suitable for a kitchen and two additional wet rooms, this ERP compliant unit is of slimline profile, fitting easily into many void spaces and is self-balancing, therefore installation will be quicker and easier. The Vort Platt HCS also has adjustable humidity sensors which will boost when the relative humidity in the room exceeds a certain level, maintaining a comfortable and healthy internal environment for occupants.

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For those looking for ambience



With PM (particulate matter) pollution grabbing national headlines, **Specflue** is pioneering an alternative heating method for those looking for the ambience of a flickering fire in their living room that offers enhanced eco credentials.

Pellet stoves, such as those manufactured by MCZ, burn compressed wood pellets and boast an impressive efficiency of 90 per cent+. They can also achieve a two thirds reduction in PM 2.5 and PM10 emissions compared to even the latest wood burners.

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Hidden Extra's in New ModuSat XR HIU's - Giving You More for Less!

With over 15 years of HIU supply under their belts, Evinox has unveiled the latest range of ModuSat® XR 'Smart' Heat Interface Units, which provide M&E Contractors and Consulting Engineers with a "whole lot more" for a "whole lot less" due to the myriad of hidden extras.

Smaller, more compact dimensions; the ability to deliver high performance at low primary flow temperatures; TCP/IP communications connectivity; and new, lower output models to allow cost-effective compliance with the latest industry design standards are but a few of the ways Evinox ModuSat XR models offer more features, value and performance - but with less space requirements, lower heat network operating conditions, and less time on site to install, commission, support and maintain - than ever before.

LESS SPACE

The latest ModuSat XR and XR-ECO Twin Plate HIU's have been enhanced to provide the same great performance but in a package requiring 27% less space in the home than before*1. Additionally, units have been "designed by



engineers for engineers", with a real focus on providing flexible pipework connection options, easy access to key components and simple installation and maintenance.

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With the latest GLA planning guidance around carbon factors already causing a stir amongst consulting engineers and specifiers, there is a clear incentive for heat networks to be designed around different heat generation technologies,

which in turn require lower primary flow temperatures. The high efficiency ModuSat XR-ECO models continue to provide impressive heating and domestic hot water performance at primary flow temperatures of 60°C (or even lower), making them the ideal choice for low temperature networks.

SMART, LOWER COST COMMUNICATION NETWORK CONNECTION

Ethernet connectivity comes as a standard feature on all ModuSat units, allowing two-way communications for diagnostics, commissioning and support - as well as metering data - to be accessed across shared building infrastructure.

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And if all that wasn't enough, yet another hidden extra giving Contractors opportunity to reduce costs and risks associated with their heat network installations is Evinox's new 'SmartTalk® Pro' monitoring and diagnostics web portal, which now comes bundled with every ModuSat installation.

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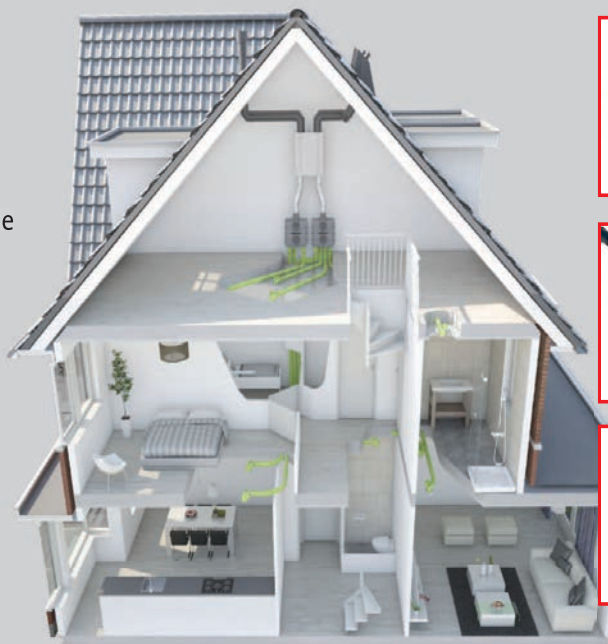
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High performance spray foam insulation for Grade 2 listed barn restoration



Old Mill Barn is a Grade 2 listed building in the conservation area of Standon, Hertfordshire.

Contractors restoring and converting an architecturally significant barn complex in the Hertfordshire village of Standon were faced with a difficult challenge in bringing the 300 year-old structure up to modern thermal performance standards, without compromising the unique and highly original, internal timber frame and external boarded facades.

Old Mill Barn is a Grade 2 listed building, situated close to the River Rib in the conservation area of Standon Village. The owners of the building were granted permission to convert the L-shaped single and two-story structure into a two-bed home and engaged Hertfordshire based conservation contractors, Datum Point Construction to undertake the work.

The barn, which is one of the oldest buildings in the village and thought to date back to the 17th Century, had up until recently, been used as a storage facility. Much of the original

timber frame and external horizontal timber boarded exterior were still in place and in relatively good condition.

The visual appeal of the barn and its contribution to the village setting were influential in its listed status so bringing the building back into use, insulating it to modern standards and restoring its fabric in a sensitive and sustainable way, were priorities for Datum Point Construction.

The barn comprises a traditional internal frame of rough-hewn timbers with an external skin of dark painted weatherboard, set on a low brick plinth. Roofs are pitched, with clay plain tiles and half hips to all gables.

Paul Adams, Construction Director and Project Manager for Datum Point Construction takes up the story. "We've worked on a number of historic building restoration projects and know the challenges that old structures bring. Hardly anything is square, there are gaps all over the place and most of the original

timbers were hand cut and variable in dimension".

Continuing, Paul said, "These factors took us down the route of a spray foam insulation solution rather than using conventional, rigid board material which would be difficult to fit and almost impossible to make the building anywhere near air tight."

Because of the sensitive nature of the Old Mill Barn restoration, Datum Point Construction worked closely with Hertfordshire Building Control and Spray Foam Insulation specialists Icynene, to come up with the most appropriate material to insulate the building.

Clive Phillips, Building Control Officer in charge explains. "Working with Icynene's technical team, it was quickly obvious that an open-cell foam insulation was best for the job, as it gave us outstanding thermal insulation but still allowed the building to breathe so there was no risk of internal condensation"

Insulation sub-contractor, Foam Insulations



Icynene is an open-cell foam with outstanding thermal insulation which allows the building to breathe.

Ltd, applied Icynene's Foam Lite LDC 50 to a thickness of 100mm to all walls and 125mm to the pitched roof areas, achieving U values of 0.32 and 0.29 respectively.

Foam Insulations completed the spraying in one day – fitting in with the tight reconstruction programme required for the wider restoration work.

To satisfy the Conservation Officer requirements, Datum Point Construction stapled a physical breather membrane to the inside of the timber cladding and original posts so that, if any repairs are need to the timber cladding or frame at a later date, it would be easier to separate the from the foam to undertake any required repairs or replacements.

Icynene Foam Lite is a spray applied system that expands instantly on application. It's specifically designed to get into difficult to fill areas where traditional insulation materials just don't work. It closes off gaps and holes, reducing air

leakage, but because it has a soft, yielding texture, it puts only minimal pressure on the building structure.

According to Icynene, air leakage is responsible for up to 40% of a buildings heat loss and the system's ability to close off small structural gaps and service holes, creating a near "sealed box" environment, makes it one of the most efficient and cost-effective means of heat-loss mitigation in a building.

Icynene also points out that, unlike urethane foams of 20 years ago, modern spray foams like Foam Lite use water as the blowing agent. The reaction between the chemical components produces CO² which causes the foam to expand. As the foam expands the cells burst and the CO² is replaced by air.

As a result, Foam Lite has a global warming potential [GWP] of 1 [One] and an ozone depletion potential [ODP] of 0 [Zero]. Furthermore, Icynene does not emit any harmful gasses once

cured and is completely inert.

Restoration work on Old Mill Barn began in September 2018 under the direction of Richard Pedlar Architects of Ware, Hertfordshire and followed a year-long consultation process to achieve the necessary approvals.

According to Paul Adams of Datum Point Construction, "The sensitive and detailed restoration of Old Mill Barns generated a huge amount of attention - so much so that the project has been nominated by Hertfordshire Building Control for the LABC [Local Authority Building Control] Excellence Awards, competing in the category: Best change of use of an existing building or conversion"

The LABC Awards will be presented at the Guildhall London In May 2019.

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

THE BOTTOM LINE ON FLOORBOARD INSULATION

Rob Firman of Polyfoam XPS highlights the key differences between floorboard insulation products, thereby illustrating the importance of correct specification in housebuilding.

Both product specification and the housebuilding sector are constantly evolving. Changes to the planning system are designed to accelerate housebuilding to ensure developers deliver 300,000 new homes a year by 2025 – a stringent target set out by the Government. Not only this, but ongoing budget restraints, land shortages and the ever-changing political climate are putting more and more pressure on housebuilders.

With all these strains, it is important to ensure specifiers make the right decisions during product selection right from the start, and floorboard insulation specification is a key factor in this decision making.

Poorly specified and installed insulation at ground floor stage can create risks onsite, and potentially threaten the effectiveness of the entire build.

Poorly specified and installed insulation can have a detrimental impact on ground floors in residential developments. At best, the floor could be sound but won't meet its intended U-value, and potentially not comply with Building Regulations. At worst, the flooring installation could fail, compromising the sustainability and quality of the entire project.

Installing the 'wrong' insulation board or switching the specification may seem like a small risk, but housing developers should

not underestimate the potential impact it could have – especially at a time when the construction industry is being scrutinised on how it delivers projects, and its quality.

Misconceptions are a big part of this problem, including an assumption that there is a minimal difference between the different types of rigid insulation for ground floors, and that a more thermally-efficient insulation offers better performance in other respects.

In fact, different rigid insulation boards offer different combinations of characteristics, so if one material is specified, but an alternative material is offered, purchased and installed, that other material may not offer the same performance – that's why it's so important to specify and install the correct one. In general, rigid insulation materials are mainly lightweight, plastic-based rigid foam insulations.

In recent years, vacuum insulated panels (VIPs) have begun to offer an alternative to the more common board stock materials. However, these products are best suited to refurbishment projects where the depth of insulation is constrained.

Both phenolic and PIR foams derive some of their long-term thermal performance from aluminium foil facings that restrict the loss of the gas from the foam structure. Protecting those facings is important to ensure they perform for the life of the building – that means keeping water away from the insulation boards, regardless of them being closed cell materials with low rates of water absorption. They should always be installed above the damp proof membrane (DPM), and never laid exposed directly to the ground.

Although expanded polystyrene (EPS) insulation has no facings that are susceptible to damage from alkalis or moisture, its capacity for moisture absorption means it must similarly be installed above the DPM.

EPS is capable of much greater loadbearing capacity than phenolic and PIR foams – but is also made available in lower compressive strengths. Even with compressive strengths exceeding 120 or 140 kPa, manufacturers of phenolic and PIR products can be extremely cautious about offering their insulation for anything



A GREATER AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF PRODUCTS CAN SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE RISKS ONSITE AND MAKE INSTALLATION EASIER

more than domestic and light commercial applications.

Extruded polystyrene (XPS) is an increasingly popular insulation option for specifiers seeking a material that can be used in demanding conditions and applications, and still deliver good thermal performance. XPS insulation is not only thermally-efficient, easy to install and lightweight, but moisture tolerant too.

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

Sustainability is of course an important factor, so housebuilders and developers should look for XPS insulation produced using a blowing agent with zero ozone depletion potential (ODP) and low global warming potential (GWP), and manufactured in a factory with an ISO 14001-accredited environmental management system. Products should also comply with BES 6001 sustainable sourcing and offer Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs).

It's not hard to see why confusion can arise regarding insulation specification and



installation. However, a greater awareness and understanding of insulation products can significantly reduce risks onsite and make installation easier.

It's important to value the thermal and loadbearing performance of materials over how much they cost, to ensure ground floor

construction performs as expected. And, if a product substitution can't be avoided, make sure the same material type is used with an equivalent performance.

Rob Firman is technical and specification manager at Polyfoam XPS

New ultra-thin A2 aerogel insulation



The **A. Proctor Group**, renowned for providing high-quality membrane solutions for controlling the heat, air and moisture movement in buildings (HAMM), has launched a new vapour permeable insulation, which offers superior thermal performance and fire protection behind cladding. Spacetherm® Slentex A2 is the result of

extensive research and development to produce a vapour permeable insulation with an A2 fire rating classification. The new insulation is classified as Class A2, s1 – d0 according to the Euroclass system, which classifies the reaction to fire performance of building products. Spacetherm Slentex A2 is a flexible, high-performance, silica aerogel-based insulation material of limited combustibility suitable for use in exterior and interior applications.

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com

Passivhaus estate constructed with Kingspan



The **Kingspan TEK Building System** is providing a precise offsite building solution for one of the country's largest Passivhaus developments in Bowthorpe, Norwich. After reviewing the market offering to achieve the demanding

fabric requirements of the Passivhaus Standard, it was concluded that the Kingspan TEK Building System was the best solution for the project on the basis of technical specification and value offered. Kingspan TEK Building System panels can achieve U-values of 0.20 – 0.17 W/m².K, or better 'out of the box'. With the addition of an additional layer of insulation, the site team were able to further improve the thermal performance of the external walls – achieving a final external wall U-value as low as 0.09 W/m².K.

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Sundolitt's XPS and EPS insulation is ideal for all domestic floor applications, offering a comprehensive range of sizes and specifications. Sundolitt EPS Flooring is BBA-approved, offers high thermal performance and is moisture resistance. A highly versatile material, Sundolitt EPS satisfies Building Regulations for all construction flooring applications. Sundolitt is seeing growth in both EPS and XPS for domestic flooring, where there has been a shift from PIR insulation with specific interest in our EPS Climate low Lambda material, which offers improved thermal performance with lower U Values as a value-engineered alternative. Offering outstanding load-bearing characteristics, high moisture resistance and exceptional thermal performance, Sundolitt's XPS is also ideal for domestic floor applications. Neither EPS or XPS will degrade over time and both ensure that the building will continue to perform as expected for its full-service life. Sundolitt is committed to providing insulation solutions that benefit customers through quality, on time supply, overall cost effectiveness and dedication to support environmentally-friendly products. All sites are accredited to global Quality Management Standard BS EN ISO 9001:2008 and operate the EC Eco Management ISO 14001 and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

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The Curvaceous DS506



The DS506 shower screen is the latest screen from **AQATA**. Created from a seamless span of 8mm glass, it is the ideal way to introduce the essence of a boutique hotel into a bijoux bathroom.

This continuous single flowing curve can be used with a shower tray but is equally suitable for wet rooms.

Available in clear or grey glass, additional touches of glamour can be added with alternative finishes including chrome, gold, polished nickel, brushed nickel or matte black.

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Cleverly designed CANDOR-S tap from BLANCO



One of the stunning designs from **BLANCO's** stainless steel tap portfolio is the CANDOR-S which features a brushed steel finish. The tap has a high-arched curved spout with a cleverly concealed pull-out hand spray; perfect for

washing up and preventing splashes around the sink area. The design also includes a vertical "off" position for the lever which allows the tap to be situated against a wall with space for wide sink models and splashbacks. The CANDOR-S tap has a basic setting of the control lever to cold start. For further information on **BLANCO UK**, please visit their website.

www.blanco.co.uk

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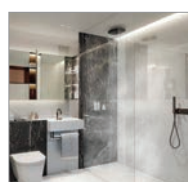


The **A. Proctor Group's** Spacetherm Aerogel Blanket has been selected for its superior thermal performance, flexibility and suitability for space-critical applications in an impressive £14m development of Bristol Waterfront apartments. Grégoire Capron,

Project Lead at AWW explains: "We chose to use Spacetherm Aerogel Blanket from the A. Proctor Group, a high-performance insulation blanket, capable of achieving extremely low U-values, whilst providing us with the flexibility required to work around doors, window reveals, and walls with minimum loss of space." With a thermal conductivity of 0.015 W/mK, Spacetherm Aerogel's performance credentials qualify it as one of the best insulation materials available worldwide.

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Perfect solution for a luxury en suite wet room



Creating a stunning wetroom in a luxury ensuite bathroom has never been easier, thanks to the highly versatile and flexible Modular Wet-Floor System from **CCL Wetrooms**, one of the UK's leading Wetroom Specialists. The system allows any size or shape of wet room to be configured quickly and easily on a timber floor. The key to the Modular

Wet-Floor is its design flexibility, which enables a stunning linear drain to be situated in almost any position within the shower area. As the trend towards longer and narrower grills along the shower wall continues, the Modular Wet Floor System is the ideal option for creating a stunning, contemporary wetroom, in even the smallest of en-suites.

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EXTRAORDINARY ENSUITES

Chris Tranter of Bristan explores how housebuilders can harness the possibilities in ensuites using showers to entice prospective buyers.

According to Direct Line, an ensuite can add as much as 5 per cent to the value of a house, with 70 per cent of estate agents reporting that an extra bathroom can help to sell a house – likely a serious consideration for forward thinking buyers.

Equally, with a whole generation of younger people choosing to rent rather than purchase, there is still a major opportunity for those buying to let. In fact, the number of people residing in private rental accommodation has more than doubled over the past decade to 4.7 million, the equivalent of 20 per cent of all households.

And, given that many are renting well into their thirties, private washroom space like an ensuite is a luxury which many believe is well worth paying for, making it a key feature for prospective landlords, and as such should be a serious consideration for housebuilders and developers.

When it comes to designing the perfect ensuite, the shower is often seen as the centrepiece of the space. With this in mind, it's vital to select an option which not only offers ease of fit, but provides style and safety too.

ELECTRIC SHOWERS

Historically, electric showers were seen as unglamorous, necessity products. Often likened to 'a kettle on the wall', these nondescript white boxes were unlikely to wow potential buyers and often did not fit with the stylish overall aesthetic of modern developments.

Today however, there are design-led options which tick all of the boxes for developers and buyers alike. These contemporary models feature a host of buyer-friendly options, including warm-up modes and digital displays, as well as practical benefits such as thermostatic control for a safe showering experience, and 'eco' modes which help cut down on water usage, and therefore utility bills (another bonus for landlords offering rent inclusive of bills).

In terms of ease of fit, many electric models now include multiple water and cable entry points for flexibility of siting, and reduced labour time on site.

CONCEALED VALVE SHOWERS

Favoured in recent years for their minimalist look, UK homeowners love a concealed

shower valve. The sleek, understated design of concealed options is a real crowd-pleaser, and the flexibility allowed by concealed shower valves allows for a range of fixture pairings, such as fixed heads, handsets and body jets.

This is reflected in market research from MTW, which shows the concealed valve sector outperforming the shower market as a whole, and double-digit growth predicted up to 2022. The reasons for this, aside from obvious aesthetic considerations, link to wider minimalist bathroom trends, for example frameless shower enclosures,

AN ENSUITE CAN ADD AS MUCH AS 5 PER CENT TO THE VALUE OF A HOUSE, WITH 70 PER CENT OF ESTATE AGENTS REPORTING THAT AN EXTRA BATHROOM CAN HELP TO SELL A HOUSE



wetrooms and low profile trays.

Traditionally, however, concealed valves could be troublesome for developers, as all too often the size of the shower valve is not considered early enough in the process, and is discovered to be too large for the wall cavity.

Fortunately, there are now solutions available on the market which cater to even the slimmest cavity areas. When choosing a concealed valve, options are available which can be fitted into cavities as small as 35 mm, the tightest space likely to be found in a UK home. Valve adjustability is also an important feature, as this provides the necessary flexibility to ensure the perfect fit every time.

BAR SHOWERS

Another excellent ensuite option is the bar shower. Unobtrusive and timeless, a bar shower is a classic choice which is stylish enough to please home-hunters, and sturdy enough to reassure prospective landlords.


What's more, from an installation perspective, recent advancements have made fitting bar units quicker and easier than ever. For example, wallmounts have recently entered the market which are able to isolate the water supply on the wall with just the turn of a screw, allowing for quick and easy fit, retro-fit and maintenance.

This enables housebuilders to save time and labour costs while also negating the potential for any water damage during installation. As these wallmounts are able to isolate the water supply on the wall, the bar shower itself needn't be fitted until a later stage of the build process, protecting it from potential damage or paint splatter while work is still ongoing in the bathroom.

For housebuilders looking to add something extra special to their developments, and who wish to present buyers – whether they be prospective landlords or home hunters – with a tempting investment proposition, a design-led ensuite can be the perfect solution. Finding the perfect shower not only adds the wow factor to an ensuite, but also saves on time and resources.


Chris Tranter is Bristan's senior product manager

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Be inspired by kitchens from Keller Kitchens



Keller has launched its brand new Kitchen Inspiration brochure for 2019 which showcases its varied range of high-quality models. To receive a copy of the stunning brochure, visit Keller's website where a PDF version can be downloaded. Alternatively, a hard copy of the

brochure can be found at a local Keller dealer which can be found via the dealer locator on the website. The easy-to-navigate brochure depicts beautiful imagery of stylish kitchens and focuses on the details such as handle trims and lacquer cabinetry. Allowing homeowners plenty of choice, the brochure lays out the different models and handles, and the range of colours from all of Keller's collections in an easy-to-read layout.

www.kellerkitchens.com

New colour and size options for Nexsys



Kaldewei Nexsys shower surface is now available in 17 colours and 20 dimensions, with three surface finishes and five stylish design covers offering around 5,000 possible combinations for individual bathroom design. The Kaldewei Nexsys combines the best of two worlds – all the advantages of an enamelled shower surface with

the modern design of a shower channel. A characteristic design feature of the Nexsys is its narrow waste channel with a minimalist look that fits almost seamlessly into the enamelled shower surface. Four new surface colours for the high-end design cover accentuate the aesthetic appeal and quality of the exclusive waste channel made of Kaldewei steel enamel.

01480 498053 www.kaldewei.co.uk

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www.mirashowers.co.uk/professional

Commodore Kitchens Cook Up Something Special for Wood Wharf

Commodore Kitchens, the specialist in kitchens for the high end residential development sector, has completed installation of the kitchens for phase 1 of Wood Wharf, a new district within London's Canary Wharf.

A residential-led development from Canary Wharf Group Plc, Wood Wharf will comprise 3,300 new homes, along with almost two million sq ft of high quality commercial accommodation and 490,000 sq ft of retail, hospitality and community spaces.

Phase 1 of the residential development involves a variety of one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments and studios across four individually-designed blocks, with properties constructed for private sale or rent.

Commodore Kitchens worked with the development's design team to develop a kitchen scheme that complements the interior design and layout of the apartments, while providing a scalable solution that can be modified to fit the dimensions and floorplan of the varied apartment types.

Materials have been chosen to offer a timeless neutral palette of natural hues and crisp white surfaces, with an emphasis on



texture and quality. Consequently, natural oak cupboards contrast with marble worktops and splash backs, creating a sense of quality and style.

The kitchens have also been designed by Commodore Kitchens to emphasise a sense of space, with a slim line and minimalist aesthetic. Handleless cupboard doors maintain a smooth, sheer line, with integrated appliances installed flush to the doors. Meanwhile, the slim profile of the marble worktops and splashbacks adds a

delicate touch.

The look has been completed with contemporary chrome sinks and taps along with feature lighting to help zone the space.

Commodore Kitchens has delivered a turnkey kitchen design, build and installation service for the project, working with the main contractor's programme to schedule the work.

01375 382323

www.commodorekitchens.co.uk

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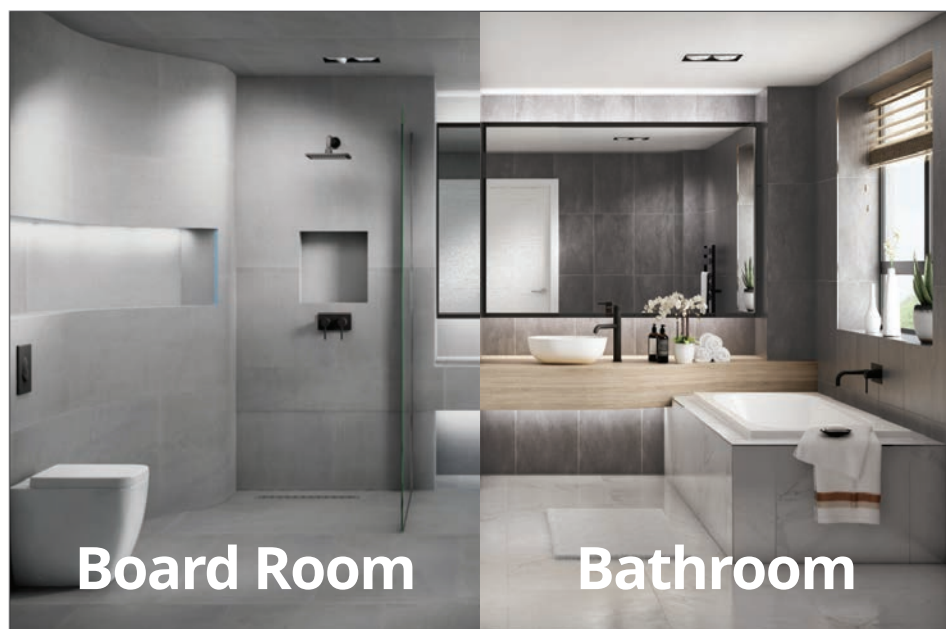
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Launch of Kinedo Kinespace shower enclosures



The new Kinedo Kinespace range of elegant and discrete shower cubicles from **Saniflo UK** is designed to make fitting shower enclosures swift and easy, while delivering a high-quality product with a 10-year warranty. Available in four sizes, chrome profiles feature across the range with some versions also available in statement black or 'on trend' copper. Numerous configurations are possible

including quadrant, recessed and corner options with pivot or sliding doors whilst fixed panels enable customisation for extra flexibility. At two metres high with 6mm or 8mm glass, some Kinespace enclosures feature an optional central frosted panel on the glass.

020 8842 0033 www.saniflo.co.uk

Just the Ticket for Housebuilders



Vent-Axia's Lo-Carbon Sentinel Kinetic Cooker Hood combines a cooker hood with mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) unit in one. The unit works seamlessly as an MVHR unit supplying energy efficient ventilation to the home and, when the cooker hood is needed, it is simply pulled out to provide a purge of

cooker fumes. "The Sentinel Kinetic Cooker Hood is a great addition to smaller homes, offering whole house ventilation combined with extraction during cooking all in one unit, saving valuable space and improving IAQ" said Jordan Lilford, Product Manager at Vent-Axia. "And as you would expect from Vent-Axia, it is very energy efficient and effective, as well as offering a host of additional features such as summer bypass and a humidity sensor."

0844 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com



Keep safe with Premdor's SoundSecure doorsets

Specifically created to meet the complex and demanding Building Regulations relating to apartment internal entrance locations, **Premdor's** SoundSecure apartment entrance doorsets fully comply with all performance and legislative requirements where security, fire and noise reduction performance are of paramount importance. Carrying Secured by Design approval and available in FD30 and FD60 fire doors, in a choice of four standard door widths, Premdor SoundSecure doorsets come with a three point espagnolette locking system, CE marked steel security hinges, chrome lever handles, security chain and eye viewer as standard, to prioritise safety in any home. Available in standard flush veneers, moulded panel or the exclusive Portfolio veneer door designs, SoundSecure doorsets offer practical reassurance whilst simultaneously delivering a stylish aesthetic.

With an installation guide available online via the Premdor downloads section and an installation video available on Premdor's YouTube channel, the company's SoundSecure doorset is more accessible than ever.

For more information about Secured by Design doorsets fit for the job, take a look at Premdor's dedicated SoundSecure brochure or call 0844 209 0008.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUTH3CUzNfs&t=140s> www.premdor.co.uk/catalogue

Vicaima add to Danish inspired design ethos for Crest Nicholson

Vicaima's innovative and stylish interior door models have been selected to compliment a new concept in housing from Crest Nicholson, at their Hygge Park development in Keynsham near Bristol, where the essence of Danish inspired design has been captured.

It may be hundreds of miles from its Nordic roots, but homes on Crest Nicholson's Hygge Park site embody a touch of Danish design prospective. Hygge, which means comfort, relaxing and wellbeing, in fact enjoying life's simple pleasures; is evident throughout this development. Innovative interior house layouts create bright and airy spaces, where open plan living and the clever use of glazing is used to maximise light. Contemporary design and designer fittings mark this development out as

a new chapter for quality UK homes.

Blending seamlessly with this modern and light theme are the Vicaima doors chosen by Crest as the perfect opening between selected room spaces. In keeping with Crest's forward approach to house design, they chose Vicaima Dekordor SD White Woodgrain interior doors. These doors have hard wearing faces and a bright white factory finished face; that displays a discrete, but visible woodgrain appearance. To enhance the design even further, Crest selected a number of options from Vicaima's extensive customisation offering. These included the incorporation of two attractive satin inlays in a vertical pattern and, where additional light was required, a full-length glazed design.

Dekordor White Woodgrain is fast becoming the door of choice for modern housing schemes, offering as it does a twenty first century alternative to doors painted on site, with a durable and cost effective solution. Ideal when supplied simply as a door or as part of a complete doorset system, Dekordor white woodgrain is available in various core constructions and a range of dimensional variations.

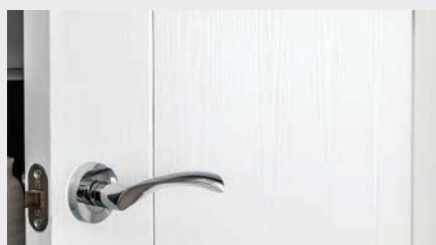
White Woodgrain is just one in a wide



selection of foil-faced finishes from the extensively specified, Vicaima Dekordor SD range. Popular for decades, Vicaima foils have recently been extended further, to include Visual Sensations. This second-generation foil collection provides trend-setting ideas with a whole host of new tones ranging from Pale Sand to the dark hues of Forest and Mountain and all available in either a vertical or cross-directional woodgrain design.

As demonstrated in the choices made by Crest Nicholson, solid core interior doors from many of the Vicaima ranges can also be enhanced by including additional face embellishments, in the form of grooves and inlays. These simple but effective add-ons elevate door design to another level and present a real opportunity to realise a specific vision or design mood for any given project.

01793 532333 www.vicaima.com



The Future is Permeable

New legal requirements for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) on developments across Wales apply from January, heralding wider use of concrete block permeable paving. Meanwhile, the trade association Interpave has published the new Edition 7 of its definitive guidance to this essential SuDS technique – ‘Design and Construction of Concrete Block Permeable Pavements’ – now available to download from the website.

The Welsh Government has now implemented Schedule 3 of the 2010 Flood and Water Management Act. This includes the establishment of a SuDS Approving Body (SAB) within each local/unitary authority, alongside its lead local flood authority duty. SAB approval will be required before construction of drainage systems can commence on new and redeveloped sites.

The Welsh National Standards point out that: “The SuDS approach mimics natural drainage, managing surface runoff at or close to the surface and as close to its source as practicable, controlling the flow ... and providing a range of additional benefits.” By its very nature, concrete block permeable paving is uniquely placed to meet these requirements, as an attractive, surface-based, multifunctional SuDS technique.

Interpave’s new ‘Design and Construction of



Concrete Block Permeable Pavements’ guidance covers the most recent permeable paving techniques, such as overlays to existing road constructions and enhanced, predictable water storage using flow controls. It can be downloaded from Interpave’s new website – an essential resource covering all aspects of

design with precast concrete paving, including an inspirational project gallery and case studies, supported by background information for all design stages, as well as for CPD.

0116 232 5170
www.paving.org.uk



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'Hero' furniture range offers style, function and sustainability for all seasons

Plaswood has launched a range of picnic tables called 'Hero' that twin style with sustainability to help transform external spaces with elegant but durable statement furniture.

The new, lighter weight range of Plaswood tables is made from 100 per cent recycled plastic and boasts a unique new design that allows for easier assembly with a semi-fabricated option.

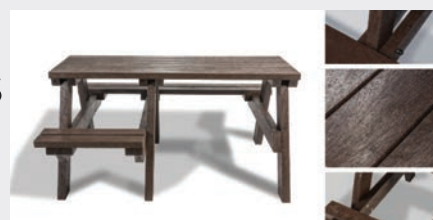
The new range reduces manufacturing offcuts waste by a whopping 90 per cent making the furniture even more sustainable whilst providing landscape professionals, local authority specifiers, garden centres, builder's merchant buyers and outdoor hospitality managers with a product that is re-made with the environment in mind. Hence the name 'Hero' range.

The new range also taps into the rising trend across the UK and mainland Europe for more outdoor entertainment and communal public spaces. The Hero tables maximise flexibility, coming in elegant rectangular or curvaceous circular forms, including playful touches such as activity table tops for children. The series has a clean design ethos and stylish finishing.

As Katherine Lorek-Wallace, Plaswood General Manager explains: "A key objective of the Hero range was to increase the products' environmental credentials, by minimising waste and reducing product weight – for a user-friendly assembly process, and we succeeded. Our innovative approach allowed us to develop a new range of picnic tables that offer a 15 per cent weight saving on a standard A frame table and 40 per cent on the round table design. This makes the process more efficient from the manufacturing point of view and gives a welcoming quality to customers looking to enhance their outdoors spaces with a maintenance free, stylish furniture piece holding strong environmental credentials."

The family of furniture includes: an adult and junior size picnic table, activity top tables, a round family size picnic table and a wheelchair access table.

Plaswood has proved its pioneering flair with this latest range. All items come fully or semi-assembled and can be fabricated in three easy steps. The round picnic table, for example, is now available part assembled, reducing the amount of space required for transportation from four to one pallet space. The wheelchair



access table is also available semi-assembled at a competitive price.

Plaswood is part of the RPC bpi group and is one of Europe's leading plastics recyclers focusing on sustainability, innovation, the highest ethical standards and dedication to its customer's need.

Plaswood's second life products support and develop the circular economy whilst promoting plastic recycling. Manufactured in Dumfries by RPC bpi recycled products, Plaswood demonstrates the value of recycled plastic products, their versatility, aesthetic potential and functionality.

Products made from Plaswood require no annual maintenance, painting or chemical treatment prior to installation or during its long-life time, and does not leach chemicals, rot or splinter. Plaswood offers a sustainable, cost-effective and innovative alternative to traditional wooden, steel or concrete products.

0333 202 6800 www.plaswoodgroup.com



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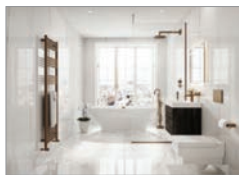
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Complete colour coordination from Abacus



Abacus Bathrooms has developed a unique portfolio of stunning brassware and accessories so that retailers and designers can offer a completely colour matched scheme in the bathroom. With colour taking a subtle centre stage in bathrooms today, Abacus has introduced four stylish contemporary

finishes – chrome, bronze, nickel and black – which will be available across three popular brassware ranges as well as accessories such as towel rails, wetroom glass, valves and traps. Abacus is one of the only suppliers in the UK to offer such a wide choice in terms of product and colour in popular ranges. The new colours are available in brassware ranges Iso, Ki and Plan.

www.abacus-bathrooms.co.uk

Stelrad at Housing 2019



Stelrad Radiators is at Housing 2019 exhibiting its wide range of radiators that make it the ideal 'one stop shop' for all things radiators at the show.

As well as its leading range of Low Surface Temperature radiators, you can touch and feel

its market leading Compact and Elite designs, and radiators from its leading Vita and Softline ranges.

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Hadley Group to bring steel framing solutions to Housing 2019

Hadley Group will be showcasing its high-performance light gauge steel framing solutions for low rise residential and social housing on Stand F41 at Housing 2019, taking place on 25-27 June at Manchester Central. The world leader in advanced cold rolled steel technology will be exhibiting at the highly anticipated housing event of the year, offering in-depth technical advice and practical product insight into how their light gauge steel framing solutions can benefit the likes of housing associations, local authorities, housebuilders and developers. Visitors to stand F41 will be able to learn more about Hadley Group's steel framing housing solution which offers a fast track and lightweight system, suitable for stick built or pre-panelised construction. Pre-panelised, stand-alone frame structures are a lighter and easier to erect alternative to steel or concrete primary frames, which in turn enables faster build turnaround times. The components are designed, detailed and manufactured at the company's advanced production facility then delivered to site, ideal for housing schemes with high volume requirements and for projects where space is limited on site. Chris Holleron, Group Product Manager – Housing, said: "By visiting our stand, visitors will be able to discover the benefits of light gauge steel framing solutions in housing and how we can support them with their next project."

0121 555 1300 www.hadleygroup.com



Lightweight Grassroof Alternative

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/m² providing an easy to install and maintain green solution.

Grass Concrete Ltd has over 40 years of supply of environmental construction products: ground level permeable grass paving Grasscrete, Grassblock and Grassroad, vertical landscaping BetoConcept and now a new Grassroof product.

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SHOW PREVIEW

MEET THE HOUSING SECTOR'S KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN MANCHESTER

Housing 2019, the Chartered Institute of Housing's colourful annual event is billed as "Europe's largest housing festival" – it takes place from 25 – 27 June at Manchester Central

Visitor registration for Housing 2019 is open, and the show's organisers are looking forward to welcoming delegates to Manchester in June. With 450+ speakers, 400+ key exhibitors, 12 streams of innovative content and a footfall of over 12,000 decision makers across three days, it is the biggest meeting place for the whole of the housing sector.

Ranked as "a global leader for the delegate experience," according to the organisers, Housing has taken place for 70 years in the UK and provides a platform for key stakeholders to "come together to discuss, debate, partner, learn and improve the lives of the people we house."

In 2019, alongside the Ministerial address, keynotes and masterclasses, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) will focus on 'red hot topics' including affordability, business transformation, leadership, technology, offsite construction, placemaking, fire safety, finance, politics and, of course, housing management, welfare reform and homelessness.

Housing 2019 is set to be the biggest and best yet, with new, exciting additions such as:

- MMC (Modern Methods of Construction) stage
- Drag queen karaoke (as part of the 'alternative street party')
- Homelessness hackathon

As well as the new additions, all visitors' favourites are back in 2019 too, as listed below.

THE HOUSING SECTOR'S 'MOST PROVOCATIVE & ALTERNATIVE THEATRE'

Unafraid to challenge the industry, the award-winning Fringe hosts creative and fun sessions on

the sector's most pressing issues with strictly no PowerPoint, jargon or cliché. This year's theme is alternative street party!

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Housing is the must-attend event for local authorities, housing associations, key partners and suppliers, government, housebuilders and developers. It brings the sector together to drive forward collectively.



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Baufritz and the use of Timber as the primary building material for a carbon positive house



Baufritz has been researching the development of healthy and ecological homes since the 1970s. Throughout the manufacturing process Baufritz minimises their carbon emissions. As a result, the eco home pioneer has been building carbon positive homes for over 15 years. In 1996 Baufritz was the first German construction company to ratify the independent EMAS (Eco-Management & Audit Scheme) 'EU Eco Audit'. However reducing carbon emissions is only part of the story.

The materials used to build ecological homes must be a consideration. Baufritz strongly believes that eco homes should create a healthy living environment for the occupants. Timber is one of our most traditional construction materials and has a key role to play when it comes to building ecological pre-fabricated homes. Timber buildings are less carbon intensive to manufacture, transport and erect than traditional construction materials. Therefore, increasing the use of timber construction in their buildings reduces the carbon impact.

Baufritz homes have a carbon positive rating, because they lock away more CO² than is emitted during their manufacture, transportation and construction. They are able

to achieve this because timber is their primary building material. Timber is able to store vast amounts of CO², which is absorbed from the atmosphere during photosynthesis. The CO² is then locked into the fabric of the building. The CO² would normally be released into the atmosphere when the tree naturally decomposes. Baufritz houses are a great carbon capture system. By manufacturing the houses off-site in a modern factory, they ensure the production methods are highly CO² efficient and that natural building components where possible are used.

The carbon balance in an average Baufritz house is approximately 50 tonnes positive. This means that if the house is run efficiently using, for example, a combination of gas and solar power, the house will take around 75 years to consume the locked in CO² and become carbon neutral.

But how does a Baufritz carbon positive house compare to a net zero carbon house as set out by the new Code for Sustainable Homes? The definition of net zero carbon in this instance focuses largely on the running costs of the house once built and places minimal emphasis on the amount of embodied energy already in the building (which has the most significant

impact on the environment). Baufritz's carbon positive homes take into account the additional carbon emissions generated during manufacture, construction and transport - a more realistic measure. Equally a carbon positive house is not necessarily a carbon zero house unless the customer invests in the necessary electrical and heating systems.

To achieve zero net carbon status, there is a need to rely on emerging technology such as photovoltaic power, wind power and microgeneration. Not only will the cost of these technologies push up the price for the consumer, but as yet their efficiency and durability in the long term has not been adequately tested. This over reliance on technology means that should a failure occur in a net carbon zero compliant building it would immediately become carbon negative, hence the need to create a positive carbon balance in the first place to allow for the inevitable breakdowns. This makes it all the more important to focus on the CO² performance of the building envelope (walls and roof), rather than solely focusing on add-on technology.

01223 235 632
www.baufritz.co.uk



Celebrating 25 years of excellence in the UK

Simpson Strong-Tie is celebrating 25 years in the UK, helping people build safer, stronger homes and structures. Simpson launched its European operations from well-established beginnings in America, where founder Barclay Simpson created his first joist hanger back in 1956. In 1998 a purpose-built manufacturing facility and head office opened in Tamworth, and subsequent acquisitions in the UK, Germany, France and Denmark have established Simpson as a European industry leader. In 2009 Simpson's UKAS accredited European Testing Laboratory opened, which now conducts over 10,000 product tests annually. Managing Director Malcolm Paulson says, "We believe that if we invest in our people our customers will reap the benefits. In my 14 years in role, I've seen the business grow and flourish. Our range has extended to include engineered structural connectors, fasteners and fastening systems, lateral-force resisting systems and bespoke one-off products."

01827 255 646 www.strongtie.co.uk

Practical points – SterlingOSB Zero



Norbord's SterlingOSB Zero can be used for all the same structural applications that plywood can be used for, and as SterlingOSB Zero is made in the UK, the finished board is very competitively priced as it doesn't have to travel here like plywood does. New SterlingOSB Zero

StrongFix is an OSB panel designed to be used in drylining applications. It is simple to fit, highly versatile and ideal for fixing cabinets, radiators, wash basins, railings and other heavy fixtures to stud walls. It is cut to size to fit within c-stud sections, has a pre-groove already cut and has zero knots meaning the strength of the board is maintained throughout.

www.norbord.co.uk

FLEXIWork Stretch Shorts for cool comfort



While fabric, functionality and fit are hallmarks of Snickers Workwear, it's the innovation and fabric technology in the design of the new FlexiWork Stretch Shorts for men and women that really set these new garments apart. These shorts are great for working in the warmer months. Delivering superior flexibility and comfort, these lightweight work shorts come in a hi-tech body-mapping design and are made from a self-ventilating stretch fabric

with Cordura reinforcements for all-round mobility and durability when you need it most. As well as being street-smart with men's and women's designs, they're packed with comfort and functionality and specially designed for the fast-paced professional who's always on the go.

www.snickersworkwear.co.uk

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