



Patrick Mooney:  
Despite concerted  
efforts, the rise in  
homelessness levels is  
a "national disgrace"



Case study: How  
Canary Wharf Group  
achieved its first  
homes for social rent  
at Lollard Street



Industry News: Public  
Accounts Committee  
casts doubt on the  
achievability of  
housing targets

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James Parker

# FROM THE EDITOR

For a profession which affects so many people's lives, the housebuilding industry is a strikingly under-regulated one. It might be argued that GPs, who train for eight years, have a more direct effect on their 'customers', but houses can have a major impact on health – in fact it's a link that's increasingly recognised.

From how well they deal with moisture, or overheating, or simply address safety concerns, houses are fundamental to the quality of human life. Of course, the quality of their construction can also negatively hit consumers financially too, with poor attention to detail leading to remedial measures, or money lost from higher than expected fuel bills. Doctors are required to prove they are equipped to undertake work safely, why not builders?

Currently, anyone can set up as builder, virtually overnight. This stark fact was reiterated at the Federation of Master Builders' launch of a major initiative to introduce a mandatory, legally-enforced licensing scheme, which some have argued is long overdue.

The FMB has aligned with a powerful Task Force to create this scheme. It also includes the Association of Consultancy and Engineering, the British Property Federation, the Chartered Institute of Building, Construction Products Association, Building Control, RICS, TrustMark and Which? As is par for the course with the FMB, it has the ear of MPs – essential as the group hopes to introduce legislation soon that will set this scheme in stone. Whether or not it will happen during the current Brexit impasse of course remains unclear.

Liz Peace, who chairs the Task Force, commented that "quality and professionalism is in some areas falling short. What we're trying to do is increase protection for the ordinary person who engages with the construction sector." According to FMB research, a third of homeowners are avoiding commissioning work completely due to worries about the quality of service they may receive.

The FMB believes most of the industry will welcome this move towards a mandatory bar that firms must jump over before they can begin selling their services. At the same time however, the industry is facing a huge post-recession shortage of (particularly SME) building firms, as it confronts the Government's stated aim of 300,000 houses per year by the mid-2020s. Bars to entry to the industry such as well-intentioned regulation need to be very carefully designed so they don't put new firms off entering the industry at all.

In the wake of the Public Accounts Committee's report saying the 300,000 homes target looks unlikely while local authorities fail to deliver housing plans, and infrastructure lags behind, mandatory licensing may just seem like another obstacle to avoid. However, it may not be avoidable.

*James Parker*

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## ON THE COVER



07.19

### HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER



#### A COOL HEATING IDEA FOR STEVENAGE SCHEME

Park Place, a 200-apartment scheme, includes a novel approach to sustainable heating

Park Place, Stevenage  
Image courtesy of Yourkeys  
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# Housing targets at risk, report reveals

"Inherent problems" at the heart of the planning system are likely to jeopardise the 300,000 homes a year target, according to the report 'Planning and the broken housing market' from the HOC Committee of Public Accounts.

The report acknowledges that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (the Department) has made some recent reforms to the planning system, but states that much more needs to be done, with the Department still not having a detailed implementation plan for how it will scale-up housebuilding.

The committee welcomed the Department's aim for a 'plan-led system,' but reports that local authorities are struggling to produce local plans showing how many, where and what types of homes are needed in their areas.

According to the report, fewer than half of authorities have an up to date local plan, and the Department has been "reluctant to take decisive action."

It also reiterates that new housing developments will need supporting infrastructure in place. While the Department estimates that £12bn a year should come from public sources – with the rest coming from developers – the report states that local authorities often "find it difficult to navigate complex negotiations with developers who are too often able to negotiate lower contributions to infrastructure."

## £142m infrastructure fund released

A £142m investment in infrastructure is set to deliver new homes in growing communities, as part of the wider £5.5bn Housing Infrastructure Fund previously announced by the Government.

The money is to be spent on widening bridges, building roads and connecting utilities so up to 8,500 properties can be built. £95m is to be invested in Woking, Surrey,

which will unlock land to build up to 4,500 homes in the town.

An extra 4,000 homes will be built as a result of a £47m investment in new road links in Truro, Cornwall.

Housing Minister Kit Malthouse commented: "We are driving to create homes, opportunities and thriving communities – and this £142 million investment will mean we can build more of the properties our country so badly needs."

## Khan claims £4.9bn a year is a necessity for affordable London homes



The amount of grant funding required to deliver the affordable homes needed in the capital is £4.9bn a year, according to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan – a figure which is seven times more than the capital currently receives.

The Mayor's current Affordable Homes Programme, launched in 2016, runs until March 2022. Working with the G15 group of London's largest housing associations, councils and experts, City Hall has examined how much grant funding is needed to deliver a 10-year programme to follow this, until 2032. Based on the draft London Plan, which identifies the need and capacity for 65,000 new homes each year, of which 50 per cent should be affordable, the programme aims to deliver 325,000 new affordable homes.

According to Sadiq Kahn, City Hall currently receives around £700m of affordable housing grant per year from the

Government. He believes that delivering this number of new social rented and affordable homes will require significant further subsidy however, with construction costs estimated to increase by 3.4 per cent each year until 2023, alongside inflation and a variable housing market.

Reportedly, before 2008 grant funding consistently covered more than half the cost of a new affordable home. The new analysis highlights however that, since the Coalition Government, it has fallen to much lower levels – now at around 15 to 20 per cent – and that a return to previous funding levels is needed. It's claimed that around 48 per cent of the cost of a new home needing to be covered by public subsidy.

Khan commented: "This analysis shows the vast increase in Government funding required to deliver the affordable homes that Londoners desperately need. City Hall is building record numbers of new council and social homes, but we need far more funding if we are to truly tackle the housing crisis. As a new Prime Minister takes the helm, they must put their money where their mouth is and provide the funding we need to turn this crisis around."

## May calls for housing design standards

New design standards to ensure homes are built to a high quality have been urged by outgoing Prime Minister, Theresa May.

Addressing the Chartered Institute of Housing conference, she also set out the next steps on the Social Housing Green Paper agenda, with an action plan expected in September.

May told the conference: "I cannot defend a system in which owners and tenants are forced to accept tiny homes with inadequate storage, where developers feel the need to fill show homes with deceptively small furniture, and where the lack of universal standards encourages a race to the bottom."

She also welcomed figures indicating that, by autumn, a million homes will have been added in under five years – while warning against complacency: "The housing shortage in this country began not because of a blip lasting one year or one Parliament, but because not enough homes were built over many decades."

May concluded: "The very worst thing we could do would be to make the same mistake again."

# Leaseholds scrapped for all new houses



All new-build houses are to be sold as freehold, and ground rents for new leases are to be reduced to zero, Communities Secretary James Brokenshire announced at the Chartered Institute of Housing conference in Manchester.

A time limit of 15 working days and a maximum fee of £200 for freeholders and managing agents to provide leaseholders with the information they need to sell their home will also be introduced.

Brokenshire said that he has already instructed Homes England to renegotiate Help to Buy contracts to explicitly rule out the selling of new leasehold houses – other than in “exceptional circumstances” – to protect new home buyers from “unscrupulous charges.”

Alongside this, he said that where buyers are incorrectly sold a leasehold home, consumers will be able to get their freehold outright at no extra cost.

Brokenshire told the conference: “We have long recognised that we have a responsibility to confront unfairness in the leasehold market. Last year we consulted on proposals including the leasehold house ban and ground rent reduction.

“Today I can confirm we will go ahead with our original plan to reduce ground rents on future leases to zero, as opposed to a cap of £10 per year.

“And we will legislate to ensure that in the future – save for the most exceptional circumstances – all new house will be sold on a freehold basis.”

## Residential contracts see slowdown

A slowdown in the residential sector has been revealed in a regional analysis of construction contract awards.

The ‘Regional Construction Hotspots in Great Britain 2019’ report from Barbour ABI and the Construction Products Association



(CPA) has analysed the value of contracts in regions across residential, infrastructure and commercial sectors, identifying ‘hotspots’ and ‘coldspots’ as pockets of growth or contraction over the near-term.

While the report shows ‘coldspots’ in the residential sector outnumbered ‘hotspots’ in 2018, it also shows that unlike previous years there were no residential ‘coldspots’ in London, which according to the CPA suggests that the slowdown in house price growth and consequent diminution in developer appetite is spreading out across the country.

As well as growth in residential, Scotland and the South East saw growth in contract awards in commercial and infrastructure, contrasting the slowdown in construction new orders on a national level. Growth in Scotland was in large part down to the Moray Firth offshore wind farm (£1.8bn) and the Highland main line phase 2 (£250m) – two of the country’s largest infrastructure contract awards in 2018. The South East’s hotspots were driven by the £25m Buckholt Lane business park in East Sussex, as well as airport and smart motorway improvements for Gatwick Airport and smaller-scale office redevelopments in the counties surrounding London.

Rebecca Larkin, senior economist at the CPA, commented: “A cooling in house price growth has formed residential coldspots across the country and despite the government’s demand side stimulus and ambitious supply side goals, a slowdown in activity in a market dominated by private sector housebuilders may not be avoided.

“In addition, Brexit-related uncertainty means investors are still wary of committing to large upfront outlays. Illustrating this, construction on Spire London, the largest residential contract award in 2018 by some way, has been paused for review given the significant weakening in prevailing market conditions, particularly for high-end property in the capital.”

# Give temporary workers access to training funds, says REC

An estimated 960,000 temporary workers could benefit from better skills training if the Government let them access the training funds their agencies pay to the Treasury, according to the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC).

The REC believes that courses which could lead to significant pay rises and higher productivity would be “unlocked” if money paid for the Apprenticeship Levy could also be used on other high quality qualifications as part of a skills levy.

The body has launched a petition that calls for the Government’s Apprenticeship Levy, which it says is poorly designed, inflexible, and doesn’t reflect modern working practices, to be changed to a flexible training levy.

Reportedly, 670 REC members already have £104m of Apprenticeship Levy funds between them going unspent, because it can’t be used to support the temporary workers on their payrolls.

The REC has also launched a new research report, Training for Temps, which provides evidence and statistics to back up the importance of reform.

Neil Carberry, chief executive of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, explained further: “The Apprenticeship Levy was designed with the best of intentions, but everyone knows it is not working as intended. It’s time for reform.

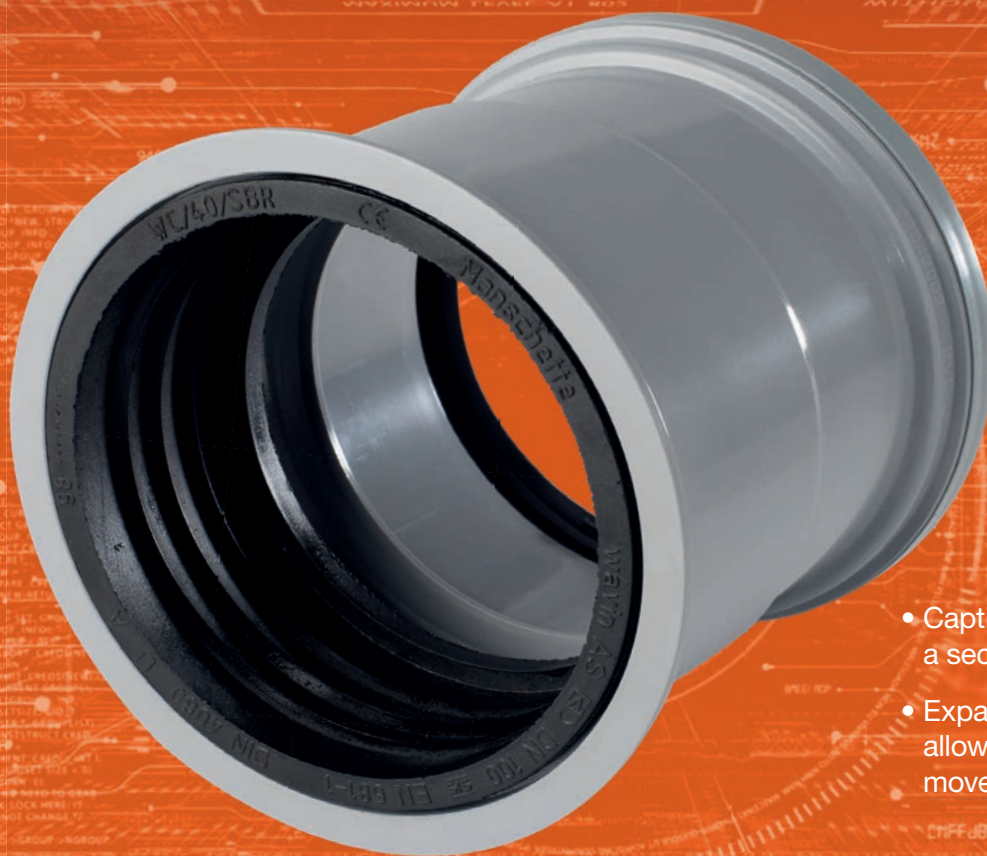
“As we redesign the levy, keeping support in place for apprenticeships matters, but we must end the scandal of locking temporary workers out of the system. Employers are paying a levy for them – but can’t use it to support their development. 95 per cent of REC members who pay the levy cannot use the funds available to them to train their staff.”





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# £150m loan agreed for first Housing Delivery Fund Homes



Homes England and Barclays have agreed £155.3m of loan funding to accelerate the construction of new homes in Wimbledon and Southampton.

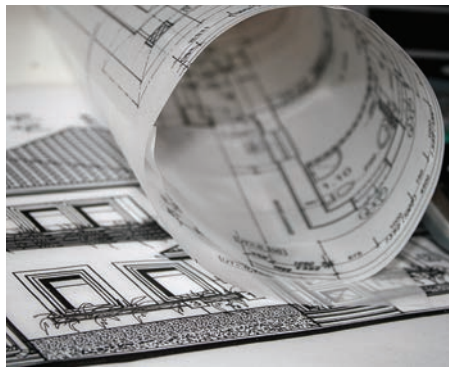
Announced by Housing Minister Kit Malthouse during the CIH Housing Conference in Manchester, the deals are the first to be agreed from the £1bn Housing Delivery Fund announced last year.

In Wimbledon, a total of £150m will be loaned to Merton Catalyst LLP, a JV between housing association Catalyst and developer Galliard. The funding will be used to help bring forward 604 apartments on the hybrid residential-led scheme at the former Wimbledon Greyhound Stadium site in Plough Lane, with the development also involving commercial space, improvements to the public realm and a new sports stadium delivered by AFC Wimbledon.

In Southampton, Cannon Capital Developments will receive a £5.3m loan to convert a former commercial building into 56 apartments for private sale in the city's Ogle Road.

"We recognised the need to get financing to smaller and medium-sized developers to help increase the number of quality homes being constructed," said Dennis Watson, head of Real Estate at Barclays Corporate Banking. "That's why we set up the Housing Delivery Fund with Homes England – to ensure projects like this could become a reality. Hundreds of homes, including affordable housing, are now on their way, but we know there is still more to do."

## Peterborough housing debated at Larkfleet Conference



Around 100 local political and business leaders met to discuss housing and economic development in the region surrounding Peterborough at this year's Larkfleet Conference.

This year's annual event focused on plans for the 'Oxford-Cambridge Arc', a Government development plan. It could include one million new homes by 2050, as well as the supporting transport, communications and economic infrastructure necessary to enable this.

The event was chaired by Lord Taylor of Goss Moor, and the speakers included Larkfleet CEO Karl Hick, head of strategic growth for Homes England Sarah Greenwood, and Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority James Palmer.

The chair told the conference: "We should not be developing new homes that do not meet future standards. The houses we build now will still be around in 50, 100 or more years."

Sarah Greenwood stressed that the Cambridge-Oxford Arc was not just an opportunity to build homes but an opportunity to integrate housing and economic development: "This is an area of enormous economic potential, but we need the right kind of houses in the right places or the economy will decline."

"If people cannot afford to live here, they will go elsewhere," she continued. "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future."

Mayor James Palmer indicated the need for investment in skills as well as housing and jobs. He said that garden villages, creating sustainable new communities, would be the key to delivering the ambitions for the Cambridge-Oxford Arc.

The conference, held at the Great Northern Hotel in Peterborough on 13 June, was organised by the Bourne-based Larkfleet Group of Companies, which includes developers Larkfleet Homes and Allison Homes.

## NHBC names UK's best site managers



Nearly 450 UK site managers have won a Quality Award in the first round of the National House Building Council's (NHBC) Pride in the Job Awards 2019, representing the top 3 per cent of the 16,000 site managers entered.

Each site manager was assessed across these six key areas: consistency, attention to detail, leadership, interpretation of drawings and specifications, technical expertise, and health and safety.

The Quality Award winners will now go on to compete for Seal of Excellence and Regional Awards that will be announced at events across the UK in the autumn, with the Supreme Award winners unveiled at a gala ceremony in January 2020.

Commenting on the awards, NHBC chief executive Steve Wood said: "Launched nearly 40 years ago, Pride in the Job has been instrumental in driving up the quality of new homes. Despite the challenges the industry has faced in recent times, this year's winners have kept their focus on delivering high quality new homes for their customers."

"A site manager's role is undoubtedly one of the toughest in housebuilding, and their drive for excellence is very much at the heart of the competition. Receiving a Quality Award is a great achievement for any site manager. It's no surprise that Pride in the Job winning sites have higher levels of customer satisfaction as these homes are without doubt among the best the UK has to offer."



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# Homes England reappoints Lister as chair



Sir Edward Lister has been reappointed as chair of Homes England.

The appointment term is for three years, and follows the completion of Sir Edward Lister's previous three-year term as Chair of the Agency.

The new chair commented on his appointment: "Homes England has set out an ambitious mission to respond to the housing challenges across England and I am proud to have been reappointed as its chairman.

"I look forward to continuing this work with colleagues across the business and with the wider housing sector, big and small, to deliver the homes this country needs."

As chair, Sir Lister will be responsible for providing effective strategic leadership of the agency.

## Construction salaries rising during skills shortage

Salaries in the construction industry are rising despite Brexit uncertainty, according to new figures.

Research from Randstad Construction, Property & Engineering into almost 6,800 permanent placed construction jobs has revealed that salaries across the sector rose 9 per cent in the last 12 months to 30th May 2018 – despite a drop in the number of vacancies being advertised.

Pay in site management has risen 3 per cent, with average asking salaries rising from £47,100 a year to £48,500 in the 12

months to 31st May. The data shows assistant site managers earning £37,600 per year, with the highest-flying candidates being offered £48,500 a year in London. Site managers have seen their pay rise 3 per cent to £50,500, up from £48,800 the previous year. Average salaries are higher in London, currently sitting at £53,400.

Maintenance engineers have seen salaries rise by 5 per cent, from £31,800 to £33,500. Randstad reported that it has seen maintenance engineers in London secure starting salaries of £47,500 over the course of the last 12 months.

A similar situation is developing in project management, where average pay has risen 8 per cent, from £59,500 to £64,200. Pay for senior project managers has risen 7 per cent, from £75,700 to £80,800.

Site engineers have seen pay rise even further. Average asking salaries have risen 19 per cent, from £37,100 to £44,300 – with the best site engineers in the capital being paid up to £68,700.

Owen Goodhead, managing director of Randstad, commented: "The most important thing to the construction industry is being able to hire, retain and train the talented people we need. That's getting harder as the UK's employment landscape changes in the wake of Brexit."

He concluded: "Given housebuilding and infrastructure building are bright spots in the sector and are continuing to grow, the government needs to ask, who's going to put up these new homes? Who is going to build HS2?"

## 'White paper' calls for industry-wide H&S code

A common code to improve health and safety standards in the UK construction industry has been suggested in a new report from Hilti.

The Construct The Future white paper identifies cross-industry initiatives, led by trade associations and large contractors, as the most effective way to confront the construction sector's future health and safety challenges.

The call for collective action includes the need for a sector-wide health and safety code to improve communication, education and consistency from site to site.

Speaking in the report, Matias Jarnefelt, general manager (Northern Europe) at

Hilti, says: "As much as we can work to mitigate risk, by their very nature, building sites remain dangerous places to work. To promote discussion and drive awareness of the issues, we've consulted at the highest level across the sector to produce this report.

"We wanted to understand what firms see as their most pressing priorities and how they are moving to address them, and we're keen to share these insights with the wider industry for everyone's benefit."

He concluded: "It's clear from speaking with the industry leaders involved that there is not enough consistency across jobsites, and only by committing to shared practices, will we ensure that all UK construction workers are able to go home safe from each shift."

The white paper brings together expert opinion from across the sector, including contributions from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and firms such as Mace, Arcadis and Morgan Sindall.

## Government reports rise in affordable units

An increase in the number of affordable homes being built in England has been reported in Homes England's annual housing statistics.

Between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019, there were 45,692 new houses started on site under programmes managed by Homes England, and 40,289 houses completed. According to Homes England, these are the highest levels of starts for nine years, and the highest levels of completions for four.

A total of 17,772 affordable homes started in 2018-19 were for affordable rent – a 4 per cent increase on the previous year – and 11,560 were for schemes including Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy – a 24 per cent increase on 2017-18. The remaining 1,231 were for social rent, a 12 per cent drop on the previous 12 months.

Of the affordable homes completed, 18,895 were for affordable rent – representing a 4 per cent decrease on the previous year, whereas the 8,854 completed under affordable housing schemes including Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy represent a 75 per cent increase on 2017-18.

Nick Walkley, chief executive of Homes England, commented: "At a time where the average house costs around eight times the average income, these are positive signs that the delivery of homes, and particularly affordable homes, is on the up."





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# Mactaggart & Mickel celebrate awards success



Four site managers from Mactaggart & Mickel have been recognised with NHBC 'Pride in the Job' Quality Awards.

Paul Starritt, senior site manager at the housebuilder's St Jude's Meadow development in Milton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire, has been named among 450 winners of the Quality Award nationwide. Paul's brother, site manager Jason Starritt, has also been recognised for his work on the Buchanan Views development in Killearn.

They are joined by two other Mactaggart & Mickel site managers in receiving the national award, including Ryan Coughtrie, who is assistant site

manager of the Midton Fields development in Howwood, Renfrewshire, as well as senior site manager Stuart Gillespie, who has previously been named as a Regional Winner and UK Supreme Winner for his Greenan Views development in Doonfoot, Ayrshire.

Joanne Casey, managing director at Mactaggart & Mickel's England Division, commented: "These awards are so richly deserved for our four site managers. We're all particularly pleased for Paul, who along with Jason and Ryan is winning this award for the first time. They have all quite rightly been recognised for their dedication to delivering high standards at developments across the country and ensuring that our customers can always depend on the finished quality of their homes."



## Apex granted further £3m equity investment

A £3m equity investment into Apex Airspace has been agreed by the Business Growth Fund (BGF) to deliver new homes in London, following an initial investment from the BGF of £6.3m in 2018.

The funding, which brings Apex's tally to £22m, is intended to aid the delivery of its growing pipeline of opportunities in the boroughs of Enfield, Southwark, and Sutton, as well as investments in R&D.

The company's model, which has delivered two pilot schemes in London so far, uses offsite technology to bring homes to 'airspace' above existing properties, with the homes arriving on site 95 per cent complete before being craned on to roofs for installation.

Arshad Bhatti, founder and CEO of Apex Airspace, commented: "Our pioneering model could deliver thousands of homes, and we're pleased to be a pivotal part of the

government's new homes target.

"With a healthy pipeline of 2,400 homes currently in discussion, as well as fast-growing workforce and a brand-new office in the capital, this £3m equity investment will help us deliver much-needed new homes to people across the UK."

## Flaxby Park developer awarded OBE

The developer behind plans to transform a disused golf course close to Harrogate into a sustainable new community has been recognised by The Queen, and awarded an OBE.

Entrepreneur Chris Musgrave is managing director of Flaxby Park. He started in business in his home town of Hartlepool with his dad aged 12, and now transforms disused and underperforming sites into large-scale developments.

He plans to build 2,750 new homes on Flaxby's disused golf course as well as a retirement village, two primary schools, a GP surgery, sports facilities, a hotel and a new village centre. Almost half of the site will consist of green space, and Goldsborough Railway Station will be reopened offering direct rail services to Harrogate, Leeds and York.

The businessman and philanthropist has credited his late father with instilling in him the business acumen that led to him being honoured by The Queen.

Chris commented: "When I was told about the award I immediately thought about my late father Joe and my mother Mary. No-one could have had better parents and the OBE is as much for them as for me."





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Patrick Mooney, editor of  
Housing, Management &  
Maintenance

## THE SOCIAL NETWORK

# IS A SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS IN SIGHT?

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and news editor of *Housing, Management & Maintenance*, discusses the rise in homelessness in recent years, and takes a look at some potential solutions.

A direct link between the country's austerity programme of spending cuts and the rising tide of homelessness has been made by opposition politicians, but rather than accepting this as inevitable, a growing number of councils are actively fighting back and investing in new initiatives and building new homes.

Our public finances have borne the brunt of expenditure cuts over the last decade, with many councils seeing their income levels cut by between 24 and 30 per cent. This has seen services pared back, often to providing the bare minimum levels of service demanded by the law.

The harsh nature and extent of the cuts are seen all too readily in the figures for homelessness and rough sleeping.

Figures for rough sleeping in London reached an all-time high of 8,855 people in 2018/19, as they jumped by almost a fifth on the previous

year. This included 5,529 people who were new to rough sleeping, the equivalent of an extra 15 people a day losing their homes and having nowhere else to go.

The figures came from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network, whose outreach workers provide a more accurate picture than the official statistics, based on a single night's count. These recorded just 1,283 rough sleepers in London in 2018.

### NATIONAL DISGRACE

The figures represent a rise of 250 per cent from ten years ago, when 3,673 people were identified as rough sleeping in London. The increase was dubbed a "national disgrace" by the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, who blamed the crisis on welfare reforms and a lack of investment in social housing.

Mayor Khan was echoing a message from national politicians in the Labour Party who said

ROUGH  
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LONDON  
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HIGH OF  
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council funding cuts are disproportionately hitting those areas that have also seen the highest numbers of deaths among homeless people.

Labour's analysis revealed that nine of the 10 councils with the highest numbers of homeless deaths in England and Wales between 2013 and 2017 had cuts of more than three times the national average of £254 per household. They are Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Blackburn, Liverpool and the London boroughs of Camden, Westminster, Lambeth and Tower Hamlets.

Birmingham is the country's seventh most deprived locality and it has seen the highest number of homeless deaths, with 90 people estimated to have died between 2013 and 2017. The city's council has experienced a cut in spending power per household of more than £939 for every home since 2010, according to Labour.

Up in the north west of England, Blackburn is the only town included in Labour's list, with the tenth highest number of deaths in a four-year period. The Lancashire town had an estimated 41 deaths among homeless people up to 2017, while spending power for every household has been cut by £879.

### GROWTH IN COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING

Many councils are responding to this crisis by beefing up their housebuilding ambitions, with a focus on the delivery of low rent homes, but they are building from a very low base and new houses take a long time to get from planning and design to being occupied.

In the last seven years councils across London have managed to build over 2,000 new homes – a huge increase on the 70 they built in the previous seven years, but nowhere near enough to make meaningful inroads into waiting lists.

To get back to the housebuilding levels of the early 1950s when councils contributed about half of the new homes built each

year, the National Housing Federation is calling on the Government to spend £12.8bn a year over the next decade.

The NHF says this investment would kick start a nationwide housebuilding programme of around 1.45 million social homes for rent and shared ownership. Their research shows that England needs 145,000 new social homes a year, to clear the backlog of people who need a home and to meet future demand.

It would also boost the economy, reduce the benefits bill and help more people to get on the housing ladder, while at the same time ensuring that millions of people no longer get stuck in inappropriate homes or on the streets.

### PRACTICAL & PERSONAL SOLUTIONS

Back in the north west, Preston is a near neighbour to Blackburn and the city council is working with a local charity to provide rough sleepers with a range of support services under the 'Housing First' banner. This guarantees them accommodation, as well as a range of health and social services.

In Preston, the Foxton Centre has been working with rough sleepers for the past 15 years. Through its outreach work, partly funded by the council, the charity identifies rough sleepers, and offers them support and safety.

On a weekly basis, the team of community social workers and volunteers take to the streets at all hours to make contact with people sleeping rough. The rough sleepers are encouraged to use the community café at the centre where they can get hot cooked food.

The centre also receives referrals from social workers, the NHS and the probation service. There are showers and washing machines for them to use and staff are on hand to help them find accommodation, put them in touch with a doctor and help with their finances and benefits. When the weather is really bad, the centre opens its

doors to let people sleep on the floor.

Foxton's chief executive Jeff Marsh said: "The work we did in the past made a difference, but three years ago we started to re-think how we did things. Many agencies working with the homeless insist they stop drinking or using drugs before they will be accepted for accommodation. If they relapse they are at risk of being evicted. We wanted to try something different."

Then in 2015, Foxton launched its Housing First project, based on a model developed in the US that offers homeless people stable accommodation immediately. From there, they are supported with any personal challenges they face, including health and substance misuse issues.

### WHOLE PERSON APPROACH

Foxton worked with a local property management company, MITEC, to develop the project. MITEC supplied the properties, while Foxton uses a team of 4.5 full-time equivalent case workers to provide intensive support for the clients, whose housing benefits helps pay for the scheme.

Mr Marsh said: "These clients can have severe mental illness, poor physical health, long-term limiting illnesses and learning disabilities. We keep the caseloads small (around eight at a time) so we can work with them to get the support they need. The goal is to find them permanent accommodation and get their lives back on track."

The number of properties in Preston's Housing First project is increasing all the time. It now stands at 35. Around 70 per cent of people provided with accommodation stay for at least 12 months, before moving on, usually to a council or housing association rented property.

Foxton and the city council worked together to apply for funding from the Rough Sleepers Initiative to expand the work it does. In October 2018, the council got over £100,000 to extend the outreach work. There are now two full-time posts to complement the first 16-hour-a-week posts already in operation. This has allowed more frequent outreach work.

In January, the council was awarded £500,000 funding to set up a Homeless Hub. Work will soon start on upgrading the facilities at the community centre, to include a medical room for a range of health services and some bedrooms offering short term, 72-hour emergency accommodation.

This sort of practical support is making a huge impact on the lives of individuals in Preston and helping to prevent them joining the terrible statistics on homeless deaths. A combination of Housing First schemes and a bigger housebuilding programme could deliver positive change across the country.





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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

## THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

# GOVERNMENT TARGETS WON'T BE MET WITHOUT PLANNING REFORM

Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), discusses the recent PAC report, and how bottlenecks in the planning system are jeopardising the Government's housebuilding targets.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recently published a damning report, warning that inherent problems in the planning system are likely to jeopardise the Government's housebuilding target of 300,000 new homes a year. This won't come as a surprise to small and medium-sized (SME) housebuilders, with half (51 per cent) reporting in the FMB's 2018 House Builders' Survey that the planning system was the biggest barrier to them building more new homes.

The PAC claims that while the Government has made some recent reforms in planning, particularly to support smaller housebuilders, it doesn't have a detailed implementation plan of how it will scale up housebuilding.

Perhaps the most shocking statistic in the report was that only 42 per cent (143) of local authorities had an up-to-date local plan. A further 44 per cent had a plan that was more than five years old, and 14 per cent had no plan at all. This is particularly concerning as the plan-led system is the primary vehicle the Government is using to achieve its targets, particularly for the allocation of smaller sites.

The report identifies that local authorities are often under-resourced and under-staffed and producing plans can be technically complex, time consuming and resource intensive. The FMB's research last year found 'inadequate resourcing of planning departments' as the main reason for blockages in the planning system. The FMB campaigned for an increase in planning fees to help address this problem, and in January 2018 the 20 per cent increase in fees was ring-fenced for resourcing of planning departments.

The impact of this fee increase, however, is yet to be seen. Earlier this year, Sir John Hayes MP, asked a Parliamentary Question on behalf of the FMB, on the impact of the rise in planning fees. In response, the Housing Minister Kit Malthouse said that central Government is

PERHAPS THE MOST SHOCKING STATISTIC WAS THAT ONLY 42 PER CENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAD AN UP TO DATE LOCAL PLAN





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working with the Local Government Association and the Royal Town Planning Institute to investigate this. We have yet to see the response of this research, but it we are likely to find out more in the Government's upcoming 'Accelerated Planning Green Paper'.

The Secretary of State for Housing

James Brokenshire MP recently gave some more information on what to expect in this Green Paper, stating that it will explore new approaches to meeting the cost of the planning service. In his speech at the Chartered Institute for Housing conference in June, he highlighted that only half of the £1bn spend on all local authority planning

functions is covered by fee income and so the Green Paper will look at alternative proposals and pilot new approaches to meeting the cost of planning where it improves the performance, speed and quality of the planning service. This is very welcome news.

It is clear, however, that at some point the Government needs to use a stick as well as some carrots. As the PAC report points out, the Secretary of State has powers, gifted to him by Parliament, to intervene when local authorities do not have a local plan, and ultimately take local planning away from a local authority. However, this power has been used rarely. The PAC claims that the Department is avoiding decisive action on this.

The FMB will shortly be publishing the results of our 2019 House Builders' Surveys and we will see if the bottlenecks in the planning system are starting to improve or not. However, anecdotally, we are hearing that members continue to be frustrated with the system, and local authorities are not fully informed of recent policy changes such as 'Permission in Principle', which could lead to greater capacity. If the Government wants to show it really cares about supporting small housebuilders, then accelerating the performance of the planning system would be a big sweetener.

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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

# Almost 600 new homes underway at Ebbsfleet

Work has started on 598 new homes at Northfleet Embankment, which forms a part of Ebbsfleet Garden City in Kent, following a deal between Homes England and Keepmoat Homes.

Alongside the new homes, 224 of which will be affordable, the project will include a new primary school, local amenities, open space and a Fastrack bus connection.

Keepmoat Homes will purchase the 11.6 hectare site from Homes England for the development. As part of this, Homes England has undertaken remediation work to prepare the land for developing, and, after working with key stakeholders Gravesham Borough Council and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, planning permission was granted last year.

With work now underway, the first homes are expected to be complete by May 2020, with the rest of the development to be completed by 2025. To fulfil the deal, Keepmoat has agreed to build the homes at an accelerated rate of over 100 units per year.

Housing Minister Kit Malthouse commented: "Not only does this deal deliver hundreds of much-needed homes, but it's another step towards building a vibrant garden community on London's doorstep."

**"NOT ONLY DOES THIS DEAL DELIVER HUNDREDS OF MUCH-NEEDED HOMES, IT'S ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS BUILDING A VIBRANT GARDEN COMMUNITY ON LONDON'S DOORSTEP" – KIT MALTHOUSE**



# Over 1,600 new homes approved in Southwark

Set to deliver over 1,600 new homes, two major planning applications have been approved by Southwark Council's planning committee. Including 162 new homes at social rent, this brings the total number of social housing due to be delivered in the area up to over 1,300.

The first development is the regeneration of Malt Street, just off the Old Kent Road, where 1,300 new homes, including 83 new social rented homes and 48 intermediate homes in the first phase, have been approved.

Overall, the new development will be made up of 11 new buildings from five to 44 storeys, offering 40 per cent affordable housing, with at least a quarter of the housing available for social rent.

The Malt Street site at the North end of Old Kent Road is currently mainly used for storage and by Travis Perkins as a builder's merchant. The application also includes affordable retail space, and contributes to the new Surrey Canal Linear Park as part of the Old Kent Road Masterplan.

The second development is on Verney Road, where planning committee members approved (subject to referral to the Mayor of London) a further 338 new homes, including 112 affordable homes made up of 79 social rented and 33 intermediate rent.

The development will consist of three buildings at 18, 19 and 24 storeys, that would also provide space for offices/workspaces and landscaping including a contribution to the new Linear Park.

**THIS BRINGS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SOCIAL HOUSING DUE TO BE DELIVERED IN THE AREA UP TO OVER 1,300**



# Four schemes announced by L&G affordable arm

A total of 278 new homes in Croydon, Cornwall, Dunstable and Shrivenham will comprise Legal & General Affordable Homes' first four affordable schemes.

With an ambition to deliver 3,000 affordable homes annually within the next four years, the company has also secured a further pipeline of over 40 sites across the UK, set to provide 1,500 affordable homes in the next 24 months.

According to Legal & General, the recent transactions, part of its business plan to develop, hold and manage a blend of affordable housing tenures, demonstrates "the breadth of the companies capabilities in the sector."

Across the four sites, social and affordable rental homes, grant-supported shared ownership homes and Section 106 schemes will be delivered.

The first of these homes to be completed are in Leon House in Croydon. Available from June 2019, the development comprises 50 shared ownership apartments.

Legal & General's second acquisition in Cornwall is a JV with Coastline Housing. The partnership's first scheme in Falmouth will comprise 44 affordable homes across two building phases.

The company's other two schemes in Dunstable and Shrivenham are being delivered under Section 106 agreements. Phoenix Park in Dunstable will be



**WITH AN AMBITION TO DELIVER 3,000 AFFORDABLE HOMES ANNUALLY WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, THE COMPANY HAS ALSO SECURED A FURTHER PIPELINE OF OVER 40 SITES ACROSS THE UK**

available to buyers from Q4 2019, comprising 23 shared ownership apartments. Its scheme in Shrivenham will deliver 109 homes at affordable rents, and 52 shared ownership units, with homes available during the first half of 2020.

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The platform provides live oversight of the sales progression of all new units, through a raft of analytics & reporting, removing countless hours spent corralling information from multiple parties via spreadsheets. With added tech developments in the Yourkeys pipeline, this is a piece of kit that will be integral to all our schemes going forward.

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## CASE STUDY

# Making social virtue from necessity



Lollard Street in Lambeth, London, from a social housing JV between the Canary Wharf Group and Qatari Diar, offers high specification at council rent. It's the result of a developer taking a decision to pursue a scheme that enabled a much larger development while offering community value, as Jack Wooler reports.

Born out of a Section 106 agreement, Lollard Street in Lambeth delivers the first social homes from the Canary Wharf Group and Qatari Diar, in a JV named Braeburn Estates.

The 89-home residential offering comprises one 16-storey tower block, one seven-storey tower block, and four four-storey blocks – all made up of one and two bedroom apartments – and a further 15 three-storey townhouses with four bedrooms each.

70 of these units are for council level rent, and 19 are designated for private sale, all delivered alongside a nursery and children's centre, communal gardens, and public realm improvements.

The development revitalises land previously occupied by a "problematic" car park block, which had fallen into disrepair and was attracting anti-social behaviour. The JV intends to remedy this and give the area new life, providing high specification homes for social and private residents alike.

In order to fulfil this vision, architecture practice Darling Associates was employed to design the homes, and Homes for Lambeth has taken control of the affordable units.

Braeburn Estates shouldered all the construction and regeneration costs/risks, with Lambeth Council celebrating taking handover of the completed project at an event on 18 January 2019.

## GETTING STARTED

The catalyst for Lollard Street was the redevelopment around the Shell Centre in Lambeth into Southbank Place, a major development by the JV to revitalise the area around the Shell Centre Tower with a large number new homes, office space and a renewed public realm.

In order to get the project through planning however, Lambeth Council revealed the need for large affordable family homes, which wouldn't have been the easiest to develop on this site.

Howard Dawber, managing director of





Braeburn Estates, explained that the company didn't want to just pay the council the money necessary to achieve this. "We looked at the option of writing a cheque, but we thought we could do something better," he said. "That was partly about control of delivery, and partly about what was good for the community."

The decision was taken with the council therefore to plan the construction of a high-quality affordable housing development on a council-owned site in need of regeneration, with Canary Wharf Contractors leading the build process.

The Braeburn team, together with project architects Darling Associates, searched through all of the available council-owned sites within a mile radius of the Shell Centre Tower that could have potential for infill development, or something similar.

"Following a lengthy decision process, we chose the Ethelred Estate site," detailed Howard. "While it was one of the more complicated sites available, it was where we thought we could do the most good and deliver the highest number of homes."

#### THE ESTATE

The Ethelred Estate was first built in the 1960s, with four 22-storey tower blocks dominating the site, situated around a multi-storey car park. As Howard puts it, "It

was in need of updating."

"The car park was used by only a handful of residents, had fallen into disrepair, and was attracting anti-social behaviour," he explains. "However, this was about spotting an opportunity to deliver a project that made a difference."

The car park had reportedly created a negative social barrier, blocking access routes around the estate and to the under-utilised community park.

To the developers, the car park had one stand out asset, however: the nursery and children's centre located in temporary buildings on its roof, which served 76 local children and had an Ofsted 'Outstanding' rating.

"We felt we could provide a new permanent building to house the nursery, improve its facilities, and increase its capacity," said the MD.

#### THE SITE PLAN

The site had a number of constraints, but the team decided that with "good design and modern architecture," they could deliver a project that went "above and beyond."

"We wanted to open the site up, and that meant shuffling a lot of things around on the site plan," said Howard. "We worked closely with Lambeth Council to deliver a

**"WE THOUGHT WE COULD DO SOMETHING BETTER. THAT WAS PARTLY ABOUT CONTROL OF DELIVERY, AND PARTLY ABOUT WHAT WAS GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY"**





proposal that maximised the site, and provided the best scheme possible.”

Damon Burrows, director at Darling Associates, added to this: “The whole ideology of the site was defunct, and that presented the opportunity to repair the urban fabric, by taking away the car park.

“Its removal allowed us to encourage people movement through to an adjacent under-used park, create new routes to bring transparency and connectivity to the heart of the development, and create a purpose-built facility to house the nursery.”

In order to deliver the homes, as well as open the space up, this inevitably meant building upwards. The architects opted to do this with a seven-storey building and a 16-storey ‘blade’ tower, the latter sitting between two existing tower blocks.

The two existing towers on the site have blank elevations facing the new tower block, meaning they do not overlook it. “In fact,” said Howard, “in terms of aspect, the new site has improved things significantly.”

He continued: “Everyone used to look out of their window and down onto a car

park. Now, they look out onto green and brown roofs, play areas, paths and greenery – this was a key part of our planning, we wanted to improve everyone’s quality of living at Lollard Street.”

#### INSIDE & OUT

Throughout the carefully designed one and two-bedroom apartments, as well as the four-bedroom family houses, the buildings and interiors have been arranged to enhance natural light and increase space. Additionally, outdoor space is offered in every home, in the form of balconies for apartments and gardens for the townhouses.

Each home interior is intended to employ the features and characteristics synonymous with new build design, in order to “set the benchmark for modern, affordable housing.” As such, clean lines, open-plan areas and rooms have been designed to a high specification in collaboration with Lambeth council, incorporating contemporary fixtures, fittings and integrated appliances, which it is hoped will work together to create “a feeling of





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All of the homes in the development have been built to the latest housing standards, and are as efficient as possible, with thermal insulation, double-glazing and ventilation.

Alongside the homes, the area was carefully designed to work within an existing community by enriching and enhancing the area as a whole, with a newly created garden square and landscaped streets integrated into the high-density scheme.

"The new design increased site permeability and accessibility, with navigation paths through the park and to neighbouring streets creating safe pedestrian routes," said the MD. "The new amenities and green spaces benefit residents of Lollard Street, as well as those from the surrounding estates."

#### A LOCAL LEGACY

The project has already been well-received, both by the community and its residents. Lambeth Council Leader, Lib

Peck, described Lollard Street as "the new benchmark for affordable homes in the borough," and the Ethelred Nursery has greatly benefitted from a high quality purpose-built building.

Howard concluded on the success of the scheme, and its intended legacy: "Lollard Street can be seen as a template for how developers in London can create off-site affordable housing to satisfy planning agreements – in this case Lollard Street supports Canary Wharf Group and Qatari Diar's development of Southbank Place.

"Rolling out this delivery model across London could deliver many more genuinely affordable homes to be owned and managed by local authorities, in addition to a wider range of public benefits."

The proceeds of the 19 units for private sale will support the construction of more council level rent homes via Homes for Lambeth. The private sale properties will start from £485,000, with Help to Buy available.



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## Accessible housing – what people want

An informal survey is highlighting that accessible housing is easy for developers to build, without adding any significant cost. The survey reinforces findings from other recent reports, and growing calls for the Building Regulations Approved Document M Part 2 to become a legal compliance in newbuild developments. Undertaken by **Closomat**, a manufacturer and provider of accessible toilet and bathroom fixtures, the survey asked disabled people what features they would want included in accessible homes. Almost every respondent wanted level access and wheelchair-wide doorways. Other popular requests were a ground floor bathroom/toilet (ideally including a Closomat shower/ wash dry WC), height adjustable fixtures in the kitchen and bathroom, a wetroom in place of a bathroom and potential for inclusion of a ceiling track hoist between bedroom and bathroom/wetroom. Closomat is already the 'go to' provider for accessible toilet provision in domestic and 'away from home' environments.

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## Vent-Axia helps reduce plastic waste



Industry-leading ventilation company **Vent-Axia** is helping social housing providers reduce their environmental impact by designing modular products to reduce plastic waste. By carefully considering the design of its products, Vent-Axia's latest energy efficient fans are even easier to repair and recycle, reducing carbon footprints and helping make ventilation even more cost effective for social housing providers. "We are working hard to help social housing providers reduce their environmental impact, and make cost savings, by developing innovative products that can be repaired rather than replaced should they develop a fault" explains Tom Wodcke, Product Marketing Manager at Vent-Axia.

0844 856 0590 [www.vent-axia.com](http://www.vent-axia.com)

## Flamco's Flexconsole gets accolades



The **Flamco** Flexconsole Plus contains a mounting bracket for an expansion vessel, a Flexvent auto air vent, a Prescor pressure relief valve and a pressure gauge.

Installer Glen Wakeling from HeatSpec, a Leicester based installation company, has recently used the Flexconsole Plus in an impressive heating system installation in a refurbishment project in the heart of Leicestershire: "For me it's a no brainer and one of the best bits of kit I've come across. Clearly it makes installation easier and quicker when you can combine an expansion vessel, a PRV and a pressure gauge in one hit. It's a great piece of kit."

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

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## Shelforce - understanding what Local Authorities want



**S**helforce are experienced specialists in providing PVCu windows and doors for Local Authority social housing projects. A leading PVCu windows and doors manufacturer, Shelforce are Birmingham City Council's chosen manufacturer and supplier of choice and have worked on a huge number of local authority projects.

From high rises to new builds, Shelforce have experience with all types of social housing refurbishment and maintenance and have developed a first-class reputation for providing Local Authorities with the highest quality products and finishing each project on time and within budget.

Whether a Local Authority needs casement, reversible or tilt and turn windows, or composite, residential or patio doors, Shelforce provide the best solution that is most cost-effective for you, and more attractive and secure for your tenants.

The reason for their success is simple, according to Howard Trotter, Shelforce's Business Manager.

"We understand the challenges Local Authorities face and what is important for both them and their tenants," said Howard.

"We understand that Local Authorities are under pressure to complete maintenance and refurbishment programmes on time and within budget, and as budgets are cut, they need to deliver more for less.

"They also want to provide the best service

for their department and their tenants, but they want quality at a fair price. We also understand that tenants want to feel safe and secure and have pride in their home."

### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND VALUES

Shelforce lead the way in inclusivity when it comes to training and employment opportunities in the glazing industry, with 75 per cent of their workforce disabled.

A training facility will also be opening at their factory in Erdington to welcome students from nearby schools, including special needs schools, and offer regular work experience placements.

Howard said: "Investing in the future by helping young adults of all abilities take their first steps into the workplace is one of the keys to both our and the industry's future growth."

Sustainability is also a big consideration for Shelforce, and the company uses new profiles made from recycled material from unwanted PVC-U frames thanks to Eurocell's very own recycling plant.

### INTEGRITY

Shelforce are highly accredited and ensure that all windows and doors surpass the standards of PAS 24. They also work closely with both landlords and tenants if required to ensure that everyone is satisfied with all work undertaken.

Their products are also rigorously tested, and Howard said: "We feel we have that trust element that is vital to Local Authorities.

Because we work for Birmingham City Council, our products are rigorously tested. Instead of just sending the best one we make for testing, the council turn up unannounced and select one at random, so our products must be spot on every single time."

### VALUE FOR MONEY

Shelforce's Eurocell Eurologik profile system not only offers high performance but huge value for money too.

The advanced six-chambered system and innovative PVC-U Thermal Inserts work together to lock in heat which maximises thermal performance making the window incredibly energy efficient. This means that a cheaper glass unit can be used, and the window will still achieve an 'A+' energy rating.

The slim, six-chambered outer frame costs no more than the standard Eurologik outer frame too, so there is no cost barrier to installing the highest energy efficiency-rated profiles.

Howard added: "The local authority market is perfect for us as we can save them money thanks to our quality, quick lead times, delivery and price. This value engineering means that the money saved can then go straight back into the local authority to be reinvested elsewhere.

"When you put this together with our social values, it makes us an attractive proposition for Local Authorities."

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Helping reduce anti social behaviour



STANLEY Security, one of the UK’s leading security providers, has installed new CCTV and intercom systems at a number of residential blocks for property management company Griffin Grays. The result has been a reduction in anti-social behaviour and a more efficient way of working. STANLEY Security has installed new audio intercom systems, featuring modern vandal proof panels on entrances and new handsets in apartments. It worked closely with Griffin Grays to gain access to apartments with minimal inconvenience or disruption to residents. STANLEY Security has completed work at eight sites to date with a further three underway. Each are under a ten-year contract which includes full service.

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



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Ahmarra supply and install fire doors for major Southampton Tower Block refurbishment

Ahmarra has been selected to supply and install hundreds of fire doors for a major Southampton tower block refurbishment.

Southampton’s tallest tower blocks are undergoing a multi-million pound fire safety up-grade and Ahmarra are working with main contractor, CLC Group and Southampton City Council to supply Q-Mark certified fire doors, riser doors and screens to all communal areas as well as Secured By Design PAS 24 security & fire doorsets to all flat entrances.

Ahmarra has developed a range of apartment entrance doorsets that meet both fire and enhanced security requirements achieving the new requirement for “Dual Certification”. These doorsets have been specified by leading social housing providers throughout London and the South East.

‘Ahmarra offer complete reassurance for our customers that the installed doorset will perform against the threat of fire, smoke and opportunist thieves should the need arise. We ensure this through regular audit testing as well as building our own body of primary test evidence ensuring a certified and compliant product.’



“Ahmarra can offer a complete turnkey service, from initial survey on your existing doors and openings, to arranging and installing replacement doorsets that are Q-Mark certified for both manufacture and installation” said Martyn Fennell, Ahmarra’s Business Development Manager.

Our Secured By Design/PAS 24 doorsets are supplied as a complete pre-hung doorset available with all associated ironmongery



factory fitted, on a supply only or supply and fit basis. All doorsets are bespoke manufactured and include a number of facing and finish options including primed, natural timber veneers and high-pressure laminates as well as options for a wide selection of ironmongery to suit budget and aesthetic requirements.

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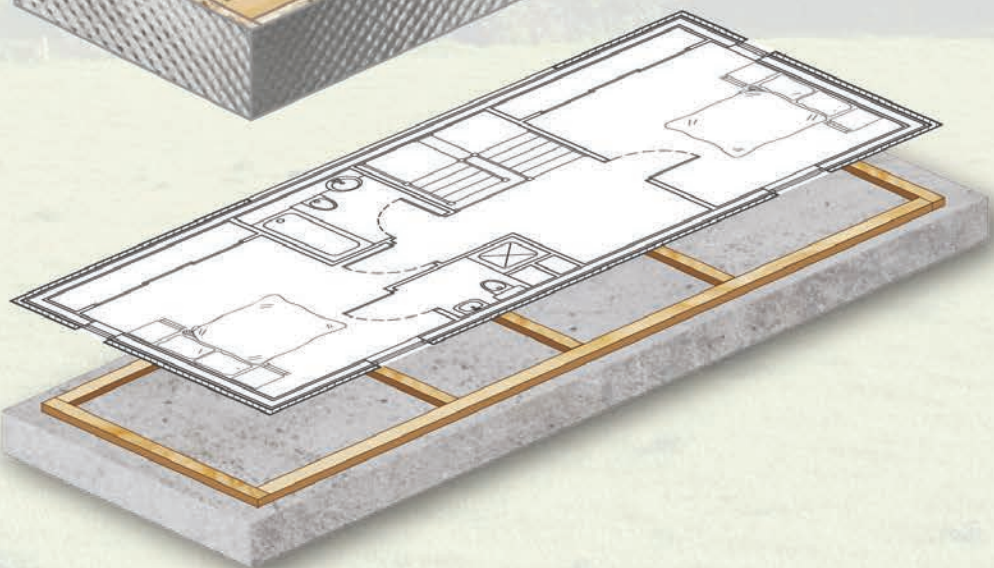
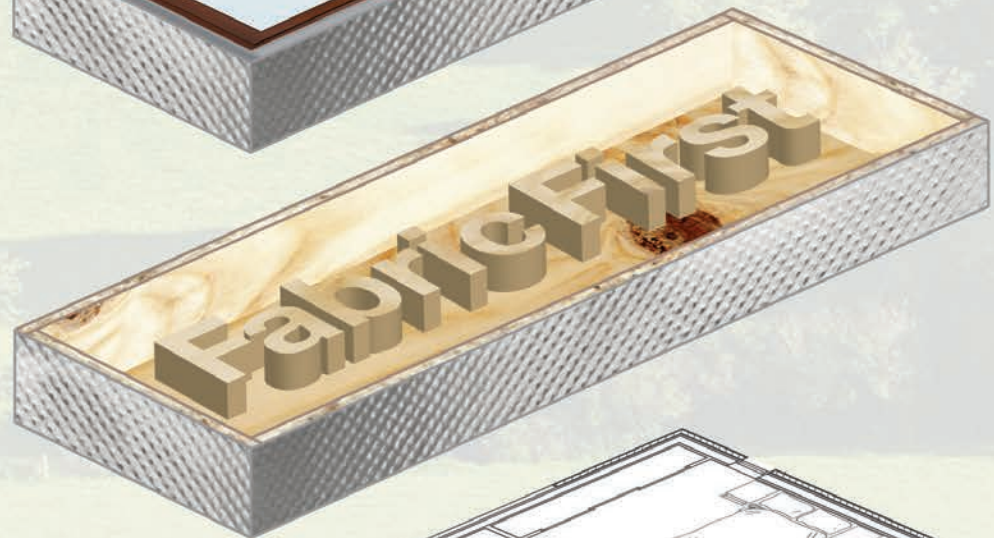
#### THERMAL PERFORMANCE



#### ENERGY EFFICIENCY



#### SPEED OF CONSTRUCTION





## Norbord appoints new national sales manager



Norbord has appointed Sanjit Dosanjh as National Sales Manager for the UK & Ireland. Formerly National Product Manager and then National Sales Manager at Kingspan Insulation UK, Sanjit is well versed in the needs of housebuilders and builders' merchants. Sanjit, heading up a team of seven Norbord Business Development Managers across the UK, explains: "We are asking lots of questions so we can understand our customers better, but also their aspirations. I see our BDMS as brand ambassadors and the type of people our merchant customers want to meet and engage with. For me, it's all about relationships and helping the merchants to achieve their goals".

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

## Double award win for Sika Sarnafil



Single ply roofing manufacturer **Sika Sarnafil** and two of its Registered Contractors have triumphed at this year's Single Ply Roofing Association (SPRA) Awards. John O'Raw, Head of Sales – Single Ply Membrane at Sika, adds: "We're thrilled to see these projects shine at the SPRA Awards. Both are a testament to the robustness and flexibility of the Sarnafil Single Ply Membrane, which is showcased by the fact that these projects won based on overcoming challenging aspects and providing excellent sustainability benefits. We are incredibly proud of both projects, not only for excelling at the SPRA Awards, but for the hard work and dedication paid by all those involved."

01707 394444 [gbr.sarnafil.sika.com](mailto:gbr.sarnafil.sika.com)

## Norcros Adhesives is a winner!

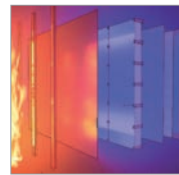


Norcros Adhesives, the tile adhesive, grout and preparation products manufacturer, has just won the Gold Award for Best Environmental Initiative at the recent Tile Association Awards. This achievement is impressive enough in its own right, but is even more so, since this is now the third year in a row that the company has won this prestigious accolade.

The company's work on environmental improvement goes back to the time of its founding. Since the earliest days it has been the intention to eliminate waste going to landfill.

[www.norcros-adhesives.com](http://www.norcros-adhesives.com)

## Fireshield® – Awarded BBA Certification



The **A. Proctor Group**, renowned for providing high-quality membrane solutions for controlling the heat, air, moisture movement in buildings (HAMM), is delighted to announce that its Fireshield® vapour permeable membrane has been awarded a British Board of Agrément Certificate. Fireshield is the culmination of leading research to produce a vapour permeable membrane with a fire proof surface, which is designed specifically to improve the fire protection behind cladding. Fireshield has a unique intumescent composition that actively reacts to prevent fire taking hold. This unique coating extinguishes fire rather than just resisting it, and significantly reduces the formation of droplets and smoke.

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**Evinox finalists in Product Innovation category at CSA Awards**

Evinox were honored to have been shortlisted as finalist's in the Product Innovation of the Year category at the 2019 Commissioning Specialists Association (CSA) Awards, with the ModuSat® XR heating interface unit for heat network developments.

Judges were impressed with the ModuSat® XR Smart technology, which enables units to be remotely commissioned and warranty validated over the internet using a standard communication network. Other HIU's installed in communal and district heating developments, require an engineer to physically attend site to set-up/commission every individual unit manually, adding time and cost to the project, so this is a big step forward for heat interface unit technology.

The judging panel included independent experts, representation from the press and sponsoring companies, who spent a day analysing and discussing every entry to decide on the 2019 finalists. Through a further secret ballot the winners were revealed at the Awards Dinner. Unfortunately, Evinox were not successful on this occasion, but they would like to congratulate the winner's and thank organisers for an enjoyable evening networking with the industry's best and brightest. The finalists can be seen at [www.csa-awards.co.uk/finalists](http://www.csa-awards.co.uk/finalists).

01372 722277 [www.evinoxenergy.co.uk](http://www.evinoxenergy.co.uk)



**Senior adds flavour to the Smokehouses**

Offering a modern take on the industrial look, high performance aluminium windows, doors and curtain walling from **Senior Architectural Systems** have been specified for a new residential development created as part of the regeneration of historic docklands in Tyne and Wear. The new Smokehouses have been designed by Simpson Haugh architects and jointly developed by Urban Splash and Places for People. Utilising solutions from across Senior's comprehensive product range, the fenestration package has been installed and fabricated by North Eastern Glass Ltd for main contractor Robertson CE Ltd, with whom Senior has an established supplier agreement.

The attractive glazed frontage of the two buildings offers spectacular views of the River Tyne, with the simple rectangular shape of Senior's aluminium windows contributing to the overall industrial design which takes inspiration from nearby warehouse buildings. The individual apartments benefit from Senior's patented low U-value PURE® aluminium windows and PURE® SLIDE aluminium doors, which also provide access to a balcony area. The ground floor retail areas feature Senior's slimline SF52 aluminium curtain walling and robust SPW501 aluminium commercial doors to create both a practical and welcoming entrance.

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

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## Timber Cladding - the natural choice



Canjaere timber cladding from the **A. Proctor Group** has been supplied for an exciting new housing development for property developer Eskdale Homes. Each of the houses at the Ballenlochan development were built using Val-U-Therm®, a unique closed panel, factory insulated timber frame system with class leading thermal performance and

manufactured off-site by Scotframe Timber Engineering. Canjaere Classic Timber Cladding in the golden natural colourway, Tongue and Groove finish was chosen for its high quality and natural appearance, created during manufacture.

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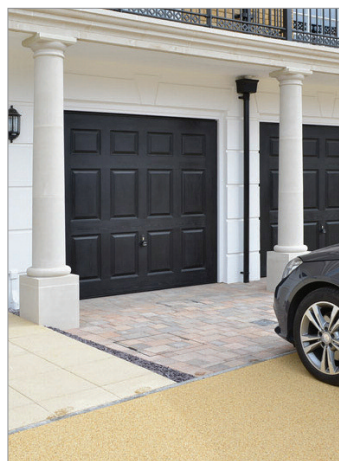
## First fix 11 windows in just 23 minutes



Timber frame and SIPs panel manufacturers can speed up the installation of windows and doors by using the **Sidey Kitfix system**. "With the Sidey Kitfix System, windows and doors can be accurately fitted at the factory stage," says Steve Hardy, Managing Director of

fenestration and offsite construction specialists Sidey Solutions. "It's quick too – 11 windows can be first fixed in 23 minutes. They are installed when the walls are horizontal in the factory and the innovative Kitfix brackets are twist fitted to the window or door frame. Air tightness, thermal and acoustic seals can also be included at this stage."

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



## Garador introduces new GRP garage doors

**Garador** has introduced a new range of GRP garage doors, bringing the total number of garage doors in their range to over 60. The GRP range is comprised of both up and over and side hinged garage doors, with nine up and over garage doors and four side hinged garage doors available.

All the GRP up and over garage doors are available in a selection of standard sizes, which is ideal for housing developers looking to specify a standardised and cost effective solution for their development. Garador also offers made to measure door sizes and double doors on certain models, with door sizes going all the way up to 4269mm wide.

GRP up and over doors are available with both canopy and retractable operating gear, with the latter also suitably designed for electric automation with a GaraMatic electric operator.

Browse the complete GRP garage door collection on the Garador website or call for more information.

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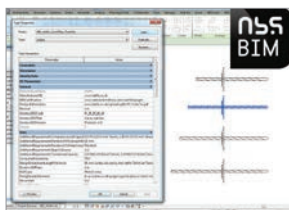
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## Helifix BIM Object Library Launched



Helifix has launched a BIM object library to support the industry's transition to digital building modelling.

Available to download from the Helifix or the NBS National BIM Library website, these Revit format BIM objects allow Helifix products to be easily incorporated into a 3D building

model and its associated component database. Offered as part of the NBS portfolio, BIM Objects are available for masonry repair products and new-build wall ties. For more information, please contact the Helifix team by calling.

020 8735 5200 [www.helifix.co.uk/downloads/bim-objects](http://www.helifix.co.uk/downloads/bim-objects)

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## New Homes in Hull Regeneration Area

Hull City Council has partnered with Keepmoat Homes as part of its regeneration project in the city's Hawthorn Avenue area, building new homes for sale and social rent.

Named after Hull's famous aviator, the Amy Johnson development by Keepmoat Homes on Hawthorn Avenue is a major project building new homes for sale and for social rent through Places for People. The Hawthornes @ Amy Johnson is part of Hull City Council's programme of regeneration of the area, which also included improvements to the exterior of existing homes.

Keepmoat Homes have completed the first phase of 148 homes, with a further 491 being constructed. The project includes three-bedroom homes as well as affordable housing. Prior to construction beginning, an assessment of the site determined varying levels for NHBC required gas protection measures. Specialist installers of gas barrier membranes and water-proofing tanking systems, SPS Substructure Protection Ltd, chose two high-performance membranes produced by Industrial Textiles & Plastics Ltd (ITP) of North Yorkshire. Protecting some of the homes is Powerbase VOC, a specially engineered multilayer composite barrier membrane with exceptional resistance



Powerbase VOC installation at The Hawthornes

to hydrocarbons and VOCs (volatile organic compounds). Under other homes, Powerbase Multigas 300 has been installed. This is an aluminium laminate incorporating a foil between two layers of LDPE and a reinforcing scrim. Both are available in convenient roll sizes for easier installation and reduced welds.

"Our expertise in gas and chemical resistant technology, developed over more than 25 years, means we can provide the right solution for any installation," said Paul Harrison, ITP's geomembrane technical advisor. "We are

adding new products, such as tanking membranes and DPCs to complete our existing products, creating an integrated, comprehensive groundworks solution for specifiers and installers."

In addition to the Powerbase range of gas barrier membranes, ITP also produces the industry-leading Puraflex barrier membrane, as well as a range of advanced building membranes and temporary containment solutions.

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# GOING WITH THE FLOW

Martin Lambley of Wavin assesses the predicted impact of new Sewers for Adoption drainage guidelines, and what they mean for the future of SuDS.

**N**ew guidance for the design of adoptable drainage is set to be published later this year. Widely described as Sewers for Adoption 8 (SfA8), the manual will be published under a new Design Construction Guidance title and is expected to come into force in April 2020. For the first time, the guide will outline standards when it comes to the 'adoption' of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) by water companies across the country. But does it go far enough?

As the frequency and severity of flooding continues to rise, it's becoming ever clearer that the solution to the UK's drainage needs no longer lies in collecting surface water from developments using pipes and releasing it into rivers. It simply isn't sustainable. In light of this, SfA8 is setting out new standards for SuDS, clarifying what is expected of developers if their drainage systems are to be adopted by water and sewerage companies (WaSCs) across the country.

To allow sufficient time for WaSCs, planning authorities and developers to update their policies and procedures to comply with the new manual, a pre-implementation version of SfA8 was published in 2018. Since its publication, WaSCs have been considering a range of SuDS techniques that improve greatly on existing assets, namely oversized pipes and tanks. These more sustainable techniques include swales, basins and geocellular systems, which are installed under green areas and are made up of modular crates that control surface water runoff either as a soakaway or a storage tank.

## A LONG TIME COMING

The benefits of SuDS are many – not only do they ensure flood resilience, but they also improve the urban environment through improved air quality and biodiversity. For these reasons, SuDS have been used since the mid-90s, and became an integral part of policy in 2014. However, despite these benefits, they are still not a mainstream feature of urban developments.

One of the main reasons for this has

been the lack of any formalised route to adoption, along with the perception that SuDS require additional maintenance when compared with conventional piped drainage systems. A lot of it comes down to pragmatism, too – where it's cost effective and quick to install SuDS, they will often be implemented; however, if a more practicable option is available, developers will often default to more traditional methods.

What SfA8 will do is provide a long overdue route to adoption in a way that allows water quality, amenity and biodiversity, as well as water quantity, to be properly considered and integrated into the surface water management and urban design process. But before we hail SfA8 as the silver bullet to bring about monumental change, it's important to evaluate its shortcomings.

## ARE THE NEW GUIDELINES STRONG ENOUGH?

Of course, any efforts made to improve the sustainability of UK drainage is a step in the right direction, and it's promising that under SfA8 designers will need to fully consider installation, health and safety risk assessments, maintenance and access requirements of both hard and soft SuDS as part of their designs. However, there are convincing arguments to say that SfA8

doesn't take regulations far enough to enforce any tangible change. For example, key SuDS components such as permeable pavements and green roofs, are not covered in the document, and there are concerns over how strongly the standards can be enforced.

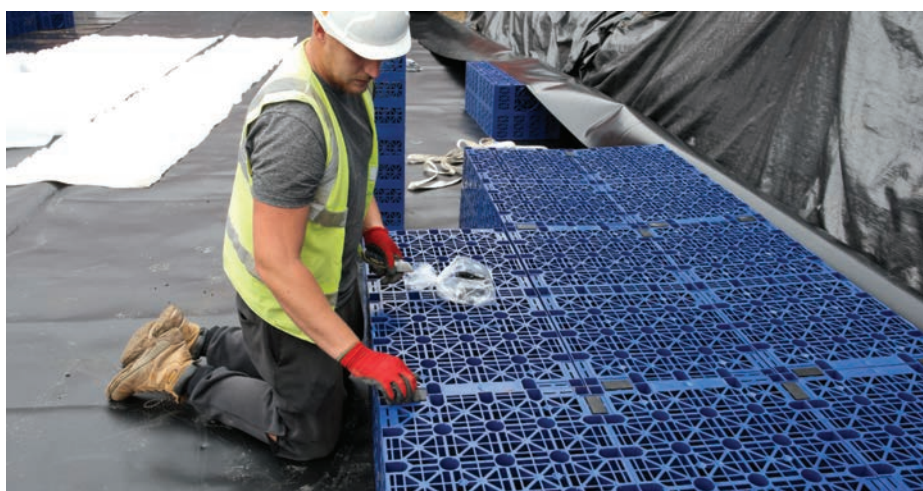
Although the document is expected to be mandated by Ofwat, making it stricter than previous editions, the way it's worded could create grey areas and wiggle room around certain aspects of adoption. For example, many water companies have been against geocellular tanks traditionally, claiming they are difficult to maintain or inspect compared to pipes. While this is not the case, old habits do die hard, and moving towards a sustainable-first mindset won't be easy without tight control.

## ENSURING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The progress made in achieving more sustainable drainage across the UK is certainly encouraging. In 2018, the Government launched its 25-year surface water action plan, albeit lacking in practical advice. This, coupled with SfA8, is a clear indicator of the increased efforts being made at all levels – from agencies to government bodies – to safeguard the future of drainage against increased environmental strains. We're no doubt closer than ever to SuDS losing their status as a special consideration and instead being an integral, standard component of all new developments.

Increasing conversations about SuDS with WaSCs over the past couple of years are a strong indication that we're moving in the right direction. While this shifting mindset is undoubtedly positive, in a country facing ever worsening floods, change cannot come soon enough. As an industry, we need to unify and put SuDS firmly at the top of our agenda to safeguard our future.

Martin Lambley is product manager for stormwater management at Wavin



# Specification - The key to effective cost management

Avoiding under-specification on UK driveways is key to achieving cost objectives in construction. Consider for example, drainage where manhole covers with inappropriate load-bearing capacities are sometimes causing installations to be revisited by developers to make repairs, costing several hundred pounds a time.

In certain trafficking, the long term effects of undervaluing loading requirements can be easily avoided by installing a B125 (12.5T loading classification) cover as a minimum. For example, the kerb weight of a 4x4 commonly varies between 1.6 and 2.5 tonnes, depending on the model, exerting a load, when turning and braking through any one wheel of 6-10 tonnes! This is because, in extreme cases, dynamic loads apply up to 3 or 4 times the static

mass of the vehicle, through a single wheel! This thought process, also benefits scenarios where infrequent traffic – skip loaders, removal vans, waste collection lorries, etc., needs access to driveways, footpaths and grass verges. Again in this instance B125 loading class should be specified as a minimum.

Fash Shahidi of Clark-Drain comments: "The correct choice of manhole covers can have a significant impact on house building maintenance cycles and replacement costs, but are sometimes overlooked due to slightly higher purchase price or incorrect specification. Manufacturers have a duty to educate the market so that correct choices are made by house builders, driveway specialists, subcontractors and ground workers. Furthermore, in recent years loads have risen as cars have continued to increase in weight and size. What may have been installed originally to take a driveway loading may not be sufficient to avoid a manhole cover becoming bowed, cracked or broken, today. I would encourage any contractor who is unsure of the correct choice to speak directly with their manufacturer for clarification as we are here to help and support."

At Clark-Drain, products such as the CD 761SR KMB+R are designed specifically for



driveway applications, as a result of feedback from house developers who were experiencing costly breakages.

Fully Kitemark certified to Load Class B125, capable of bearing a 12.5T load, in line with BS EN 124:2015, Clark-Drain's CD 761SR KMB+R access cover offers a long-lasting and sustainable driveway drainage solution.

Furthermore, for chamber depths more than 1.2m, the CD 761SR KMB+R is supplied with a reducer to convert the 450mm diameter clear opening to 350mm in accordance with Building Regulations Part H to restrict the size for health and safety reasons and deter entry (for example by children).

01733 765317 [www.clark-drain.com](http://www.clark-drain.com)





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## Stelrad extends radiator ranges



From 1<sup>st</sup> July, **Stelrad** has extended the Vita Compact range still further and introduced the Vita and Softline Concord ranges as well as supplying the very popular Concord Vertical in a K2 version, to add to the traditionally available K1 version of this stunning radiator. The Vita and Softline horizontal Concord range will be available in two heights – 444mm

and 592mm and in lengths from 500mm up to 1400mm and in outputs from 1338 Btu/hr up to 8,107 Btu/hr. Full details of the new extended product ranges can be found at Stelrad's website.

0844 543 6200 [www.stelrad.com](http://www.stelrad.com)

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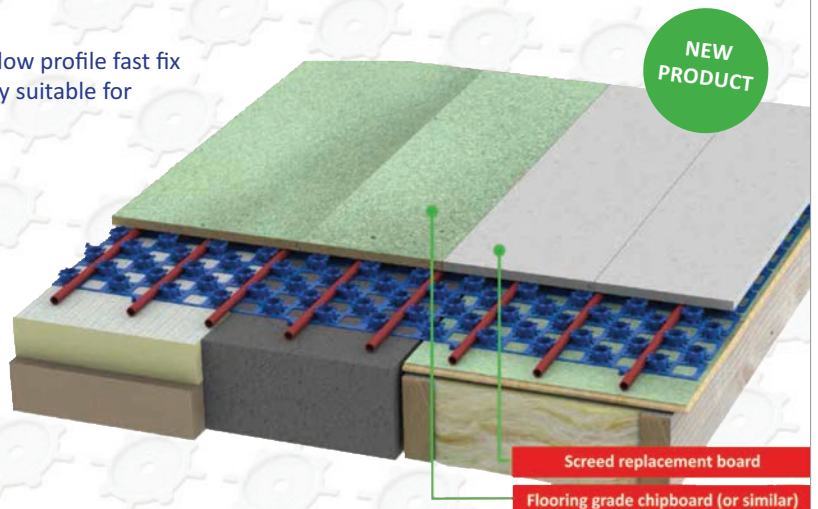
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## VARIETY AND QUALITY PRODUCTS WHICH STAND THE TEST OF TIME ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT, ALONG WITH AN EMERGING CONCERN ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

tones and often in easy-to-clean polypropylene with the new 'supersoft' ranges proving especially popular in the bedroom, where comfort is paramount. LVT and other options are more prevalent in high traffic areas such as the hallway, kitchen and bathroom, where its eminently practical properties are needed the most.

Today's buyers are usually pretty savvy and know exactly the look they want from their new property. Thanks to social media platforms such as Pinterest and Instagram, they can research the interior look they want and source products from their favoured brands. So much so, that when it comes to visiting the new home marketing suite, there's an expectation that they will have a variety of options available to them – including flooring, fabrics for curtains and blinds, tiling and everything else in between.

This is where the show home property comes into play. Careful research of the target demographic will help the design team to shape an interiors scheme that will help the developer sell properties.

Done well, a show home can prove to be the developer's greatest marketing tool, offering a great return on investment. In designing it, everything from the flooring, to the quality of the builder's fixtures and fittings, are taken into consideration. Detail is critical in a market where competition for sales is rife.

People are much more discerning too. Gone are the throw-away days of fast-fashion culture, and in their place are considerations towards the impact of goods on the environment. From a supplier's perspective, the sustainability of a product and whether it can be recycled are crucial. Where has it been sourced? What kind of packaging has it arrived in? And can it be recycled? They are all questions that suppliers need to address.

So, what is shaping the modern home? It would seem that variety and quality products which stand the test of time are increasingly important, along with an emerging and very real concern about the environment. And, of course, style that will never go out of fashion.

Peter Kelsey is MD at Designer Contracts

# SHAPING THE MODERN HOME

As the housebuilding sector continues to evolve, Peter Kelsey of Designer Contracts offers his perspective on how buyer expectations have shaped the design of the modern home.

It's interesting to look back, particularly over the past 20 years, to see just how much the new build sector has changed – especially in terms of the added extras on offer to buyers.

New home buyers expect much more from their property than they once did, and the 'extras' on offer from developers tend to reflect market conditions. The tougher the market, the better the deals, and while some builders offer to pay stamp duties or legal fees, the value of 'free carpets and curtains' is much higher – while actually costing the builder less!

Marketing suites also have a much broader and more sophisticated choice of finishing touches than they once did – from the latest flooring options, to window dressings and 'spiced up,' top-of-the-range kitchens and appliances. Buyers have never had it so good.

Thirty years ago, consumers could expect very little choice. Indeed, for many, it was a case of one colour of carpet throughout the whole property – including wet areas such as the bathroom and kitchen. If buyers were lucky, they had the option of one colour upstairs and another down. Driven

by choice, today's expectations are higher, and developers are more willing than ever to meet the demands of the consumer with a variety of options, including a comprehensive selection of flooring.

Carpet has traditionally been the go-to flooring for domestic properties since the 1930s, when it became more affordable for the everyday homeowner. Before that, wood parquet was the choice for many, as it was low-cost and reasonably easy to maintain – something that remains an important factor for many homeowners today.

Fast forward to the 2019 market, and we're seeing demand for a much more luxurious look. This is reflected in the number of realistic wood and natural stone effect luxury vinyl tiles (LVT) flooring collections on the market, from high-end brands offering a stylish and affordable alternative to the real thing. Importantly, LVT has none of the associated care issues of real stone and wood – it's easy to clean and maintain and great for busy, time-poor families.

Modern buyers will usually select several flooring choices for their new property. Carpet is still a staple, usually in neutral

## New LVT products on Kahrsflooring.com



Shown for the first time at BAU, **Kährs Luxury Tiles** is a comprehensive offering of over 170 high quality, non-repetitive, waterproof and phthalate-free luxury vinyl tile designs, finished with a highly durable and robust ceramic coating. Kährs Luxury Tiles combine the beautiful and natural appearance of wood and stone with all the benefits of resilient flooring.

The modern floors provide excellent durability, even in areas with high traffic, and are based on wood or stone designs in a variety of colours and looks, including stunning wood herringbone and patterned stone designs.

023 9245 3045 [www.kahrsflooring.com](http://www.kahrsflooring.com)

## 28 colours to keep kitchens on trend



With a pedigree in supplying top quality materials with a top quality service, **Königstone** is proud of its growing range of quartz worktops: Königquartz. Quartz is one of the toughest natural substances making it the perfect material for kitchen worktops. The stone is mixed with silica,

and sometimes crushed glass, and is then bonded together with polyester resin and colouring. Quartz worktops are highly scratch-, stain- and heat-resistant, have a consistent design from the engineered aspect and are easy to maintain. The Königquartz range is currently made up of 28 colours with varying designs to complement any kitchen scheme.

[info@konigstone.co.uk](mailto:info@konigstone.co.uk)



## Armitage Shanks enhances DOC M offering to better support

Armitage Shanks, the renowned commercial washroom solutions provider, has enhanced its industry-leading DOC M package alongside new research around sight loss and dementia. For the last few decades, Armitage Shanks has worked closely with occupational therapists to create the most inclusive solutions which guarantee compliance in commercial and residential care sector washrooms. Now, the manufacturer has adapted its DOC M offering to comprise more visually distinctive products. Due to the colour's optimum visual properties, Armitage Shanks' easy to specify DOC M packages now include red toilet seats, hinged arms, toilet roll holders and back rests. The products, suitable for residential care, hospitality, leisure and office environments, are all quick to install and maximise accessibility for those suffering from sight loss and dementia. At the same time, they also help ensure building owners comply with legislation and maintain high levels of hygiene. Armitage Shanks revamped DOC M offering also includes new, easy to install, exposed shower packs within the range which guarantee compliance in facilities with inclusive wet rooms. For more information, please watch the video or visit the **Ideal Standard** website.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBDXPlm5A9I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBDXPlm5A9I) [www.idealspec.co.uk/sectors/doc-m\\_s20\\_c1.html](http://www.idealspec.co.uk/sectors/doc-m_s20_c1.html)

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## Norcros Adhesives offers the best solutions for today's housebuilders

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

01782 524140 [www.norcros-adhesives.com](http://www.norcros-adhesives.com)



## Kingspan TEK provides off-site solution



Silverlake is an exciting new development, constructed by Conservation Builders Ltd, which offers lakeside holiday homes amongst the beautiful heathlands, woodland and lakes of West Dorset. The newbuild project is designed to be an exemplar of sustainable development from design to future operation, and the latest

phase utilises 4,000 m<sup>2</sup> of the **Kingspan TEK** Building System for the walls and roofs of the new properties. The Kingspan TEK Building System was selected as it allowed for predictable off-site construction and design flexibility, as well as providing exceptional out-of-the-box fabric performance.

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

## Saving gas in Scunthorpe



A brand-new housing development in Scunthorpe called Yaddethorpe Grange has **Alpha Heating Innovation's** InTec GS boilers installed in all 68 properties. Incorporating the latest flue gas heat recovery technology, the InTec GS is perfect for the environmentally conscious homeowner. As well as

the potential to reduce gas consumption by up to 35 per cent when providing hot water, it has a low electrical consumption. In terms of its components the InTec GS scores highly with a stainless-steel heat exchanger and high efficiency Grundfos pump and hydroblock assembly. It uses the same connections as a standard combi so is easy to fit and comes with a five-year warranty as standard meaning peace of mind for all parties.

[www.alpha-innovation.co.uk](http://www.alpha-innovation.co.uk)

## Development benefits from insulation solution



© Michael Whitestone

A development for contemporary urban living in Bristol is benefiting from the latest advancement in vacuum insulation technology and exceptional thermal performance with the **Kingspan OPTIM-R E** Roofing System. The building includes several small roof-top balconies, which are above heated spaces and offer an extension to the living areas. Installers at Youngs Roofing noted that "the need to retain low threshold heights whilst meeting the demanding U-value of 0.14 W/m<sup>2</sup>.K provided a challenge" for this project. The Kingspan OPTIM-R E Roofing System offered the perfect solution. With an ultra-slim 80 mm thick design, Kingspan OPTIM-R E delivers an outstanding thermal conductivity of 0.009 W/m.K.

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

## Insulation performance and daylighting



New research from building consultants, Peutz B.V., has revealed that by using higher performing insulation within rainscreen and cavity walls, it is possible to reduce construction thicknesses and achieve noticeable improvements in internal natural light levels. Its findings are explored in full in the updated Daylighting White Paper from **Kingspan Insulation**. The findings showed that in all

scenarios, the constructions using Kingspan Kooltherm insulation achieved improved average daylight factors. The percentage improvements ranged from: 10.6 – 63.2 per cent with Kingspan Kooltherm K15 Rainscreen Board; 13.7 per cent - 23.2 per cent with Kingspan Kooltherm K106 Cavity Board; and 6.3 per cent - 24.3 per cent with Kingspan Kooltherm K108 Cavity Board.

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

## Commodore Kitchens brings Style to the South Bank for Bellway

**C**ontract kitchen specialist, Commodore Kitchens, has completed the design, fabrication and installation of 320 high specification kitchens for Bellway Homes' new flagship residential development in Nine Elms, The Residence.

The Residence is a luxurious development of one, two and three-bedroom apartments on London's South Bank with enviable river views. The former industrial area is currently undergoing a major transformation into a thriving residential and business district. Inspired by the architecture of New York, The Residence is a standout scheme in this regeneration area and the apartments' contemporary specification boasts high quality appliances and furnishings, including custom-designed, quality kitchens.

Commodore Kitchens designed and manufactured the bespoke kitchen units, which provide a sense of luxury and quality. The units are handle-less with high gloss, soft close doors and drawers and under cabinet LED strip lights. The kitchens feature Silestone work surfaces with matching full height splashbacks and include a range of high specification, integrated appliances including oven, microwave, touch control induction hob, wine

cooler and fridge-freezer.

Buyers were given the opportunity to choose from a palette of three kitchen colours and had the option to upgrade appliances from AEG to Miele. Providing the buyer with the opportunity to choose was an important part of the overall brief, enabling buyers to tailor their property to their personal taste and preference.

Henry Glendinning, project manager from Bellway commented "The Residence is one of Bellway's flagship developments and the kitchens play a crucial role in attracting prospective buyers. The capability of Commodore Kitchens to manufacture and install bespoke units which further enhance the high-specification of the development has been essential. Their input during the planning and design stage has helped enable us to meet the aspirations of our buyers and to allow them an element of choice over the final look and feel of their new kitchen. Consistently high levels of quality have been achieved and the completed kitchens complement the overall exclusivity of the development."

Commodore Kitchens' design director, Darren Mahoney commented:

"The scheme continues a long-standing



partnership between Bellway and Commodore Kitchens and builds on our understanding of the elegant interior style the developer requires for high prestige projects like this. We're delighted that our turnkey approach to design, production and installation has, once again, contributed to the success of a high-end Bellway development."

01375 382323  
[www.commodorekitchens.co.uk](http://www.commodorekitchens.co.uk)

## Switch supply to permanent conversion pack



Scolmore's Switch Supply to Permanent Conversion Pack provides a retrofit smart solution to allow independent control of the lighting circuit, whilst still supplying a smoke detector with constant power.

The required components are supplied in a boxed unit - Switching Receiver, Battery Transmitter, Unfurnished MiniGrid Plate, and Retractive Module.

This solution eliminates the need for time-consuming and costly channelling and repair work. Simply replace the switch that is currently there with the retractive switch and wire in the Switching Receiver and Battery Transmitter to the retractive switch and light.

01827 63454 [www.scolmore.com](http://www.scolmore.com)

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The **Hultafors Group** Adds Hellberg Safety PPE products to its premium brand portfolio for professional tradesmen and women. With over 50 years experience in the PPE industry, the Hellberg Safety specialist equipment includes highly advanced hearing protection products, face protection and communication solutions for personal protection on site. From face guards, helmets and passive hearing protection with up to three levels of protection from low to extreme noise, Hellberg also supply secure electronic hearing protectors to suit different work environments. Getting information on the new Hellberg Safety product range is easy – just visit the website.

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



## Clearstone resin bound walkways

The contemporary homes in this North London residential development are linked by undulating walkways – one of which leads onto Hampstead Heath. The discerning homeowners wanted the original worn tar and chip replaced with a light, flexible surface that would look beautiful, feel comfortable to walk on and last a long time.

With 20 apartments, there were quite a few clients to please. **Clearstone** installed resin bound test patches of 1.5m<sup>2</sup> in four different colours and the residents chose Bronze Trio. Clearstone laid 705m<sup>2</sup> over the existing pathways to a thickness of 18mm and, for a clean sharp finish, Clearstone edged the paths with aluminium AluXL.

Durable and long-lasting, Clearstone resin bound is a water-permeable SuDs compliant surface, so there's no puddling, low maintenance and it's easily cleaned with a quick power-wash.

Clearstone uses only the highest quality resins and aggregate blends, so their paving won't crack or fade and, because they formulate their own BBA certified product ClearBound, they offer a 10-year guarantee.

"Everyone is happy. It looks 100 times better than before and the Clearstone people were very professional and helpful," says residents' management committee members.

01273 358177 [www.clearstonepaving.co.uk](http://www.clearstonepaving.co.uk)



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## The newest clothing innovations in 2019



**Snickers Workwear's** 200-page catalogue has all you need to know about the UK's most extensive range of working clothes for professional tradesmen and women. There's something for every trade you can name in the Snickers Workwear range – AllroundWork, RUFFWork, LITEWork and FLEXIWork clothing – Trousers, Jackets, Tool Vests, Shirts, Underwear, Accessories and much more – plus an extensive range of EN-certified PPE working

clothes. Added to which, there's the most innovative street-smart stretch fabrics for mobile comfort and a Layered Clothing System that ensures you can choose clothes to suit the weather on site – rain or shine, wind or snow.

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

## A new brand launch from Talasey Group



The **Talasey Group**, formerly known as Natural Paving Products (UK) is delighted to announce the release of the latest landscaping product to its portfolio with the launch of a new resin bound aggregate system, Resiscape. The system is flat in appearance and features an even and uniform finish on its surface. Unlike other resin-based products that might discolour under ultraviolet radiation,

Resiscape has been manufactured to be UV stable. This ensures they will not go brown over time, meaning homeowners and specifiers can be confident their project will continue to look great for many years to come.

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However, since the break-out of fire is never predictable, a fire door, unlike any other door, must perform to its prime purpose: to delay the spread of fire and smoke, protecting lives and property.

Since the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the ability of fire doors to perform has been at the top of the construction industry's agenda – but at the time of writing this, the results of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) investigation into fire door burn times are yet to be published. The BWF's Fire Door Alliance believes that only third-party certification of fire doors and doorsets can provide true confidence in fire safety.

#### PERFORMANCE

The performance of a fire door assembly, commonly referred to as a fire door, depends on a number of factors including design, manufacture, installation and ongoing maintenance.

A fire door assembly is a system of

# THE CASE FOR THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION

Helen Hewitt of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) explores the intricacies of third-party fire door certification and its benefits.

components which not only includes the door, but also the frame, ironmongery, seals, and its glazing. These components must all work as one unit and perform as they're designed, otherwise the door may not be fit for purpose.

A fire door's effectiveness is determined by its ability to resist fire and cold smoke. The two main classifications are FD30 and FD60, which means a door can provide resistance to fire for 30 minutes and 60 minutes respectively according to British Standards. Similarly, a door that can also resist the passage of smoke is referred to as FD30S for 30 minutes, and for 60 minutes FD60S. It's important to note that smoke control is not classified for a particular period of time.

#### THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION

Fire doors that are manufactured in isolation without independent scrutiny are unlikely to be subject to a retest programme when the design is changed, or there is a change in the supply chain for raw materials and/or components. This is why third-party certification is so important, as it ensures that there is a robust and ongoing testing programme.

The certification process relies on three stages: passing the British Standard tests, a strict production control systems audit and, crucially, repeated and regular retesting. This provides specifiers and building owners with reassurance and confidence that the fire door will achieve the performance criteria that its accompanying documentation outlines. Supporters of the

**THE DOOR FRAME, IRONMONGERY, SEALS AND GLAZING MUST ALL WORK AS ONE UNIT AND PERFORM AS THEY'RE DESIGNED, OTHERWISE THE DOOR MAY NOT BE FIT FOR PURPOSE**





Fire Door Safety Week campaign, since its inception seven years ago, will know that the BWF Fire Door Alliance has long called for improvements to fire door safety and the mandatory requirement for third-party certificated fire doors. The process of independent third-party testing will only grow in importance following the current investigation into fire doors by MHCLG.

#### INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE

While certified components are essential, the performance of a fire door is also dependent on the quality of its installation and its ongoing maintenance once in situ. The installation should be completed by a competent installer in exact accordance with the specification and third-party certification scope as detailed on the manufacturer's instructions.

It's important that this documentation is retained and adhered to throughout the fire door's service life, because unless there is clear evidence that the components are compatible, the building owner may not be able to demonstrate compliance under the Building Regulations or the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRO).

#### FIRE DOOR SAFETY WEEK

Raising awareness of the correct specification, installation and maintenance of

fire doors has never been more important in the wake of the Grenfell Tower atrocity and the MHCLG investigation. Although awareness of fire safety has certainly grown since Grenfell, there is still a long way to go, and this precisely why industry-led campaigns such as the Fire Door Safety Week – organised by the British Woodworking Federation – are so vitally important.

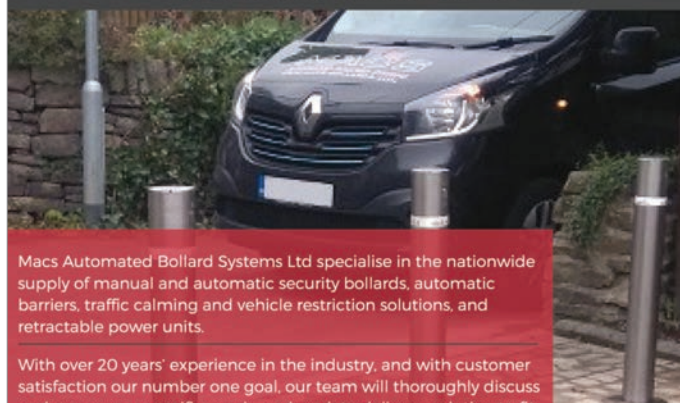
The BWF is currently planning for the eighth Fire Door Safety Week campaign to help increase understanding of the vital role that fire doors play in protecting both lives and properties. Taking place from 23-29 September, the campaign will highlight bad practices while providing technical support and guidance to the construction industry, as well as raising awareness of the importance of fire doors.

By selecting a door that is third-party certificated, correctly installed and supported by an ongoing maintenance programme, building owners and occupants can be confident that in the unfortunate event of a fire, their fire door will prevent the spread of fire and smoke, and save lives.

Helen Hewitt is CEO of the British Woodworking Federation (BWF)




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# OFFSITE: NOT THE PANACEA?

The Government is making a big push for modern methods of construction as part of the solution to the housing crisis. While offsite has a key role in the market, it might not be the panacea many hope it to be, according to Chris Stanley of The Concrete Block Association.

This will come as nothing new to readers of *Housebuilder & Developer*, but there's no ambiguity about the fact the UK is in the grips of a housing crisis, and the need for increasing the number of new starts is pressing.

Back in November 2017 Philip Hammond announced the new targets. He himself admitted there would not be one magic bullet to solve the problem, implying that everyone across the housebuilding sector would have to pull together.

As such, you would have thought the approach would be to inspire hearts and minds across the whole construction industry, yet the Government's actions suggest otherwise. While we're falling short of meeting those targets (300,000 new starts a year), there is a concerted push for one type of construction in favour of others, namely offsite.

While offsite is among the range of systems we have at our disposal, it is not the definitive answer to current problems. In my view it's inefficient and misguided to put all our eggs in one basket.

## OUT OF PROPORTION

Plenty of media excitement exists around modular housing, but arguably the only reason this type of construction method is receiving so much attention is because of favourable Government funding schemes.

There are some short-term benefits to building modular homes, which is why the Government has aggressively backed it as a construction method. It can reduce labour requirements and limit onsite activities, but investing in offsite manufacturing is still at an early stage and investment costs are high.

The Government could be said to be twisting the arm of the developers, promising funding with the caveat that it must be spent on modular.

Companies such as Ilke Homes and Project Etopia claim to be able to produce 2,000 units a year (or, 18 a day) – but we are yet to see evidence to back this up.

To offer some context, by comparison around 85 per cent of new build housing is currently achieved with masonry construction. The sector, as it stands, is more than

capable of absorbing the 85 per cent of the current shortfall (80,000). Furthermore, concrete block production for example is not at high risk with regards to Brexit, as most of the constituents are sourced within the UK and blocks are manufactured and delivered regionally.

## NEW IS NOT ALWAYS PROGRESS

Traditional forms of construction are considered to be 'untrendy,' and therefore are underrepresented in design programmes on national TV. These shows prefer to bestow screen time on 'fashionable' methods such as steel frames, timber cladding and quirky things such as hemp insulation. We have a tendency to believe that progress is linear, and to assume that things are better simply for the fact of being new. This is just one of a whole host of misconceptions which urgently need to be overturned.

Masonry has been the primary building material for the majority of our houses for centuries. If you look at the Peabody and Guinness Trust estates from the Victorian/Edwardian era, they are still standing and still occupied. They have also become the fabric of our neighbourhoods – a particularly iconic one, the Boundary Estate in London, is a great example.

In contrast, most of the post-war construction boom modular dwellings, such as the Airey houses from the 50s and 60s, are no longer inhabitable – however, I'm by no means suggesting that techniques haven't evolved since.

We should be careful not to repeat past mistakes – that is, cutting corners because of a push to achieve results now. We need to be building for longevity, which is true sustainability. The speed at which we need to build requires traditional onsite methods to keep making use of the years of accrued skills and utilising readily available products.

## THE DIFFERENCE IS BLURRED

Indeed, evidence from Arup in the Government's 2018 report, 'Building for Change', suggests modular requires the creation of a new 'manu-construction'



workforce, not a reskilling of the existing construction workforce. Why focus on a method that necessitates spending such time and resources, when most of our labour know how to build traditionally?

The debate of onsite versus offsite is something of a red herring. Construction types can be said to always be hybrid to an extent. Labour will always be needed for assembly onsite, even if modular homes are produced in a factory before being ferried onsite.

We all know that when you start digging, you uncover unexpected things, no matter how many tests you've done in advance – stuff happens, spontaneously. With a concrete block, you can be flexible and reactive. If you come across a Victorian water main while excavating, you can shift your footing ever-so-slightly, but you can't do that with factory-made modules.

The housebuilding sector is and should be diverse, and there should be room for both onsite and offsite to receive funding to create a level of parity. As with any complex problem, there is no easy fix. There is a need to look at different build methods, but let's not focus all our attention on this debate. As outlined in 'Building for Change', there are bigger issues to address: the out-dated business model of the industry as whole, and our lacking infrastructure.

Chris Stanley is housing manager at The Concrete Block Association

## New Imperial pressed and engineering bricks



**Imperial Bricks** has introduced a new range of pressed and engineering bricks. The new 3"/75mm bricks – Accrington Smooth Red, Blue Engineering and Manchester Pressed Red – can be used to match existing brickwork or surrounding properties for RMI and new build in the North and Midlands. Imperial Accrington Smooth Red (Class A) is a high-quality red engineering brick, colour matched to original Accrington stock bricks. The Imperial Blue Engineering (Class B) features an attractive metallic finish and is a strong and durable brick suitable for use below damp course proofing or to cap freestanding walls. The new Manchester Pressed Red features natural shade variations that replicate traditional pressed stock bricks found throughout Northern England.

01952 750816 [www.imperialbricks.co.uk](http://www.imperialbricks.co.uk)

## New Pro-Tek™ WPC engineered vinyl flooring



**PRO-TEK™ WPC** - the next generation engineered vinyl floor – has launched in the UK. Developed to meet the demands of the commercial and residential sectors, PRO-TEK™ WPC features the latest technology and offers superior performance, ease of installation and low maintenance, as well as

reduced lifecycle costs and eco-benefits. Five collections offer a total of 40 designs, in wood and tile effects, with matching four-sided bevelled edges and a complete range of matching WPC vinyl-wrapped accessories. The new waterproof WPC engineered vinyl floor is a phthalate-free wood plastic composition design with a robust construction, measuring 7mm to 8.5mm in thickness and comprising seven individual layers.

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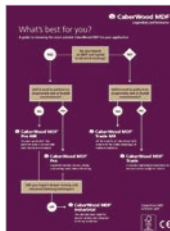


**Ancon** has extended its technical services offering with the addition of webinars. The first webinar available in the series is entitled *The Correct Use of Wall Ties in Brick-to-Block Construction* and can be viewed on the Ancon website.

This webinar provides viewers with information on the various types of cavity wall restraints and their design considerations including how to limit heat/sound transfer. The webinars are delivered by Ancon technical staff who have considerable technical experience of applying seminar content in practice.

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## A guide to CaberWood MDF



**Norbord** has released a guide to help tradespeople know which product from its CaberWood MDF range is the most suitable for their project. The flowchart asks simple questions and the answers to these directs the user to one of the five products in the CaberWood MDF range. This includes CaberWood MDF Pro, which is suitable for straightforward machine and surface finishing; CaberWood MDF Pro MR, a moisture resistant panel ideal for application in

humid interiors; CaberWood MDF Trade, a lighter board; CaberWood MDF Trade MR, the benefits of the lighter board with added moisture resistance; or CaberWood MDF Industrial, a high-performing, deep-routing panel.

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