

Housebuilder & Developer survey reveals housebuilders are resilient, despite political uncertainty



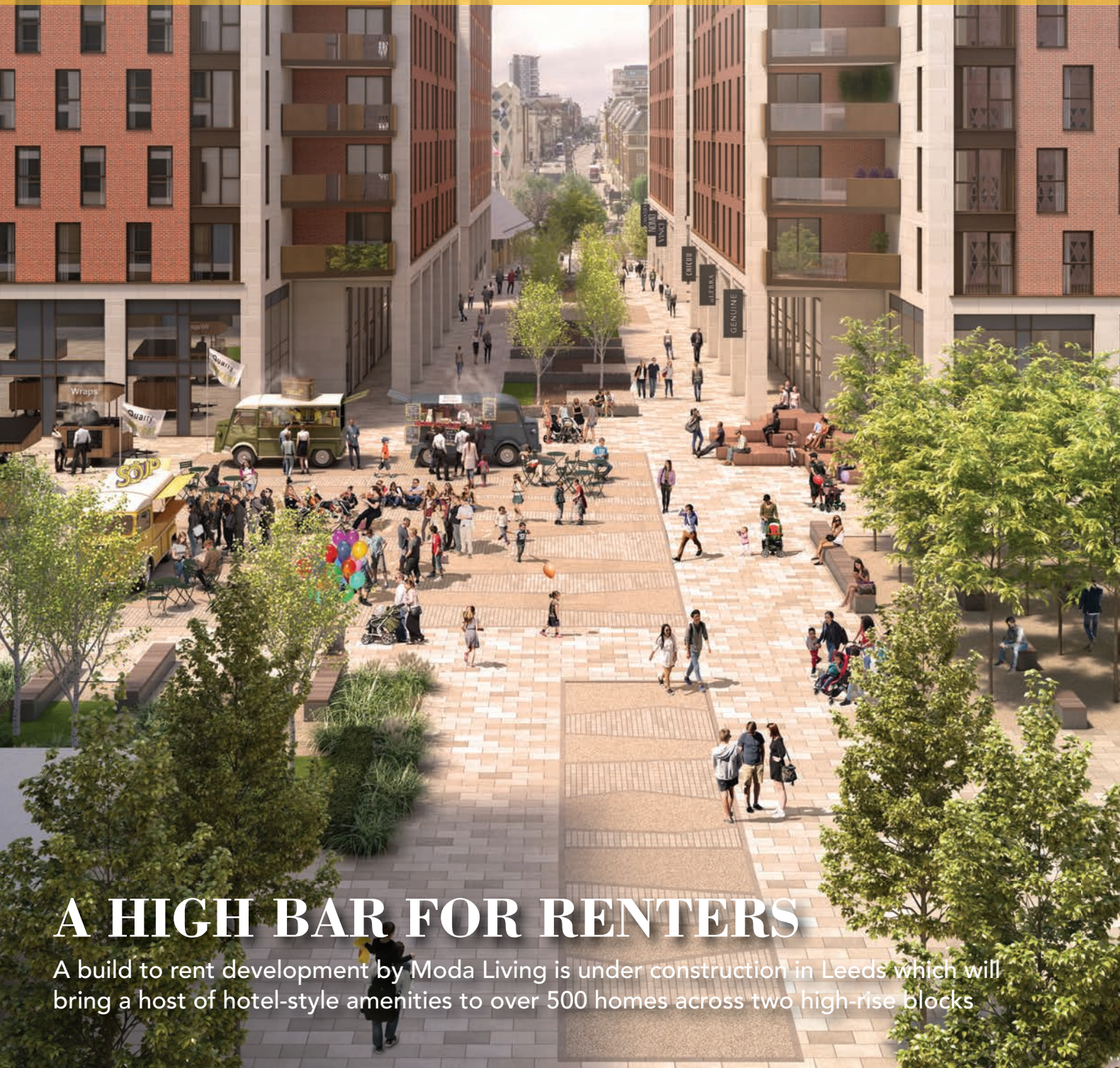
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James Parker

FROM THE EDITOR

With the recent news being somewhat bleak in terms of signs of progress in the housing sector, it's important to focus on the positives when they arrive. The awarding of the prestigious Stirling Prize by the RIBA (for what the architects' body judges as the UK's Best New Building) to a relatively humble council estate in Norwich is fantastic recognition not only of good design, but also of the social importance of such schemes to their communities.

With many recent Stirling Prize winners going to what might be described as the built equivalent of the trophies of prosperity (last year's winner was the £1bn Bloomberg building in London), this year's prize is a refreshing departure. Giving the award to Norwich City Council's Goldsmith Street also reflects the strength of the sustainability agenda, in the light of the 'climate challenge' (that's the branding we have given to a new series of articles in *Housebuilder & Developer* on practical sustainability solutions – see more on page 26).

The fact that the homes in Norwich barely need heating – their heavily-insulated structure meaning human beings are enough to provide heating most of the year – means they are a viable means of living for decades to come for cash-strapped residents. As our regular contributor Patrick Mooney writes on page 14, it's inspiring other councils to take up the baton and aim for much higher energy performance.

Their design may not be what most people have recently become used to, it's largely rows of densely packed terrace housing with a shared 'ginnel' behind – harking back to Victorian times. However the RIBA has recognised that these finely-detailed brick buildings provide excellent living standards and good quality communal facilities that can perhaps support community living in a better way than many 'traditional' estates of semi-detached or detached homes.

When it looks as if the current Building Regulations Part L review may be clamping down on the current state of affairs in terms of 'transitional provisions' – whereby developments can be built out to obsolete Regulations (once finally completed) – maybe it's time for more developers to emulate Goldsmith Street and reach for a higher sustainability standard?

James Parker

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The manufacturer of the paper used within our publication is a Chain-of-Custody certified supplier operating within environmental systems certified to both ISO 14001 and EMAS in order to ensure sustainable production.

Subscription costs just £48 for 12 issues, including post and packing. Phone 01435 863500 for details. Individual copies of the publication are available at £5 each inc p & p.

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Printed in England



ON THE COVER



11.19

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A HIGH BAR FOR RENTERS

A build to rent development by Moda Living is under construction in Essex. It will bring a host of hotel-style amenities to over 500 homes across two floors.

New York Square, Moda Living.
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Zero starter homes built of 200,000 target

A total of zero Starter Homes have been built as a result of the 2015 Government scheme to build 200,000 new homes for first time buyers in England by 2020, a recent National Audit Office report found.

The Conservative Party's April 2015 General Election Manifesto committed to building 200,000 starter homes, built exclusively for first-time buyers under the age of 40, and to be sold at a 20 per cent discount. According to the NAO's report, the November 2015 Spending Review provided £2.3bn to support the delivery of the first 60,000 of these homes, with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) spending nearly an extra £174m on acquiring and preparing sites for them between 2015 and 2018.

The NAO said: "The funding originally intended for Starter Homes has instead been spent on acquiring and preparing brownfield sites for housing more generally, some of which is affordable housing."

The report also found that the Starter Homes legislative provisions are still not in force, including relevant sections of the Housing and Planning Act (2016). The MHCLG expected to introduce the secondary legislation and planning guidance required for Starter Homes in 2019, but it is yet to lay the regulations in Parliament. The NAO said: "Developers can, and do, market discounted properties as 'starter homes' as part of their contribution to affordable housing, but such properties do not necessarily conform to all the intended requirements of Starter Homes as defined in the Housing and Planning Act."

The MHCLG "no longer has a budget dedicated to the delivery of Starter Homes," the report continued. The 2017 housing White Paper replaced the target of 200,000 Starter Homes with a target to "help 200,000 households into home ownership" through a range of Government-backed schemes, including Starter Homes, shared ownership, Right to Buy and Help to Buy products. The November 2017 Autumn Budget reallocated funding earmarked for Starter Homes to the £9bn Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme and the Land Assembly Fund.

North should be a world-leader in MMC, says McVey



The north has the potential to become a world-leader in offsite-constructed homes, according to the Housing Minister Esther McVey.

During a visit to Factory 2050, part of the University of Sheffield Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, she met developers, small businesses and academics to announce the Government's ambition for a new "centre of excellence" for modern methods of construction (MMC).

As part of the speech given at the event, McVey explained that "the benefits are clear," with modular homes able to be built in a factory over a week and assembled on site in a day.

"Industry has told us some homes built using modern methods can have 80 per cent fewer defects, and heating bills up to 70 per cent lower," she continued. "Homes built using modern methods can be of higher quality, greener, and built to last."

She described how she wants to see a "housing green revolution" in the north, with an emphasis on safety, quality and beauty. "We could be the global leaders in housing standards."

McVey added that to build these new homes, in an industry that she estimates will be worth £40bn "once it matures," the country "will need a brand-new workforce to make these homes offsite."

If this can be achieved, McVey envisioned that the north of England has the potential to be "the construction capital of the country for this new technology," and as such, "we need to fully embrace this."

"This could be a new hub," she concluded, "think Silicon Valley – the 'construction corridor.'"

Six LAs receive Homes England funding



Funding totalling £38.2m for six local authorities has been announced by Homes England, intended to speed up the construction of at least 2,072 homes across the country.

The money will be used by the local authorities to invest in infrastructure and enabling works to get 13 sites – from Somerset to Cheshire – ready for the development of new homes.

The Government housing agency encouraged awardees to use both local SMEs and modern methods of construction (MMC) on their sites, in order to reflect the recent Government pushes in these areas.

New sites set to benefit from Local Authority Accelerated Construction (LAAC) funding include land at Locking Parklands, Weston-Super-Mare, where North Somerset Council will receive over £9.8m of LAAC funding for infrastructure to bring forward 425 new homes, at least 30 per cent of which will be affordable. Another of the sites, in Winsford, Cheshire, will benefit from over £4.5m LAAC funding to accelerate the construction of 310 homes, including a 60-home extra care scheme.

Stephen Kinsella, chief land and development officer at Homes England, commented: "This funding will enable local authorities to prepare their sites for development and to bring forward the construction of homes. New homes will then be built out at pace using modern methods of construction."

The deals are the latest to be awarded through the Government's £450m LAAC programme, which was launched to help "unlock public land and increase the speed of delivery on local authority housing schemes."

Homes England said it is "looking to work with other ambitious local authorities where LAAC funding can help unlock sites for development."

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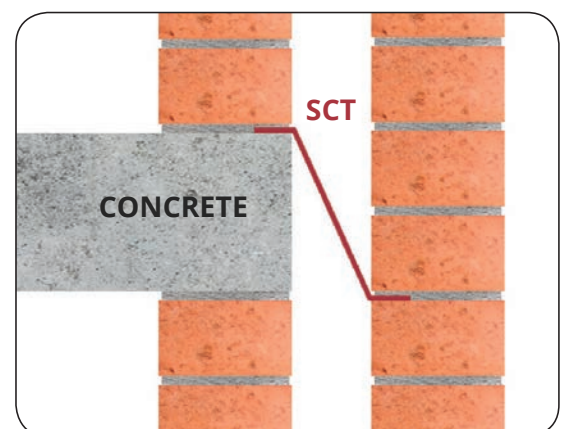
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Customer service is key to home purchases, survey reveals

Research has found 94 per cent of people say that the customer service they receive when buying a home is key, and 83 per cent stating that poor customer service would put them off buying or renting a new build home, according to a survey by Classic Folios.

With builders feeling the pressure to make moving as seamless as possible to achieve the desired 5 star Home Builders Federation rating, the research found that 63 per cent of people claim that as long as they are kept adequately informed and communications are honest throughout the buying process, they would not mind the hassle of buying a new home, which is found to be the “most stressful” life event by one-third of Brits.

Despite these claims, however, 17 per cent of those surveyed have experienced poor customer service during the buying or renting process, with the majority of those surveyed stating there are factors such as better communication and management processes, that would make the home buying experience easier, demonstrating a need for improvement in the industry.

The research also revealed that nearly a third of people were concerned about finding problems that require further work once the property was completed.

A total of 46 per cent of those polled considered the buying process to be easier with a new build, as they can choose

certain options, such as colour palettes and fitted appliances, when buying off plan directly with the developer or builder.

Furthermore, the research found that when buying a home, 47 per cent consider the most important factor when deciding on where to buy is being near shops, followed by local amenities such as pubs and restaurants (43 per cent) with being in the catchment area for local schools also an important factor.

David Graydon, managing director at Classic Folios, commented: “To purchasers, buying a new home is more than just purchasing a building – it’s the whole experience from reservation, through to completion and aftercare, so it’s important that developers and other housing providers are taking this on board to meet their customers’ requirements, while at the same time enhancing their brand.”

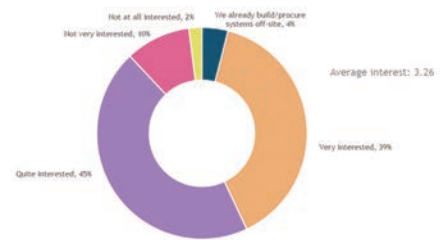
Industry is more resilient than thought, HBD survey finds

Despite the many barriers to building and the political uncertainty reported in recent years, it appears as though the housebuilding sector is suffering less from industry challenges than is often argued, with builders and developers instead looking ahead to increasing sustainability and adoption of new technologies.

According to research conducted by *Housebuilder & Developer* on the magazine’s readership – which is chiefly top employees of SME housebuilders and developers – issues such as Brexit and the skills crisis are not as troubling for smaller firms as is being portrayed.

Though Brexit and its effects have been delayed, the significant uncertainty across the sector is undeniable, and the media has reported impacts of that uncertainty already occurring across the industry. According to the survey however, there are indications the vast majority (84 per cent) of firms have not been affected by the process of leaving the EU at all as yet, and are carrying on as normal. Only 16 per cent reported that they had seen any impact of Brexit so far on their business.

The skills crisis is another issue that is purported as being an industry-wide challenge, affecting builders from the small-



est to the biggest. Our survey revealed however that 63 per cent of respondents had not been at all affected by this shortage, though 37 per cent did. This split is less extreme than over the Brexit question however, and 37 per cent indicates a significant number of firms may be struggling with skills – itself a problem set to worsen post-Brexit.

Site acquisition was another issue raised in the survey, with respondents asked to answer how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statement – “Our company is finding it increasingly difficult to secure sites to build on.” This seems to be something of a ‘headline’ problem for smaller housebuilders, with only 6 per cent strongly disagreeing, 25 per cent disagreeing, and 34 per cent agreeing. Only 7 per cent were strongly in agreement, with the rest remaining on the fence.

Despite these barriers, there was a great interest shown in environmental issues and modern methods of construction (MMC). This showed the issues were high on the agenda for professionals leading SME firms; over 68 per cent of the respondents were top employees, including 23 per cent being chief executives, 23 per cent managers, 11 per cent directors and 11 per cent chairmen.

Sustainability and environmental issues were seen as especially important to the respondents, with none citing that it was not at all important to their roles. Just 10 per cent said it was not very important, while 49 per cent said it was quite important, and 41 per cent considered the issues to be very important to their role. With the impending climate challenge the world faces, this is positive news, especially as the UK built environment contributes around 40 per cent of the country’s total carbon footprint currently.

Another potentially positive response was regarding readers’ levels of interest in MMC. While SMEs are not always connected with modular building, this assumption is shifting, with just 2 per cent of respondents not at all interested in the building methods, 10 per cent not very interested, 45 per cent quite interested and 39 per cent very interested. This shift has perhaps not taken full effect yet however, with just 4 per cent of respondents currently building or procuring offsite systems.



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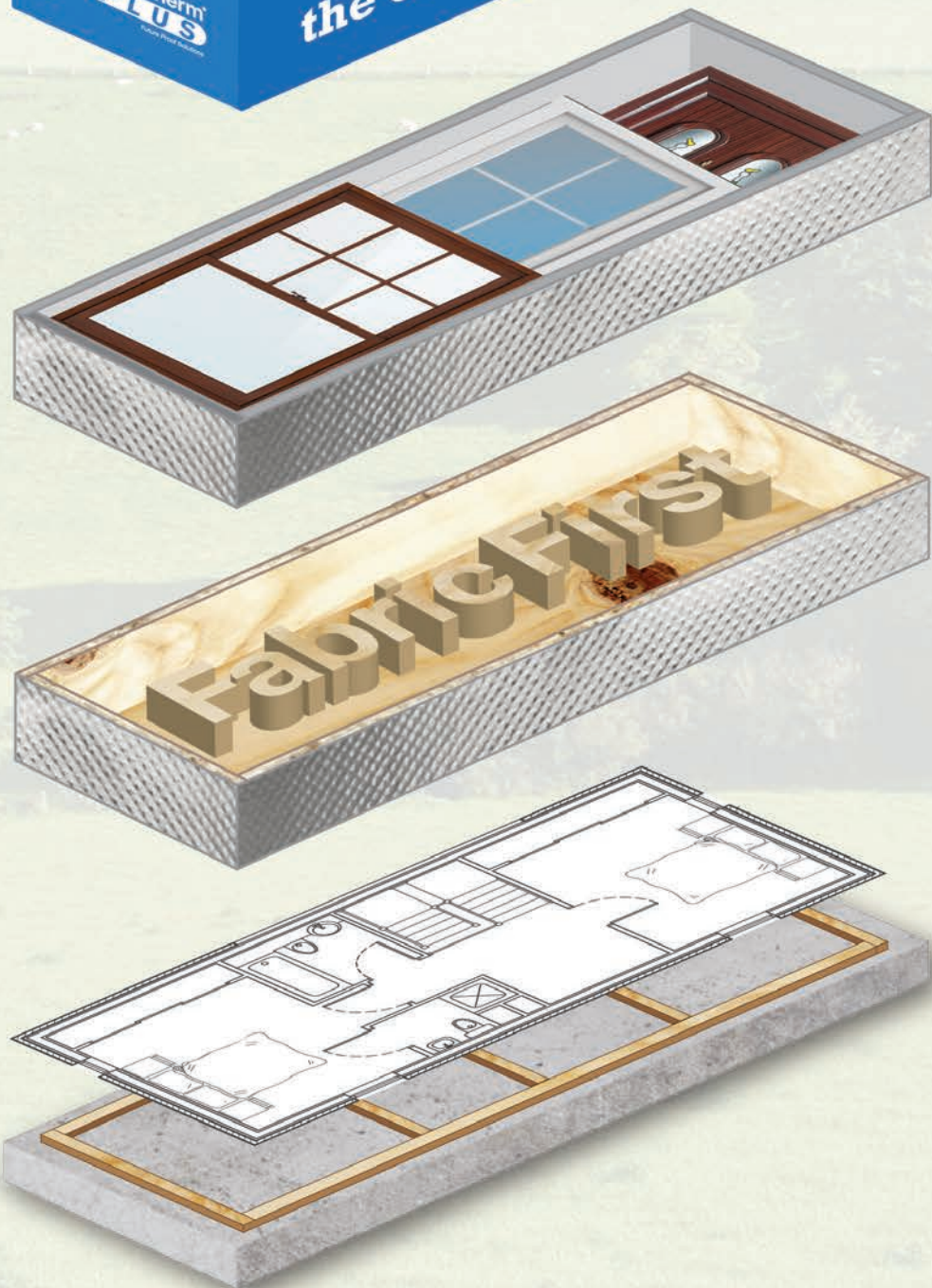
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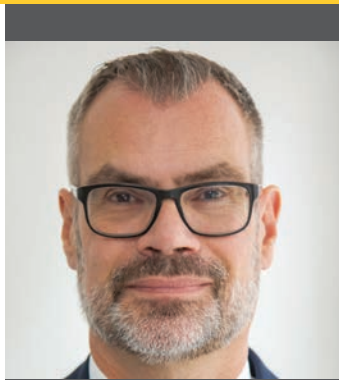


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Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders

THE INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

THE SME CASE FOR SELF-BUILD

Brian Berry of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), explores how and why Government policy designed to aid self-builders can actually help SME housebuilders too.

When discussing how to support small- and medium-sized housebuilders (SME), one area that is often not seen as a policy solution is empowering more people to commission the building of their own homes. This is often still treated as a niche area, or only for the lucky 'Grand Design' types who have the money and time to do it. However, it is SME housebuilders that are building these houses, so by supporting more people to commission self-builds, we also help the SME sector.

Data on the self and custom build sector in the UK, and its link to SME housebuilders, is on the whole, however, hard to come by, which is why we included a few questions related to the sector in our 2019 survey.

The results confirmed that the custom and self-build market is a major source of work for SME housebuilders, and demonstrates how the two sectors are very much connected. The data showed that over half (52 per cent) of SME housebuilders had built a home to the plan and specification of a new home owner in the last year. Of these, 12 per cent have built more than 10 houses this way in the last year. Therefore, it is clear that by supporting the custom and self-build sector, you are indirectly boosting SME housebuilders. We plan to include this question in the survey every year so that we can track progress, and see if the sector is growing.

If the Government wish to diversify the housebuilding industry, then empowering the consumer to build their own home seems to be one clear way of achieving this. So, what more can be done to support people to build their own home, and to make this more of a mainstream option? One new and exciting initiative, that could be replicated across the UK, is 'Self Build Wales,' due to be launched by the Development Bank of Wales later this year.

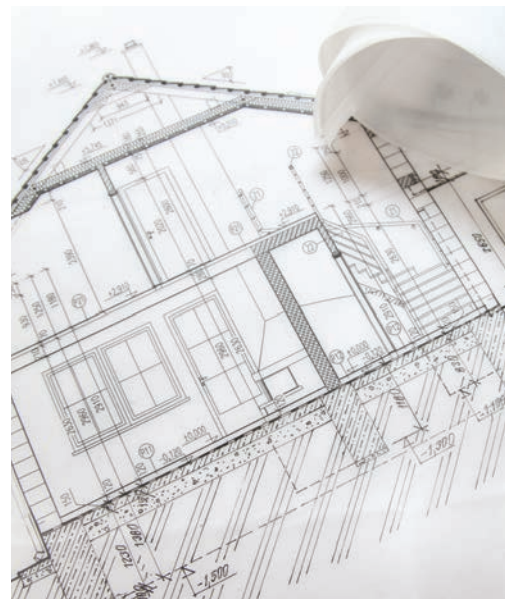
How will this work? Local authorities across Wales will free up small serviced brownfield plots which will then be listed on an interactive map of Wales that prospective self-builders can browse. Each plot on the map will contain information about the price of the plot, planning information, approved designs,

estimated build costs, and the application process. Once the self-builder has chosen a plot, they will be able to choose a prepared design and then find an approved builder to build it.

In terms of finance, the self-builder would only need to provide a deposit of 25 per cent upfront for the cost of the plot, and then the Development Bank of Wales will provide a loan to cover the cost of the plot and building cost. The self-builder wouldn't have to make any repayments on the loan until the property is completed and mortgaged, and the builder will be paid in instalments through the process. Once the house had been built, the homeowner would not be able to rent or sell their property for a minimum of five years after completion, without incurring a penalty fee.

This is a radical new policy and has the chance to bolster the self and custom build market in Wales and therefore SME housebuilders too. It is clearly too early to be able to tell whether the policy will be a success or not, and clearly there is a high amount of risk involved, but it could provide a framework for other schemes across the UK.

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Patrick Mooney, news editor
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CAN COUNCILS DELIVER ON THE QUALITY AS WELL AS THE NUMBERS?

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and news editor of Housing Management & Maintenance, discusses the barriers to councils upping their game in terms of housing quality as well as output.

The importance of getting local authorities building tens of thousands of new council homes has been amply demonstrated by the large-scale cuts made to housing association development programmes in recent weeks.

It is also revealed in the growing figures of those in temporary accommodation (an estimated 84,740 households) and on housing waiting lists (up to two million) across the country. The numbers in temporary accommodation, such as bed and breakfast hotels, includes 126,020 children – a rise of 28 per cent in the last four years.

Councils in England built just 2,550 homes last year – their highest total since 1992/93 – but clearly an inadequate number, when compared to the demands on their resources and housing services.

Now councils are hoping to up their game massively, with plans for building up to 80,000 new homes over the next five years being assembled. The drag or disincentive of only being able to replace a quarter of homes sold under Right to Buy continues to undermine these ambitious plans.

And in the dash to house thousands more people in need, councils are desperate to not repeat the mistakes of earlier decades when some of the housing built en masse, quickly became unpopular and is often derided as 'sink estates', littered with 'difficult to let' empty properties.

AWARD-WINNING DESIGN

Instead they are hoping to replicate the shining example set by Goldsmith Street in Norwich, a new council housing estate that is winning a host of design awards and has been hailed as a modern masterpiece.

Other councils with house building plans, such as York, have already been to East Anglia to see the award-winning development and no doubt they will be trying to reproduce similar designs in their own environments.

But not everybody will be able to do this and given the ambitions to build tens of thousands of homes, it is highly likely that Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) will need to contribute a significant number of the new council homes.

Interestingly the new Housing Minister Esther McVey has said she would like Britain to become a world leader in MMC. We are currently a good few years behind Germany in this respect, but it's helpful to have an aspirational target to aim for. The test of the ambition will be whether the Government backs this up with the resources necessary to become a world leader.



The recent increase in the cost of council borrowing via the Public Works Loan Board has already sent treasurers and directors of finance back to their calculations and spreadsheets, to see how the higher interest charges will impact on their council's housebuilding plans.

Another huge test will be whether MMC can deliver the sort of features and qualities that saw Goldsmith Street win the prestigious Stirling Prize, from the Royal Institute of British Architects. This has been added to the Neave Brown Award for Housing, which recognises the best new example of affordable housing in the UK and was won earlier in the year.

POPULAR WITH RESIDENTS

Goldsmith Street consists of almost 100 energy-efficient homes, laid out in rows of two-storey houses, bookended by three-storey flats, each with their own front door, space for prams and bikes, and a private balcony. Each home meets the Passivhaus Standard, meaning energy costs are estimated to be 70 per cent cheaper than the average household.

When the television news crews were being shown around by the very proud (and lucky) tenants, the energy efficiency aspect of the homes got a particularly favourable commendation. One tenant said they had only used their heating twice since they moved in.

The new houses were obviously not cheap to build, but they are producing a really useful asset with a long life and providing comfort and stability to the residents, as well as reducing their use of greenhouse gases. Compare this to the unstable and unhealthy living conditions of temporary accommodation being endured by many thousands.

The latest Government figures show that councils in England spent £93.3m on bed & breakfast accommodation in 2017/18. This is expected to have risen to well over £125m during 2018/19, as nightly charges and the numbers being accommodated in B&Bs have both risen.

This money is effectively being thrown away. It produces nothing for the councils or for the families who are being 'warehoused' until something better comes along for them. At an estimated cost of £150,000 per new council home, the money paid to the B&B owners could have provided permanent, low-rent homes for 800 families.

HELP AND SUPPORT NEEDED

In many respects this is precisely the sort of calculation that needs to be done, but only as part of a much more complicated set of questions and answers, which factors in a whole basket of issues including peoples' health and life chances, as well as the security of having



a settled home.

I have spoken with many councillors and council officers in recent months. They all see the existence and establishment of stable and successful communities as hugely important outcomes. They also feel that their efforts are not being supported sufficiently by the Government.

The long-running Brexit saga and the change of Prime Minister has distracted Whitehall to a huge degree for the last couple of years. We are also nearly 30 months on from the Grenfell Tower disaster, and might just be starting to see some movement on changes being made to Building Regulations and fire safety.

In the Queen's Speech the Government announced its intention to implement a new set of building safety standards, consistent with the Hackitt Review and focused on delivering a new safety framework for high-rise residential buildings.

However, more column inches were grabbed by Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick's plans to introduce a new shared ownership Right to Buy, which will allow HA tenants to buy as little as a 10 per cent stake initially, with staircasing allowed in increments of just one per cent.

People working in the social housing sector see this as a huge distraction and would rather the Minister was instead focused on helping councils to design and deliver thousands of new council homes.

A BROKEN MODEL

The true extent of the problem in delivering new social housing was laid bare when L&Q publicly declared that the current development model of providing cross subsidies from outright

sales was broken, and failing to deliver new rented homes in the numbers needed.

If an association with the size and ambition of L&Q is having difficulty delivering new homes at affordable rents, then you can bet the rest of the HA sector is as well.

But it is not just problems with declining grant rates and difficulties in shifting recently completed properties in a market full of nervous would-be buyers, that is making social landlords seriously re-think their spending plans.

Many social landlords are facing the prospect of having to spend huge sums on ensuring their housing stock is properly safeguarded from the risk of fire. Balancing the two is hugely problematic. The G15 group of developing HAs in the capital recently estimated they are having to earmark £6.87bn for fire safety works to their high-rise blocks.

This eye-watering sum is reducing the amount they can spend on building new affordable homes. And this is where the contribution of local councils will be so important in picking up the slack and replacing HAs as the main providers of new social homes for rent.

But the Local Government Association has warned that the one per cent increase in PWLB borrowing rates could see council housebuilding projects cancelled, postponed or pared back in size.

One person who hopes that will not happen at his council is Michael Jones, the head of housing at York City Council. He visited Goldsmith Street in Norwich back in July and he plans to build three similar estates in York to the same Passivhaus energy-efficient standards. He said: "The site visit gave us the confidence to do it. I remember getting goosebumps walking around."



HERITAGE COLOURS
8



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NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Norwich estate wins RIBA Stirling Prize

The Goldsmith Street development in Norwich has been announced as the winner of the 2019 RIBA Stirling Prize.

Comprising almost 100 ultra-low energy homes for Norwich City Council, the project is arranged in seven terrace blocks, modelled on the Victorian streets of Norwich's nearby 'Golden Triangle' district.

Designed by Mikhail Riches with Cathy Hawley, rows of two-storey houses are "bookended" by three-storey flats, each with their own front door, generous lobby space for prams and bikes, and private balcony.

The back gardens of the central terraces share a secure 'ginnel' (alley-way) for children to play together, and a wide landscaped walkway for communal gatherings runs perpendicularly through the middle of the estate. Parking has been pushed to the outer edges of the development, "ensuring that people own the streets, not their cars," said RIBA.

Energy-wise, Goldsmith Street meets rigorous Passivhaus environmental standards – "impressive for a dense, mass housing development," commented RIBA. The 'passive solar scheme' is designed to minimise fuel bills for residents (annual energy costs are estimated to be 70 per cent cheaper than for the average household). To maximise solar gain, all homes face south and every wall is over 600 mm thick, and the roofs are angled at 15 degrees to ensure each terrace does not block sunlight from homes in the street behind. Even the smallest details have been meticulously considered: letterboxes are built into external porches – rather than the front doors, to reduce any possibility of draughts – and perforated aluminium brise-soleil provide sun shading above windows and doors.

The palette of building materials references Norwich's history, such as the glossy black roof pantiles – a nod to the city's Dutch trading links – and the "creamy" clay bricks, which are similar to those found on Victorian terraces nearby. To ensure the windows echoed Victorian proportions but also met the project's low energy requirements, the architects developed a recessed feature, giving the impression of a much larger opening but limiting the amount of glass. Bespoke steel mesh garden gates and brightly coloured front doors give each home "a strong sense of individuality and ownership," said RIBA.

David Mikhail of Mikhail Riches, commented on the award: "Goldsmith Street's success is testimony to the vision and leadership of Norwich City Council. We thank them for their commitment and support. They believe that council housing tenants deserve great design.

"It is not often we are appointed to work on a project so closely aligned with what we believe matters; buildings people love and which are low impact. We hope other local authorities will be inspired to deliver beautiful homes for people who need them the most, and at an affordable price.

"To all the residents – thank you for sharing your enthusiasm, and your homes, with everyone who has visited."

The annual prize, presented since 1996, is awarded to the UK's best new building. Goldsmith Street was chosen by the Stirling Prize jury from the following shortlisted projects:

- Cork House, Berkshire by architects Matthew Barnett Howland with Dido Milne and Oliver Wilton
- London Bridge Station by architects Grimshaw
- Nevill Holt Opera, Leicestershire by Witherford Watson Mann Architects
- The Macallan Distillery and Visitor Experience, Moray by architects Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners
- The Weston, Yorkshire Sculpture Park by Feilden Fowles Architects

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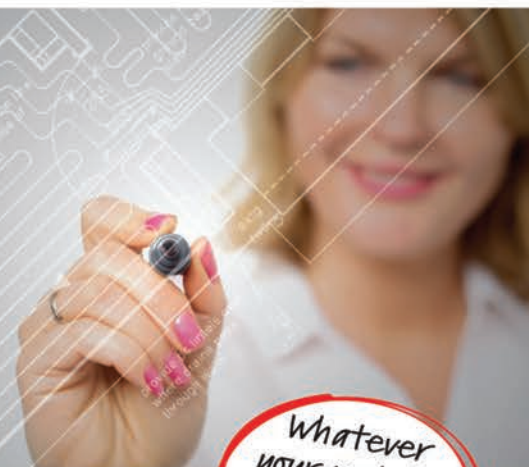
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CASE STUDY

A big eco ambition on a small site



Five new 'eco' homes have been completed on a 'micro site' in Enfield, which combine environmental efficiency with a traditional feel. Nic London, of SME builder and developer NLondon Construction, spoke to Jack Wooler.

To the north of the capital, the London Borough of Enfield is the recipient of five new highly energy efficient homes, constructed by NLondon Construction in Bush Hill Park.

Overlooking Enfield Cricket Ground, the bespoke-built terrace in Lincoln Road has been built to stringent energy specifications, offering an electric-powered heating and energy system, powered in part – and sometimes in full – by a combination of discreet solar PV panels and a battery storage system.

The homes are deceptively large – approaching through low-maintenance landscaped front gardens with off street parking, the new micro development doesn't immediately give away the scale of the interiors. Each unit houses four large double bedrooms, a reception room, luxury kitchen, and three bathrooms – one of which in each property offers a wall-mounted TV by the bath. In addition to an innovative energy system, each also has an EV car charger, and private garden to the rear.

These luxury fittings are supplemented with a 'hassle-free design,' which includes low maintenance specification in the gardens, the intelligent energy system, and 10 year Build Assure Warranty, ensuring residents' stability for years to come.

AN ETHOS OF EFFICIENCY

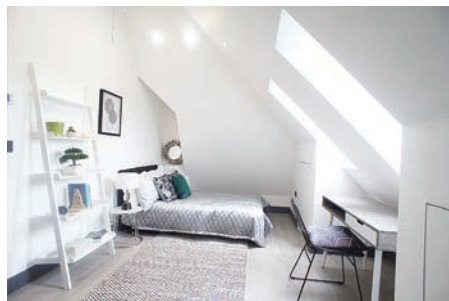
When discussing the process behind these homes and the offerings with Nic London, construction manager at NLondon Construction, it soon became clear that an ecologically-driven focus on energy-efficiency was vital to the development process; it's also an integral part of this particular professional's ethos.

"As a builder and developer, all my life I've tried to use or introduce as many eco products into our builds as I can," said Nic. The first house the firm built, in 2012, was made from highly insulating hemp block and lime mortar inside a timber frame, for which they won a couple of awards, and NLondon has even produced its own hemp products.

However the company decided not to propose such a pure 'eco' fabric for the Enfield scheme, after NLondon's experiences with promoting its hemp blocks at the Grand Designs consumer trade show. "People have still got this mentality about bricks and mortar, as soon as you say timber frame they're not interested, they want classic." He says that as a result, the firm's thinking was, "how can we build this development in a traditional style, while still offering some eco-advantages?"

Their answer to this question was a renewable energy ecosystem provided by The Phoenix Works, involving a high efficiency solar PV system, a Tesla Powerwall home battery, and an air-source heat pump – all built in the classic brick and block build that NLondon's audience is after.

With no need to connect to the gas grid, the heat pump meets all of the properties' heating needs, both in terms of hot water and underfloor heating – the system is able to heat 250 litres of hot water in 35 minutes from cold. This is then powered by a mix of the renewable energy the home itself produces, supplemented by green electricity from the grid supplied by Tonik Energy – the former generated via the solar panels and then stored in the 14 kWh battery for either direct or later use.



Further eco elements of the properties include recycled plastic roof tiles and composite decking, LED lighting, and a home chargepoint for electric vehicles, all allowing residents to live comfortably while potentially reducing their carbon footprint dramatically.

Though it lacks the highly-insulated hemp structure of the firm's previous schemes, the building also still held up extremely well in terms of U-values, with the BRE approving the site and awarding it an A+ rating.

MAKING MONEY OFF THE GRID

The whole-house energy system provides many more benefits than just its ecological offerings, particularly in helping potential residents to exist 'off-grid' thanks to the solar array. "Pretty much most of the day – especially if it's particularly sunny – you can run just off of the solar panels from morning until the following morning, working off-grid," said Nic. "Even if the weather's bad, you could still be off-grid until night time."

"As well as being very efficient, the system's very intelligent," Nic explained. "It works everything out for you, and you can see what it's doing through the app." The developer pulled out his phone to demonstrate this, the app showing home was producing 1.6 kW, fluctuating up to around 2 kW – it being a relatively cloudy day. The battery was at around 29 per cent (by 11:30 am), so, said Nic, "if it stays like this, by about 3 pm we should have the full 14 kWh stored."

The app also showed the system intermittently sending some electricity back to the grid. "If the loading is too much," explained Nic, "it'll send some back, even while you're still charging the battery."

The builder estimated that energy bills are going to cost between £600-800 per

annum, which for four double bedrooms would be a significant saving on 'normal' houses – especially when accounting for the money paid out under the Feed In Tariff (FiT), and the fact that the gas bill is non-existent.

As he showed off the solar panels, placed discreetly along the front roofing tiles, Nic lamented the recent changes in Government policy "that will halt builds like this in the future," namely the ending of the FiT on 31 March this year. "We got there just in time to qualify for FiT payments, which is worth around £70 per year. If you install a system like this now, though there's lots of financial benefit to generating, storing and using your own electricity (more than £300 per year at current electricity prices), unfortunately there's no FiT payment."

He continued: "So if anyone wants to do this in the future, there is less incentive for them. It's a real shame, and unless they re-introduce something, then I think not as many people are going to do this."

More positively, since our visit, there has been hopes that the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG), the Government's replacement scheme for FiT set to take effect by 1 January 2020, will tackle this likely downturn in adoption to some degree, but at the time of writing the information was not final.

BARRIERS TO BUILDING

Even though the build was completed in time to make use of the FiT scheme, the remainder of the build was no easy task. Nic described some of the barriers to building he has experienced as an SME, exploring some of the issues that appear to mainly have arisen over the last 10 years.

The recurrent theme, as so often seems the case, was the planning system. It took the company two years and eight months to get planning which, with the project taking nearly five years to complete from start to finish, meant that over half of the time spent was in the planning stages.

"It is an absolute nightmare," said Nic, having worked with planners for over 30 years. "There's a lack of resources; they haven't got enough senior planning officers, and because of this, micro sites just aren't their focus – in order to meet

"MICRO SITES JUST AREN'T [PLANNERS'] FOCUS – IN ORDER TO MEET GOVERNMENT TARGETS THEY TEND TO FOCUS ON THE BIG STUFF"

Government targets they tend to focus on the big stuff.”

He continued: “If you can get a site with over 1000 units on it through, it’s much easier to reach the targets, leaving behind hundreds of small micro developments.” As “small fry” in the grand scheme of things, Nic revealed that “you can’t talk to planners any more – the only contact you can have is via email.”

He continued: “Before, you used to be able to walk into a planning office and see a duty officer, discuss things, or you’d make an appointment to see the planning officer in charge of your case; now you can’t even ring them.”

The current process of requesting an appointment by email can reportedly take around 10 days to get a response, and then a month or two before you get to speak to anyone – even on the phone.

He puts this in part down to the 2008 financial crash, when “they basically got rid of all the planning officers” as a cost-cutting measure, on the pretext that there were a lot fewer plans going through. “But obviously in the last five years,” he added, “things have picked up, and they just haven’t got enough people to cope with it all – and it’s hard to replace them, because they’ve all gone to private consultancy work or gone abroad, you’ve lost them.”

Acquiring land was the other key issue, as an SME, he said. With the much-cited shortage of smaller sites, it is often difficult to find places to build on this smaller scale.

According to Nic, this is partly because volume developers are purchasing large swathes of land by doing deals with landowners (e.g. local authorities or TFL), “paying peanuts for the site in return for a couple of roundabouts, a few roads or some traffic lights.” “They’ve got big sticks,” he asserted. “They can beat them!”

THE PRICE OF QUALITY

Despite such barriers, NLondon has succeeded in bringing the development to completion, offering a select few in Enfield a new way of living, and providing a benchmark of what can be achieved in SME eco-design.

Of course, however, all of this comes at a price – around £800,000 – though this is not far off the benchmark considering its London suburb location plus great transport links, as well as its size, the luxury amenities, and its energy saving system.

The latter represent the ideal way ahead for all new build homes in the future and must surely play a role if Britain is to achieve Net Zero for carbon emissions, but Nic explained why he thinks it’s a long way off before volume



builders adopt such technology: “If they had to add ten thousand pounds to every unit, it makes a big difference to them, and they’re not going to do it – that would cut their profit margins, so they won’t do it unless the Government says they have to.”

“We’re slightly different,” he asserts. “We know that if we spend the money, we can get it back in the price.” Despite the firm’s strong positioning, London’s less than ideal market currently has however posed challenges: “At the end of the day, we want to sell but the market is very difficult at the moment – we’ve rented three of them already, but we are keeping the two corner ones up for sale.”

“We’ll wait for a few years, see what happens, and put them back on the market – and you never know, one of the tenants might want to buy it in the future.”

This kind of flexibility, along with the firm’s end-user focused ethos, has obviously served it well – winning NLondon a clutch of awards over the years, from LABC and RSA accolades to Green Business of the Year.

This has not led Nic to sit on his laurels however; he is actively trying to improve things in the industry, having sat on the panel for the Home Builder’s Group, working within the FMB, and being repeatedly involved in lobbying government.

Whatever can be expected of the Government’s future policy for incentivising eco-homes and leveraging planning for smaller sites – if Nic has any influence on the direction of travel, housebuilding could be in for a greener future. ■



“HOW CAN WE BUILD THIS DEVELOPMENT IN A TRADITIONAL STYLE, WHILE STILL OFFERING SOME ECO-ADVANTAGES?”

Smoke and environmental ventilation from SE Controls for Walthamstow residential development

A major residential development by Taylor Wimpey in Walthamstow, East London, is using combined environmental ventilation and smoke control system from SE Controls to help keep residents both comfortable and safe.

As a key part of the ongoing planned regeneration of the Blackhorse Lane area, the Eclipse development provides more than 400 one, two and three bedroom apartments, as well as incorporating a proportion of affordable housing within the design.

Eclipse is split into two construction phases with each comprising of six residential blocks that are joined together to form a single building. Each six-storey block incorporates a dedicated hybrid smoke control and ventilation system, which was designed and installed by SE Controls.

In normal operation, the hybrid system maintains comfortable temperatures within the corridors and avoids overheating due to ceiling mounted heating pipework, while providing fresh air movement through the building.

To achieve this, SE Controls installed 'enviro-fans' in the ceiling plenum on every floor, which are activated by temperature sensors and



draw warm air from the corridors, into the building's smoke shaft before being vented.

The mechanically vented smoke control system utilises roof mounted duty and standby fan sets, which are linked to smoke shafts in each of the residential blocks. Every corridor is fitted with a SHEVTEC smoke shaft damper, which opens in the event of a fire, allowing the fans to remove smoke from the fire corridor into the smoke shaft to keep escape routes and stairs clear of smoke.

SHEVTEC control panels are installed on every floor to manage the automatic operation of the

smoke control system, while tamper proof manual control points enable the fire service to reset the system after testing or actuation and also prevent any accidental activation.

Due to the building's design, the roof mounted duty and stand-by smoke fan sets had to be concealed and located away from terraced areas. To meet this requirement, SE Controls created a dedicated solution that would also allow them to be accessible for maintenance and servicing in accordance with the specified schedule for compliance.

In addition to using fire rated ducting, which allowed the smoke shaft to be offset at roof level, SE Controls Contracts Manager, Dave Furneau developed a fan 'cassette' solution, which enabled the fans to be concealed within the shaft, yet also allows them to slide out on integrated load bearing runners.

A key benefit of this approach, in residential situations is that it provides unrestricted access for service engineers, which minimises downtime and reduced potential risk exposure for the building. If necessary, a fan can be replaced within a turnaround time of one hour.

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The **A. Proctor Group's** Spacetherm® SLENTEX® A2 Aerogel Blanket has been chosen for its superior thermal performance, flexibility and suitability for space-critical applications in the refurbishment of 146 high-rise apartments in Poplar, East London. The re-design of the 27 storey tower block is part of a development led by architects Studio Egret West. Alisan Dockerty, project architect at Egret West explains: "The existing wall construction of the Grade II listed buildings meant that space for traditional insulation was limited in some instances. We chose to apply Spacetherm SLENTEX A2 Aerogel Blanket from the A. Proctor Group, a high-performance insulation blanket with A2 fire rating, capable of achieving the BRE's surface condensation analysis target temperatures of 16°C, whilst providing us with a minimum loss of space." In addition to the Spacetherm SLENTEX A2 blanket, foil encased Spacetherm A2 (CBS) Cold Bridge Strip was also included at window and door junctions to address areas susceptible to cold bridging.

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Raising the bar for renters



A new build-to-rent development is under construction in Leeds, which is set to bring a host of hotel-style amenities to over 500 homes across two high-rise blocks.

In Leeds city centre, construction has begun on 515 homes spread over two 16-storey blocks, designed exclusively for rent.

Created by Moda Living – which develops, owns and operates its own projects – the rental homes will be complemented by a new public courtyard between the buildings, and rooftop terraces overlooking the city centre, as well as two commercial units on the ground floor.

Named New York Square after the nearby New York Road, as well as being ‘a nod to its synergy with performing arts and culture,’ the development will offer renters a range of on-site amenities for their health and wellbeing, with everything included in their rent.

Alongside Moda, sister company Caddick Construction is to undertake the works, with DLG Architects designing the properties.

The development forms a key part of the new £300m ‘SOYO’ neighbourhood being delivered by Caddick Developments, another sister company of Moda Living.

In addition to the 515 Moda rental homes, SOYO will include a new hotel, bars, restaurants, further residential, a multi-storey car park, as well as high quality public realm and open green spaces.



BUILT FOR RENTERS

Build-to-rent, known as multifamily housing in the US, is particularly popular in that region of the world, where it has existed for decades. According to Moda however, the idea has only just started to take off in the UK, with cities like London, Manchester and Birmingham all seeing lots of build to rent activity recently.

New York Square will reportedly be one of the first large scale scheme built in this manner in Leeds, and is being developed by Moda to be operated for the long term.

Some of the benefits of renting that Moda introduces are a whole host of on-site amenities, providing a sense of hotel-living in its developments, and giving renters a range of reasons not to have to even leave the building.

Among the onsite amenities at New York Square – as in Moda's typical offerings across all its sites – are shared lounges, flexible workspaces, a cycle hub,

and health and wellbeing facilities.

Alongside these, other services include a 24-hour hotel-style concierge, and round the clock management of the building. The bespoke 'MyModa' app adds to this level of care, enabling residents to report maintenance issues, communicate with the concierge, book events, and acting as the apartment key.

The homes will include a mix of studio, one two and three-bedroom apartments. As part of these options, a two bed sharer layout will be on offer, providing a solution for sharers in two equally sized bedrooms, with ensembles on either side of a shared living space – allowing for greater privacy, reduced noise, and no arguing over who gets the biggest room.

BETTER TOGETHER

Together with Apache Capital Partners, Moda has a pipeline of over 7,500 rental homes in eight cities across England and Scotland. Other Moda projects under construction or completed include its flagship Angel Gardens in Manchester, The Mercian in Birmingham (the city's tallest residential tower), and The Lexington in Liverpool – a 35-storey, 325 home tower.

Caddick construction is also building the Angel Gardens project, which at 35 storeys will provide 466 homes to the centre of the city, close to where Amazon is opening its first UK HQ outside London.

Other Caddick Construction projects include the £33m Hudson Quarter development in York, creating three luxury residential blocks totalling 122,000 ft² and 45,000 ft² of office space.

Caddick Construction, Caddick Developments and Moda living are all part of the Yorkshire-based, family run Caddick Group, with reported a record turnover of over £200m this year.

This Group recently agreed to help Leeds City Council create a 100,000 ft² creative complex at the site of the old Polestar Petty works to host media and TV companies attracted by Channel 4's new nearby headquarters.

Johnny Caddick, managing director at Moda Living and director of the group commented: "This is a real group-wide effort. and demonstrates Caddick's cross-sector strengths in both property development and construction as well as underlining our ability to deliver institutional-grade assets.

"New York Square marks the first phase of SOYO, which will regenerate a car park into a new and exciting city centre neighbourhood. Moda's aim is to raise the bar for rental in the city, creating high quality homes and strengthening the appeal of city centre living for all." ■

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Resilience is the key to sustainable building

The Government's sustainability targets have put the UK on the map in terms of ambition, but they set a huge challenge for policymakers, the construction industry and the wider public. Steven Smith of Knauf Insulation says if we get it wrong, residents, social housing providers and the planet could be left counting the cost.

The climate crisis has penetrated the public consciousness. Whether it's sweltering summers, torrential rain or freezing winters, few people now deny our planet is experiencing more extreme weather – and that addressing climate change is one of the most urgent issues we face.

So, the Government's renewed focus on this subject is both overdue and necessary. In March 2019, it passed world-leading targets to bring UK greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. But, less than eight months later, experts are already warning that policies are not being implemented fast enough to meet this target.

When you consider buildings are responsible for more than 40 per cent of global energy usage, the construction industry clearly has an important role to play in realising this ambition. The industry, Government and even the wider public must align to meet the challenge.

The upcoming changes to Part L of the Building Regulations and planned

Future Homes Standard will require new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating and exceptional levels of energy efficiency. Both of these are positive steps, providing that house-builders and contractors close the current gap between notional and actual performance.

But, depending on how the Future Homes Standard is executed, there could be unexpected consequences. For example, it's anticipated gas boilers may be replaced by electric heating on a massive scale, but if this happens without improving the efficiency of the property, home occupants could find their energy bills doubling.

Such a spike in energy bills could have far reaching consequences. Earlier this year, a Bank of England blog reported that homeowners living in energy-efficient homes were less likely to default on their mortgages. Indeed, some mortgage lenders have been reflecting this lowered risk with green mortgages that offer lower rates for the most efficient homes.

It stands to reason that the reverse is also true, and spiralling energy bills could drive many people into fuel poverty with implications for lenders, landlords and social housing providers alike.

For such far-reaching changes to be a success, it is essential that the public sees a positive link between Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and the affordability of their homes. Homeowners, renters and investors must demand better buildings – but what makes a building better?

Insulation materials are the most efficient way to regulate the internal temperature of the home, helping to keep

buildings cool in hot weather and warm when it's cold outside. However, while energy efficiency is important for the reasons stated, it's not the only factor. Homes are not a disposable commodity. It's estimated that 80 per cent of the UK's building stock in 2050 already exists today. This means it's vital we think about how to create homes that are fit for purpose far into the future.

The concept of resilient buildings – where their fabric delivers high thermal, fire safety and acoustic performance in the real world and over the long term – needs to enter the public psyche. Improving insulation isn't the complete answer, but it certainly has a role to play.

When it comes to fire safety in particular, it is imperative that buildings are designed and constructed to both minimise the risk of fire and its spread should it occur. Not all insulation is equal where fire performance is concerned. So, if a product has been identified for its thermal and acoustic performance, it is important to check its Reaction to Fire classification. All CE marked insulation materials are given a Euroclass Reaction to Fire Classification in accordance with BS EN 13501-1. Classification ranges from F, the lowest, to A1, the highest.

In England, 2018 changes to Approved Document B and Regulation 7 mean that all insulation used on the external walls of certain types of buildings over 18 metres in height must have either A1 or A2-s1, d0 Euroclass Reaction to Fire Classification. In Scotland, the proposed regulations impose an even stricter height restriction – insulation products with either A1 or A2 Reaction to Fire Classification will have to be used on any building over 11 metres.

Post-Grenfell, there is a real possibility that if the wrong material is specified, subsequent remedial action may be required, and it could fall to the housebuilders and contractors to bear the cost of such works. Where fire safety is concerned, why take the risk? The safest option for buildings of any height are products classified as A1 – such as Glass or Rock Mineral Wool insulation – which are non-combustible and will not contribute to the development or the spread of a fire should it occur.

Acoustic performance is another factor

**THE INDUSTRY,
GOVERNMENT AND EVEN
THE WIDER PUBLIC
MUST ALIGN TO MEET
THE CHALLENGE**



in building resilience. The way we use our homes is changing – for example, more people are working from home. This makes noise and its impact on health and productivity more of an issue.

Choosing the right insulation will help to prevent unwanted noise from penetrating the building from outside or from one room to another. Acoustic mineral wool insulation is highly absorbent and traps sound energy between the individual strands and turn it into heat energy.

Approved Document E sets out the minimum standards for acoustic performance of dwellings, but at present it only governs walls and floors classed as separating elements and internal walls separating bedrooms and bathrooms from other rooms. For a building to be resilient, you need to consider sound transfer between rooms too – somebody using a room as a home office will need it to be well-insulated from children playing or a noisy washing machine in the adjacent room.

And just as we've seen Building Regulations change for fire, and imminently for thermal performance, so too are they likely to become stricter regarding acoustic performance, especially as we better understand the serious health, wellbeing and productivity



impact of noise pollution. A resilient building designed with real world acoustic performance in mind is more likely to remain fit for purpose.

Focusing on long-term real-world thermal, fire and acoustic performance will not only ensure housebuilders and developers meet the sustainability challenge, it will give them a marketing point of differentiation too. After all, occupants will be keen to

choose an eco-friendly property if it's also safe, warm, quiet and cheaper to run.

However, a failure to take resilience into account during the design and build process risks building a generation of buildings that are simply not fit for purpose – by its very nature that is totally unsustainable.

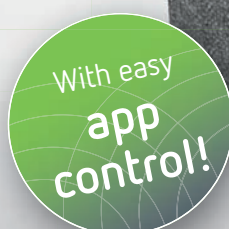
Steven Smith is head of product management and business intelligence at Knauf Insulation.

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SHOW PREVIEW

A UNIQUE EVENT FOR EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF LIVING

With a new home for its 2019 edition, Homes UK aims to provide the UK's residential property sector with the opportunity to connect, learn and do business over a content-packed two days.

Homes UK is set to look at the entire ecosystem of both housebuilding and maintenance for every type of accommodation in the UK, from affordable to market sale and the rapidly growing build-to-rent, student, co-living and retirement sectors.

It's claimed to be the only event of its kind to unite so many residential players, driving collaboration and discussion, and providing a showcase for the latest solutions necessary to deliver a diverse and high-quality supply of new homes to address the UK crisis.

Homes UK consistently attracts the largest concentrated audience of senior decision-makers (70 per cent of attendees have budgetary responsibility), making it a great platform for doing business.

ALL THE ACTION IN ONE PLACE

The show floor is set to host over 200 exhibitors, showcasing innovative products and services designed for Homes UK's key market.

Meanwhile, the extensive conference programme will run over seven varied theatres

covering everything from sustainability, design quality and regeneration, to planning reform, Brexit and the sector's future workforce.

Bringing together a programme that covers every type of residential accommodation is no mean feat, but the show's creators have reportedly curated the best of the sector's expertise and achievements through over 70 hours of content.

Although now in its eighth year, the ethos of Homes UK hasn't changed – keeping the design, build and management of great quality homes in thriving communities at its heart. The programme will provide insight on complex challenges while also offering practical advice and success stories led by peers.

Choose from topics spanning the entire lifecycle of residential development and asset management. This year, you'll find industry heavyweights and rising stars and even the odd celebrity.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- How should we reform the planning system?





TICKET INFORMATION

Public sector and not-for-profit employees can register for a free visitor pass (a £165+VAT per day ticket fee applies to private sector and for-profit attendees) and start planning their content schedule. You can tell Homes UK what you're most looking forward to by joining the conversation on Twitter @HomesEvent. The show looks forward to welcoming you to the ExCeL later this month to explore the #futureofliving.

- Brexit or bust? What's next for the residential market?
- Design quality: Building better, not just building more
- Hackitt 18 months on: What still needs to change?
- Regeneration: How do we drive quality community engagement?
- Homes for an ageing population: At crisis point?
- Sustainability and the carbon zero challenge
- Health and wellbeing in our homes and towns.

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND HOMES UK?

Visitors can learn from exemplar case studies on what is working in the sector – the organisers have spent hours researching the answers to your biggest challenges so you don't have to.

You can also gain fresh ideas from international speakers, accessing world-leading expertise that you rarely find at other UK events. Homes UK will allow you to expand your network at one of the biggest meeting places for the entire sector – with over 6,000 attendees at curated networking events – and keep up-to-date with product innovations and sector announcements at the show's biggest-ever exhibition of 250 suppliers.

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2019?

New this year is a focus on rapidly growing

markets like build to rent, student accommodation, intergenerational and co-living – keep up with trends or research expansion opportunities.

The organisers hope to allow visitors to reimagine what housing looks like at the Home of 2030 'charette' led by the Ministry of Building Innovation & Education (MOBIE), where you will be able to collaborate with students and sector leaders.

There will also be a new 'Tech' theatre dedicated to digital innovation and customer experience – a one-stop shop to help progress your digital journey.

Visit **HOMESEVENT.CO.UK/REGISTER**

to complete your registration and secure your ticket.

London bricks for London Build



On the 27th and 28th of November, **Imperial Bricks** is displaying its '50 Shades of Clay' on Stand D29 at London Build. Architects, specifiers, developers, contractors and self-builders can speak to Imperial Bricks for expert advice on brick matching, sourcing an ethical,

sustainable supply and technical queries. All of Imperial's brick products are CE marked, sourced from SEDEX-compliant partners and tested by Lucideon. The range includes handmade brick finishes, glazed brick tiles with crackle effects and a range of on-trend vibrant shades.

01952 750816 www.imperialbricks.co.uk **London Build stand no D29**

Helifix to exhibit at London Build 2019



Helifix will be exhibiting at London Build on the 27th & 28th November 2019, Olympia, London on stand number C28. Helifix will be showcasing their range of concealed, non-disruptive products and installation

techniques alongside the Helifix Micro-Pile system, an efficient, economical and non-disruptive method of foundation stabilisation. The sales and technical teams will be available on the stand to discuss your project-specific requirements and answer any questions you may have.

020 8735 5200 www.helifix.co.uk **London Build stand no C28**

Vent-Axia named a Business Superbrand



British ventilation manufacturer, **Vent-Axia**, is delighted to have been named in the UK Business Superbrand list for 2019. The award follows robust independent research commissioned by The Centre for Brand Analysis (TCBA), which identifies the UK's Superbrands in

an annual league table. The ranking, which has been tracking the UK's leading business-to-business (B2B) brands since 2001, recognises the company for quality, reliability and distinction. Vent-Axia is considered to have established the finest reputation in its field. Richard Paine, Marketing Director at Vent-Axia said: "At Vent-Axia we have led the ventilation industry since 1936 developing innovative, reliable, landmark products."

0844 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com

Housebuilder & Developer website



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

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

www.hbdonline.co.uk



27 - 28 NOVEMBER
OLYMPIA LONDON



SHOW PREVIEW

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

The construction and design show for London is back, and this time it is 'bigger and better than ever.' Focusing on a diverse array of current topics, London Build is jam packed with content, networking and entertainment.

This year, London Build will have an important focus on mental health, wellbeing, diversity and equality throughout the exhibition, as well as opportunities to get up to date with upcoming major construction projects and opportunities across Greater London and the UK.

WHAT'S ON?

London Build will run CPD accredited sessions across eight different 'summits.' These sessions will feature training workshops on everything from sustainability and BIM to Advanced Digital and Social Media Construction Marketing.

The programme of over 500 speakers includes the likes of Juliemma McLoughlin, chief planner – Development, Enterprise and Environment at Greater London Authority; Fergus Harradence, deputy director of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; Gillian Charlesworth, CEO of BRE; and David Speight, project delivery director for Heathrow Expansion, to name a few.

Over 350 exhibitors will be on show at the venue, and alongside this The Humans of Construction photography exhibition will be displaying 1,000 of the most influential and inspiring professionals working in the UK's built environment, featuring individuals from a wide array of fascinating backgrounds in the industry, from CEOs to architects, pioneers to students and future leaders.

NETWORKING

London Build is looking forward to welcoming over 25,000 registered contractors, architects, engineers, developers, councils and construction professionals over the two days, and is expecting a high level of attendance from the UK's top 100 contractors and architects, offering a great

opportunity for networking with peers and clients alike. The organisers say they want visitors to leave London Build "armed with a wide range of new connections and friends."

Networking opportunities include the event's first LinkedIn Networking Lounge – an initiative which enables attendees to network and make new contacts while simultaneously building their online network through LinkedIn using QR codes and a timetable of Speed Networking events.

Other networking events being hosted include Meet the Buyer by Constructionline, CIOB Hub in the Pub, Constructing Excellence Club Breakfast, BIM & Tonic, #TeqDen10x10, Diversity in Construction, and what's claimed to be the UK's largest ever networking meeting of Women in Construction – plus many more.

'AN EVENT LIKE NO OTHER'

The organisers believe that "doing business should be fun," and to this end the event features the Festival of Construction. Including comedy acts, entertainment, live music, celebrity guests, London Beer Festival, gin tastings and prize giveaways, the Festival promises to be the biggest of its kind in construction, offering the chance to rub shoulders with industry names and celebrity guests, while indulging in food, drinks and live entertainment.

Charity contests will also be taking place across London Build's two days, including the event's very own world record attempt! They'll be striving to break the world record for the greatest number of Movember Moustaches at one event to raise funds for men's health.

The show hopes to be an event like no other, built for those in the industry who want to have fun, be inspired, and meet with thousands of architects, developers, contractors, local councils, housing associations, and more!

Register for your free ticket today at

WWW.LONDONBUILDEXPO.COM

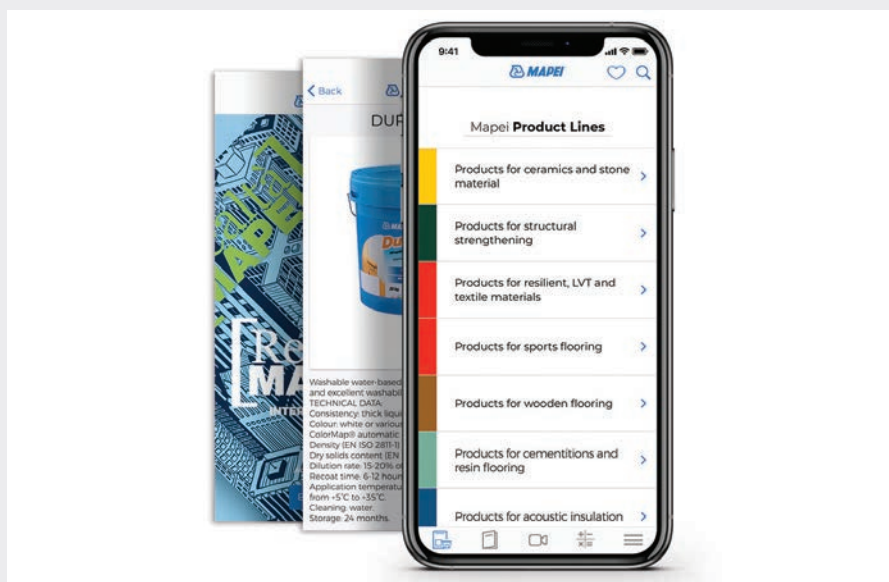
Personalise your space with the new Mapei app

Mapei's new and improved app has been updated to enhance and personalise areas for installers, distributors, engineers and architects alike, providing brand new, fundamental tools that cover all areas of construction and building.

The new My Mapei area will allow users to register to make an account on the Mapei app, ensuring that their personal area includes the most relevant information to them. Users will now be able to update and change their personal data, keep their favourite products in one place, backlog results from calculators, and access the many services offered by Mapei.

Another step towards staying engaged with customers, users of the app will find it ideally accessible to vital information at just a few taps, providing what is effectively a library for necessary resources for all types of projects.

The complete product catalogue, which features on the app and can be viewed by product line, has been updated to include brand new products and systems. Mapei's extensive range covers products for ceramics and stone materials, resilient, textile and wood materials, concrete repair, structural strengthening, protective and decorative coatings, EWI, cementitious and resin flooring, products for underground construction,



acoustic and thermal insulation, waterproofing, and admixtures for concrete.

Helpful tools such as the grouts and sealants calculators allow for users to estimate consumption rates in accordance with specific project data.

Popular features including an extensive product tutorial video library, technical

documentation and the latest editions of Mapei's bi-monthly magazine, *Realtà Mapei* International provide users with the opportunity to stay informed on all things Mapei.

The world of Mapei in your hands. Available on the App Store and Google Play.

0121 508 6970 www.mapei.co.uk

Consort Claudgen launches new brochure



The latest Heat brochure includes a host of new heating controls and heaters including motion-activated and waterproof run-back time controllers, new heater models in the electronic seven-day timer range and advanced wireless controllers which are now compatible with **Consort's** RX and SL heaters. These are detailed in the brochure along with the established panel and fan heaters, convectors, LST heaters, air curtains, downflows and towel rails. Download a copy from the website, or request one by telephone.

01646 692172 www.consortepl.com

George Barnsdale celebrate becoming finalists



George Barnsdale is celebrating being shortlisted for two categories at the prestigious BWF (British Woodworking Federation) annual awards. The national awards recognise innovation and the best in design, application and ability in joinery manufacture. There are six categories in all and George Barnsdale are finalists in the BWF Woodworking Project of the Year Award and the Health and Safety Hero award. Tom Wright,

Managing Director said: "We are delighted that our growing expertise in large commercial projects like this has been officially recognised. Whether we win or not, it is great to be one of just three finalists."

01775 823000 www.georgebarnsdale.co.uk

Ancon to exhibit at London Build 2019



Ancon will showcase products including Ancon's range of insulated balcony connectors, helping building designers meet their thermal performance aspirations while still boasting Class A1 non-combustible insulation, reinforcement and steelwork, making it fully compliant with The Building (Amendment)

Regulations 2018. Ancon offer a wide range of products fully compliant with The Building (Amendment) Regulations 2018 – the Government's ban on combustible materials in external walls. Find out more at London Build on the 27th & 28th November 2019, Olympia, London – stand number C28.

0114 275 5224 www.ancon.co.uk

London Build stand no C28

Housebuilder & Developer website



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

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

www.hbdonline.co.uk

Cromar win h&b Supplier of the Year



Cromar Building Products are proud to announce that they have been awarded h&b Group's Supplier of the Year award 2019. The award, officially known as the 'Peter Buttle Supplier of the Year Award', was announced on the 18th September at the annual group activity event at The Belfry.

Daniel Marshall, Sales Director for Cromar, attended the event and said: "This is an incredibly proud moment for the company;

myself and the other Directors want to thank everyone at Cromar – this has truly been a team effort. The company has made a lot of positive changes and experienced tremendous growth over the last year and this award is certainly the icing on the cake!"

Cliff Cato of the h&b group commented: "The h&b roofing & insulation committee were delighted to nominate Cromar for group supplier of the year 2019. Cromar are an independent family owner manufacturer with

the same values as many group members, they have fully supported every initiative the group has undertaken which has benefited both parties and are now viewed as a strategic partner to the group. The ongoing growth of Cromar's product portfolio continues to offer H&B members new and exciting sales opportunities".

01977 663 133
www.cromar.uk.com

Form, function and fire

It would be fair to say that Vicaima are renowned for the manufacture of on-trend and innovative interior door designs, however it is sometimes overlooked, that this prowess extends beyond simply form and function. Vicaima also stretch the perceived boundaries and market norms when it comes to the performance of risk critical products, most notably fire doors and door assemblies.

Vicaima FD30 (30 minute) timber fire doors recently tested by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG), achieved an astonishing 54 minutes. Tested on the most onerous side of the door, this result was exemplary and once again illustrated Vicaima's superior fire door and doorset capabilities, at a time when well-being and personal safety has never been more closely scrutinised.

Stake-holders throughout the refurb and development market will no doubt be well aware of the vital role they play in the decisions which ultimately lead to the supply of safe products. As important specifiers in the build process, they have a duty of care and therefore it is essential to have a clear understanding, that should products fail to perform as intended, they may also share responsibility for any consequences that may arise.

Speculation regarding the actual safety of fire

doors has been widely discussed over the last two years, following the government enquiry into the tragic events of Grenfell and related risk critical products. Perhaps this was only to be expected, given the less than robust conclusions drawn by the MHCLG into composite and GRP doors; and their failure to consistently pass a 30-minute fire door test. This result precipitated the removal of many of these products from the market and led to a call for timber fire doors themselves, to be examined independently by government. The results of which subsequently vindicating the assurance provided by a fully certified timber fire door assembly.

Budget of course cannot be ignored, but cost considerations often focus on the product in isolation; often overlooking the contemporary labour saving benefits and cost saving whole costs afforded by fully finished doors. The Vicaima range of own manufactured, factory finished products presents everything from real veneer, through laminates and lacquered paint to finished foil; meaning that it is able to match vision to budget. This design flexibility does not stop there, with easy customisation such as decorative grooves, creating a simple added extra within the grasp of every specifier.

A fire performance range such as that offered by Vicaima removes doubt. Rigorously tested,



third party accredited and fully traceably products that meet FD30 and FD60 rating, assures that those with a duty of care are taking appropriate steps. Additionally, formal test evidence which includes more exacting requirements such as integral face grooves, over height/width dimensions, integrated eye viewers in two positions, concealed door closers and testing to both sides of a door, illustrate a comprehensive approach. Products, which offer additional Secure by Design (SBD) compliance and meet exacting mobility and acoustic criteria ensures products are fit for purpose. Lastly, but by no means least, real design choice that is truly innovative and delivers forward thinking and on-trend answers for today's housing, means that doors are in step and reflect modern lifestyles.

Vicaima designs for refurb, new build and commercial use, offer specifiers the safe choice when it really matters and in the knowledge that innovative design and functionality really can go hand in hand.

01793 532333 www.vicaima.com

Innovative public housing with Nordic Copper

An exemplar for a new, progressive era of public housing design in London utilises high-quality materials – including Nordic Brown Light copper cladding – as part of its tenure-blind strategy.

Branch Place provides the first replacement homes in the second phase of the Colville Estate Masterplan designed by Karakusevic Carson Architects, part of Hackney Council's innovative housebuilding programme, delivering hundreds of much-needed Council homes for local people through a pioneering model of financial cross-subsidy. The project provides 116 mixed-tenure homes alongside new public routes, play spaces and landscaping.



The two buildings of Branch Place are crafted from a considered palette of high-quality tenure-blind materials including brickwork, timber and Nordic Brown Light pre-oxidised copper. A copper mansard roof, installed by Full Metal Jacket, to the building next to Regent's Canal reflects the roofscape of neighbouring historic warehouse buildings and marks an entrance to Branch Place and the new Colville neighbourhood.

Nordic Brown Light is part of an extensive range of architectural copper surfaces and alloys from Aurubis with an unrivalled lifespan counted in hundreds of years, no maintenance and full recyclability. With a melting point of 1083°C and 'A1 (non-combustible material)' fire classification to EN 13501-1, copper is suitable for cladding tall buildings, using appropriate constructions. Low thermal movement makes it appropriate for any locations and it is non-toxic and safe to handle and work. Its inherent antimicrobial qualities make it ideal for touch surfaces internally as well.

The Aurubis architectural range includes Nordic Standard 'mill finish' and Nordic Brown pre-oxidised copper, with lighter or darker shades of brown. The extensive Nordic Blue,



Nordic Green and Nordic Turquoise ranges have been developed with properties and colours based on the same brochantite mineralogy found in natural patinas all over the world, and offer various 'Living' surfaces. Copper alloys include Nordic Bronze, Nordic Brass and the innovative Nordic Royal with a rich golden through-colour.

01875 812 144 www.nordiccopper.com

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How many times have you heard it said: 'flat roofs never last more than 10 years'?

Even roofing materials manufacturers have to admit that 'flat' roofs are not always seen as being attractive, and can be perceived by some as troublesome.

There are many common pitfalls when specifying and installing flat roofs that must be addressed to avoid these issues, including:

- Inadequate or inappropriate design
- Low levels of insulation
- Inadequate ventilation
- Unsightly edge details
- Poorly sealed junctions and abutments
- Fitting by under-trained roofers

ATTRACTIVE AND RELIABLE

What most specifiers, housebuilders and owners want is a good-looking, reliable roof. It doesn't seem a lot to ask, does it?

Sometimes however, what they get is a disappointing, problematic and not to mention expensive liability. Poorly installed and badly finished roofs not only put a property at risk, but can also let down its appearance, possibly leading to expensive running repairs and reduced property value.

How many times have you seen an uneven felt roof which looks like a child has installed it?

Poor details in roof construction are among the most common causes of water ingress into a building – as with many roof covering systems, the detailing has to be decided upon as the job progresses, leading to solutions which have not been fully thought through.

GRP ROOFING

Glass reinforced polyester (GRP) is a robust, lightweight material, which is naturally watertight, aesthetically pleasing and has great longevity. Its bulk strength and weight are better than many metals, meaning that it can be readily moulded into complex shapes and can be used for a wide variety of roof coverings.

The material also benefits from good fire retardancy, is easy to handle, and, as it is UV resistant, is ideal for roofing installations. Being a flexible material, it is versatile and easy to repair, and – providing it is offered by a responsible

BEING A FLEXIBLE MATERIAL, GRP IS VERSATILE AND EASY TO REPAIR, AND CAN BE FULLY RECYCLABLE AT THE END OF ITS SERVICE LIFE

REINFORCING THE GRP MESSAGE

Andy Fell of Hambleside Danelaw explores how housebuilders and developers can avoid the common pitfalls of flat roofing by specifying glass reinforced polyester (GRP), explaining its various benefits.



manufacturer – can be fully recyclable at the end of its service life.

GRP was initially developed for widespread applications by the British military during WWII. The plan was to use GRP for several applications, including building the minesweeper fleet because of its light weight, strength, and lack of magnetic footprint. Later, the benefits of GRP were recognised as ideal for a variety of uses across the boat build-

ing, motor manufacturing and construction industries.

As the name suggests, GRP is produced by combining glass fibres with thermosetting polyester resin consolidated under strictly controlled factory conditions. The glass fibres are embedded into the resin with several layers of fibres facing in different directions, allowing the stiffness and strength of the finished material to be controlled.



GRP IN 'FLAT' ROOFING

There are two main types of system where GRP is specifically used as a 'flat' roofing membrane. One of the most commonly used systems is 'wet-lay', where the roof

substrate is effectively used as a mould for an in-situ lamination in a similar manner to boat building.

The proven alternative to 'wet lay' is a component-based membrane system

where all the products involved are pre-manufactured under closely controlled factory conditions, thus improving the speed and flexibility of installation.

For both wet lay and component-based systems, a correctly installed GRP roof should have a service life of at least 30 years.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

As GRP is safe to use in greywater systems and does not release any chemicals once installed, it is a favoured material for eco-friendly housing, both 'green' and 'blue' roof waterproofing.

At the end of its long service life, GRP can also be broken down into its component elements, which can then be recycled into new materials, saving the customer money while benefitting the environment.

A major benefit of GRP when used as a roof waterproofing membrane is the additional ability for the material to be refurbished in-situ towards the end of its service life, doing away with the financial and environmental costs associated with re-roofing.

Andy Fell is national sales manager of Dryseal at Hambleside Danelaw

Comar 7P.i FSDX – British by Design

The next generation of aluminium bi-fold, folding sliding door has arrived from Comar Architectural Aluminium Systems.

COMAR FSDX: Superior, stabilised rolling action with the quietest roller in the industry and improved weight bearing capacity means fit-once and reduced call outs. The new outer-frame is one profile and is used for the track and jambs which reduces stock holding. It is a mitre frame construction with 2 crimping options: pinned cleats for creating pre-assembled outer frames that can be shipped to site or mechanical cleats which means the outer-frame can be shipped to assemble on site – a key consideration when larger door sets are to be installed.



COMAR FSDX EXTRA ROLLER

The stainless steel dual roller seamlessly integrates with the stainless steel running track, with a stabiliser the wheels always remain in contact with the track, which means that even if the track is slightly mis-aligned due to building tolerances the smooth rolling action is not hindered. The weight bearing capacity is increased to 120Kg which with the FSDX's glazing pocket of 62mm triple glazed or acoustic glass can easily be incorporated.

COMAR FSDX EXTRA - TRACK

Superior thermal performance with integrated stainless-steel rail means that low U-values and continued performance are guaranteed. The intelligent design of the profile means the same profile is used for the jambs and the head, providing mitre frame construction and two options for site transport – preassembled or stick using pinned crimped cleats or mechanical cleats.

COMAR FSDX EXTRA - GLAZING

The view out of the FSDX door offers the homeowner that little bit eXtra. With the slimmest sightlines available of 60mm, the doors maximise daylighting into the home. Maximising glazing without lacking perform-



ance the maximum width of the doors has been increased allowing door sets to be over 4M with only three doors.

COMAR FSDX EXTRA - HINGES

The new hinge design incorporates a central gasket strip, which actively reduces hinge gasket prep and site installation. Even the roller pillar has been treated with consideration and pre-applied foam pads seal the roller to the door. This increases home-owner satisfaction with a draft-free solution and no call backs for the installer. Adequate sealing between the sliding doors ensures that a long-term solution is guaranteed.

For further information, please email projects@parksidgroup.co.uk

020 8685 9685 www.comar-alu.co.uk

THE RENDERERS RENDER

Fassa Bortolo is a historic name in the world of building. Attention to quality raw materials, research, innovation and the environment have always been at the basis of the company's vision, expressed through the continuous development of state-of-the-art solutions for the evolution of building.

Find out more about how Fassa can work with you and your business.

W: fassabortolo.co.uk

T: 01684 212 272



Yeoman Rainguard plays a part in bringing listed mansion house back to former glory



A grade II listed Mansion on the outskirts of Ulverston, Cumbria, has respectfully been restored and developed by house-builders, Charles Church, Lancashire.

As a way of protecting the future of the mansion, planning permission was granted for it to be converted into 19 apartments and the gatehouse into a bungalow.

Charles Church ensured that the conversion work carried out was sympathetic to the Scottish baronial style whilst respecting the original features.

These qualities also needed to be reflected when it came to the replacement of the rainwater systems on both the mansion and the gatehouse.

With over 40 years' experience of providing

aesthetically appropriate, yet highly functional rainwater systems for heritage and listed building projects, Yeoman Rainguard were the perfect choice to provide a suitable system for the restoration.

On the mansion house gutters that could not be refurbished were replaced with Yeoman Rainguard MOG 25 x 100 mm cast iron gutters finished in Light Aircraft Grey colour along with complementing rectangular rainwater pipes.

The use of Yeoman Rainguard ornamental ear bands and corner ear bands for the cast iron pipes played a part in maintaining the authenticity of the façade of the building.

In areas where replacement gutters were required to match up seamlessly to the original gutters, Yeoman Rainguard were able to

replicate exact size and profiles with their manufacturing capabilities using GRP material.

Cast iron soil pipes were provided from the Rainguard TX range providing a highly durable, easy to install waste water drainage solution.

The gatehouse, tastefully converted into a bungalow, was fully fitted with brand-new Yeoman Rainguard cast iron MOG gutters and round down pipes. Finished in a classy gloss black paint the rainwater system was befitting of the buildings design and heritage.

All Yeoman Rainguard products were fitted by their own directly employed fixing team ensuring a quality installation and end result.

0113 279 5854
www.rainguard.co.uk



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SIDEY

Throughout the UK, Sidey is developing quality partnerships with leading players in the country's new build sector and are experienced in catering for the needs of all types of House Builder and Architect.

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SIDEY

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The future is modular... the future needs Tyvek®



The benefits of modular developments are playing a part in addressing not only the housing shortage but also the impact of climate change. DuPont™ Tyvek® membranes and systems are also playing their part in a new 73-unit housing development under the

Homes for England scheme, constructed by Modularwise Ltd. The modules feature the Tyvek® Supro advanced breather membrane to the roof, a product which exceeds BS5534 regulation without restriction and is suitable for all wind zones, regardless of height or topography. To meet STA guidance requiring a breather membrane to also act as a second line of water ingress defence with no leakage, Tyvek® Reflex provided a combined moisture control and thermal solution in one hi-tech and trustworthy layer.

08444 068 722 www.construction.tyvek.co.uk

Senior adds strength to its range



Senior Architectural Systems has developed a new aluminium curtain wall system that allows architects to create sleek and expansive fenestration designs, all with the added reassurance of accommodating greater structural movement. The new SF62 aluminium

curtain wall system has been specifically developed for use on projects where structural movement may be a challenge. Similar in design to Senior's popular SF52 aluminium curtain wall system, the new SF62 also boasts exceptional thermal performance that not only meets but exceeds current building regulations, and has been fully weather tested.

www.seniorarchitecturalsystems.co.uk



Sapa systems deliver seamless sightlines

It's rare to see so many different architectural aluminium window, door and curtain walling product applications on one house. Yet at this impressive home in Cheshire, fully compatible curtain walling, window and a variety of door systems from Sapa have been installed to create a seamless appearance, satisfying both client and architect requirements completely. This contemporary style, five-bedroom detached house commands a floor area of 10,000sq ft and includes an indoor swimming pool together with gym and leisure facilities. Rear facing, the property has been constructed on raised land that slopes down to a natural stream with breath-taking countryside views beyond. Following initial design meetings with the architect, Sapa provided a full NBS specification for the aluminium systems with typical through sections and full thermal value calculations, as well as budget pricing pre-tender to ensure an accurate tender package. Meeting the demanding energy efficient U-value of 1.5 W/m²K, external doors, windows and curtain walling from the Sapa range were carefully selected for their compatibility and specified with high performance solar performance glazing throughout.

01684 853500 www.sapabuildingsystems.co.uk



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

www.hbdonline.co.uk

Replace pumps for energy efficiency gains



Wilo offers the new generation of the Wilo-Yonos PICO series small circulators to the UK market. A range of new features has been added to this popular circulator primarily for residential homes and properties, for heating systems and air conditioning equipment. The compactness of Wilo-Yonos PICO has been dramatically improved to make it easy to install. Front access to motor screws and the Wilo

connector position, contribute to the adaptability of the pump in any installation. Importantly, new ease of use functions make maintenance far easier for the installer. Manual restart is a response to a specific request from the market, as is the new constant speed mode.

01283 523000 www.wilo.co.uk

In-line filter for improved indoor air quality



Domus Ventilation, part of the Polypipe group, has launched its first ever in-line carbon filter range – NOX-FILT – designed to improve indoor air quality by preventing harmful airborne contaminants, including up to 99.5 per cent of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) pollution, from entering

a home. Designed to work on the supply leg of the ducting system of a mechanical ventilation system, NOX-FILT works seamlessly with the system to deliver fresh, filtered air into the main living areas of homes. A low profile means it readily fits into restricted spaces. Domus Ventilation has a well-deserved reputation for quality, supported by excellent technical support, from a market leading manufacturer and designer.

vent.info@domusventilation.co.uk

The Grundfos UPS3 changing the game



Since the launch of the UPS3 15-50/60, it has gained a significant following of supporters and those numbers are continuing to grow. One very important attribute is the reliability this pump can demonstrate, as it maintains a consistently high performance throughout the season. Improved energy efficiency is another

key talent, that combined with an easier to wire plug and on-board diagnostics, that really makes this pump stand out from standard offerings. Peace of mind is guaranteed as this pump was built on a platform that was proven in millions of boilers, prior to its launch. We all want to support the winning team and with so many great signings, joining forces with the **Grundfos** domestic circulator team, will ensure that you'll be in a league of your own.

01525 850000 www.grundfos.co.uk/newteam



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A new build home has embraced a 'best of both worlds' philosophy by combining traditional aesthetics with the exceptional fabric performance provided by the **Kingspan TEK Building System**. Constructed with innovative Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) from the Kingspan TEK Building

System, the house enjoys excellent thermal performance, making it both comfortable and efficient. Kingspan TEK Building System panels comprise a highly insulated core sandwiched between two layers of Oriented Strand Board type 3 (OSB/3) and can deliver U-values as low as 0.17 W/m²K without the need for additional insulated liners, providing exceptional out-of-the-box fabric performance for this new home.

01544 387 384 www.kingspantek.co.uk

Listed townhouse insulated with Spacetherm®



The heat efficiency of a Grade II listed Georgian townhouse in the historic city of Bath is set to be dramatically improved as a result of the introduction of Spacetherm® Multi insulation. The challenge of dealing with heating inefficiencies, major heat loss and high heating costs are a common

problem with many listed buildings and solid wall dwellings. Spacetherm Multi, from **A. Proctor Group**, is a high-performance laminate specifically designed to be laid directly onto existing floors & walls. The use of Spacetherm Multi has virtually no negative impact on floor space, making it ideal for refurbishment projects where space is at a premium.

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Overcome Fast Track Flooring Challenges with IVC Nomad

Nomad is the commercial loose-lay heterogeneous vinyl floor from IVC that's ready to overcome the challenge of fast-track new-build and refurbishment projects. By adding two glass-fibre layers to its heterogeneous construction, IVC has given Nomad better stability than conventional sheet vinyl for an easy-to-fit floor that can be loose-laid without the need for glue and without limit. With an estimated installation cost saving of 30 per cent in comparison to conventional sheet vinyl and a 20 per cent reduction in fitting time, Nomad brings a tough and easy to look after floor instantly. This innovative solution also delivers 20dB sound insulation, helping multi-occupancy housing developments and student accommodation projects to overcome potential noise issues. Thanks to its high-density foam backing, Nomad also delivers underfoot comfort, making it a great all-round choice. Made by Europe's biggest carpet tile, LVT and heterogeneous vinyl manufacturer, Nomad's versatile modern and traditional wood designs, concrete looks and playful colours ensure wide-ranging looks suited to both commercial and domestic environments. From commercial offices, to boutique shops and leisure spaces to housing, education and accommodation; Nomad is a solution that's ready for almost any challenge.

info@ivc-commercial.com ivc-commercial.com



Accessible housing design: Put pleasure over procedure

According to guidance published by RIBA, a well-designed bathroom is often the key to dignity and independence. The guidance – 'Age Friendly Housing' – says "hospital-style bathrooms have made bathing [personal hygiene] a procedure rather than a pleasure for older and disabled people but safety and practicality no longer need to come at the expense of style". It cites as exemplar of well-designed accessible bathrooms the inclusion of fixtures such as wash & dry toilets. **Closomat** is the leading brand of wash dry toilets, also known as shower toilets, smart toilets or automatic toilets, which combine integrated douching and drying within the WC so there is no need to manually wipe. Its latest models, the wall-hung Asana and floor-mounted Palma Vita, reflect several of the features and benefits referenced in the age-friendly housing guidance. They deliver contemporary styling with the best performance in douching and drying. The Asana features a low level soft ambient light, facilitating its location in the dark/ at night. The Palma Vita is unique in that it can be accessorised, initially and retrospectively, to suit the individual's changing needs. Closomat's website is the 'go to' resource for specifiers involved in designing for ageing and/or disabled people, with a raft of white papers, NBS specifications, CAD blocks to simplify the process and deliver an appropriate, compliant solution.

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Embrace Scandi-styles and creativity



The new Pebble Beach model from **Keller Kitchens** embraces Scandinavian style with soft pebble tones and combines it with brighter contemporary trends to offer homeowners a chic, modern kitchen. Keller's units can be arranged to create a breakfast bar with chairs or stools that complement the worktops (as pictured) and with numerous layout options, the cabinetry can offer as little or as much storage space as the homeowner needs. The sleek, white cupboards combined with the natural colours of the landscape breathe the typical Scandinavian style. There are a plethora of shades from Keller for homeowners to embrace the Scandi-style and add a touch of their own personality.

www.kellerkitchens.com

Crown's clean extreme has opacity covered



Leading trade paint brand **Crown Trade** has introduced an upgraded Ultimate Opacity formulation to its popular range of Clean Extreme Stain Resistant Scrubbable Matt emulsions which offers excellent coverage, increased scrubability and a flawless finish. The new high opacity formulation is available on Crown Trade's Clean Extreme Stain Resistant Scrubbable Matt, as well as the matt versions of its Clean Extreme Anti-Bacterial and Mould Inhibiting paints. Developed to not only match but exceed the performance characteristics of the popular Clean Extreme range, the new water-based Ultimate Opacity option offers increased scrubability and excellent flow as well as being quick-drying and low-odour.

info@crowntrade.co.uk



Grass Concrete Ltd turning hard landscapes soft

Converting traditional hard landscaped drive ways into softer landscaped green space applies to both commercial car parks and domestic driveways. Specifiers can turn those large parking areas into sustainable green vistas with sustainability built in. With new builds developers are enjoying a bigger green envelope by the adopting grass paving for many driveways and carparking areas. The permeability features of grass paving addresses SUDS issues where hard landscaping can provide too much run-off, whereas the more permeable grass paving mitigates surface water run-off and its implications for the local storm water network. To achieve the green vistas, maximum and sustainable grass cover is best guaranteed by a system that promotes permeability. The depth and shape of the soil pockets therefore has a critical part to play if grass cover is to be sustained. Both Grasscrete and Grassblock offer substantial capacity for soils and root systems to promote maximum grass coverage. When cast-on site is not an option Grassblock provides easy install precast blocks. Wakefield based **Grass Concrete Ltd** has become the generic name for permeable grass paving with over forty years of installations.

01924 379443 www.grasscrete.com

Saniflo launches Kinesurf Pietra shower tray



The lightweight **Saniflo Kinesurf Pietra** shower tray is a simple, classic design for the mid-market featuring a stunning mineral textured surface. This versatile shower tray is available in four colours – white, black, anthracite and grey – and is easy to cut at just 40mm thick. The Kinesurf Pietra can be teamed up with matching wall panels if required. The grainy Biocryl surface is

reinforced with Biotec, a high density polymer that is also used to reinforce the ultra-flat stainless steel waste to match the tray colour. Multiple sizes in square and rectangular shapes can be specified from the compact 800mm to the walk-in 1800mm. The Kinesurf Pietra offers peace of mind for users and the minimalist design blends perfectly into any bathroom.

020 8842 0033 www.saniflo.co.uk

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Case study confirms that SuDS cost less

The trade association Interpave has published a new case study which demonstrates that sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) – including concrete block permeable paving – should cost less than conventional piped drainage, both initially and in terms of maintenance.

Interpave’s new case study revisits the SuDS scheme at Lamb Drove in Cambourne, Cambridgeshire. This scheme demonstrates the use of as many SuDS techniques as possible, including concrete block permeable paving, used in combination to form an effective management train. The Monitoring Project measured the performance of the SuDS over time, compared with that of a conventional



pipied drainage system on another nearby development, similar in size and density. Overall, both capital and maintenance costs – and therefore whole-of-life costs – associated with the Study Site were much lower than those for the conventional piped drainage system Control Site. The Monitoring Report noted capital cost savings of £314 per home and also suggested 20-25 per cent lower maintenance costs than traditional drainage on the Control Site. Having said that, further potential cost savings were also noted.

In addition, monitoring of pollutants, biodiversity and resident satisfaction is testament to the SuDS, notably concrete block permeable paving delivering a gradual flow of treated water to open SuDS features further down the management train. The Monitoring Report also confirms that: “The permeable pavement infiltration study specifically illustrates the robustness of the performance of this feature to limited maintenance. The infiltration capacity of the permeable pavement is able to adequately cope with the highest recorded rainfall intensity at the Study Site.”

Interpave’s new case study on this Monitoring project, including photos showing how the scheme has developed over time, is now available to download from Interpave’s website



www.paving.org.uk – an essential resource covering all aspects of design with precast concrete paving, including an inspirational project gallery and case studies, supported by background information for all design stages, as well as for CPD.

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GETTING CEMENT SELECTION RIGHT

Sandra Higginson of Tarmac Cement explains the importance of selecting the right cement products in order to reduce waste and costs.

For professional builders, saving time and money remains of paramount importance. However, as anyone with experience knows, opting for the cheapest materials and products could actually end up costing you more in the long run.

As build projects can vary enormously, where to save time and money will depend on a number of factors, not least the type of design and building materials required.

Thanks to its strong, durable and long-lasting properties, masonry construction remains the most common form of house construction in the UK. As such, the vast majority of builders are well educated on the specification of bricks and blocks.

However, this often isn't the case with other associated materials, where time and cost savings benefits could be overlooked. In particular, cement and mortar are often seen as commodities thanks to their proven track record and availability. This means that some builders will make spontaneous purchases. However, doing your homework to specify the best product for the job can reap numerous rewards.

In many instances it's often not one big thing that differentiates one type of cement or mortar from another. Rather, it is the sum of all the little things that can really make a big difference, including improved health and safety, reduced wastage, and a tighter control on spend.

Selecting the correct product for the

job, based on its characteristics and benefits, is a given for professional builders. For example, a cement that has enhanced resistance to a freeze/thaw attack will not only protect the reputation of your work, but will also help avoid costly mistakes further down the line. Likewise, whether the cement has a low water demand or how it compacts, spreads and finishes will also be taken into consideration to ensure ease of use on the job. However, there are also other factors that shouldn't be ignored.

REDUCING WASTE AND IMPROVING HANDLING

While it may not seem like a deal breaker, the type of packaging and size of the product is also worth considering. The majority of cement available to buy as a packed product comes in 25 kg bags for builders to split open with a spade and load up the mixer with half of the bag.

On a larger site, where there are multiple mixes to be made in one day, this isn't an issue. However, smaller projects, such as extensions or home improvements, may only require one mix at a time, which could result in the half opened bag potentially going to waste or being spoilt.

This is because of the other half of

cement is often left lying around, meaning that cement dust gets into all sorts of unwanted places. Overall, the process is extremely wasteful.

In contrast, there are smaller handy packs available which are half the size of the traditional 25 kg bag. Importantly, these then have the exact amount for one mix of mortar, ultimately reducing waste, and meaning that money and cement can be saved as they can buy the exact size that they need.

As expected, a smaller bag is also lighter, which makes it easier to deal with onsite. It essentially makes the product easier to transport, whether that be up ladders or on to site through confined spaces such as passageways.

As well as handling, it's also important to look at storage, especially as products can remain outdoors and onsite for a number of months. With the unpredictable British weather, something as simple as waterproof packaging can increase storage space for water-vulnerable products and eliminate wastage through accidental damage.

READY-TO-USE MIXES

Likewise, when looking for a high-quality mortar there are many qualities to look

A CEMENT THAT HAS ENHANCED RESISTANCE TO A FREEZE/THAW ATTACK WILL PROTECT THE REPUTATION OF YOUR WORK AND HELP AVOID COSTLY MISTAKES FURTHER DOWN THE LINE





out for – from how it hangs on the trowel and spreads, to its workability, compressive strength, and appearance. For many builders a pre-packed, ready to use mortar is therefore a firm favourite.

The guaranteed mix proportions of a ready to use mortar also help overcome

many potential problems relating to site mixing. These include the use of excess water and the addition of other inappropriate materials. This can result in reduced strength, increased permeability, and reduced durability of the hardened mortar.

A pre-mixed mortar is designed to eliminate all of these headaches. With improved quality and consistency, high quality products are made to exacting standards in a controlled factory setting. Ready to use, with the addition of water, the dry mix already includes selected sands, lime, cement and admixtures, which have been blended together. High quality products are also available in weatherproof, tear-resistant plastic bags, and for even smaller projects, re-sealable plastic tubs to reduce mess and wastage onsite.

Saving time and costs onsite is also possible, which is ideal for home improvements that may include the fixing of wooden, concrete and metal posts. For example, fast-setting, ready-to-use products are available which require no mixing, and are developed to enable the fixing of posts in just 10 minutes.

For professional builders, products that make them feel confident about the task at hand are essential, and the onus is on manufacturers to equip them with the best quality products that can reduce waste and worries, while also saving costs.

Sandra Higginson is technical advisor at Tarmac Cement

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RENDERING BEST PRACTICE MORE ACHIEVABLE

Dale Telling of Fassa Bortolo UK looks at the steps to take in choosing the best external render system for your next development.

Practical, durable and stylish, render systems can completely transform the exterior of a property through colour or finish, while protecting buildings against typical British weather conditions. Whether it's the development of a suburban new build, a series of coastal properties or a period restoration, there is a render to suit the job.

As with all external finishes, there is uncertainty as to which systems can be used with different substrates, but – providing you know the material you're using – a render company can easily specify the right product to suit your property.

The key considerations for most builds and renovations are cost, maintenance and aesthetics. Rendering provides one of the best solutions here, delivering a striking design and seamless finish to a

house which can be applied in a matter of days.

With a good quality render, developers and builders can be assured of a durable finish that will stand the test of time against algae, weathering, and any other factors that could damage or discolour the finish. Some render systems are more hard-wearing than others, but homeowners will be able to keep the surface looking its best for a number of years with minimal upkeep.

A crisp, clean white render is one sought-after look, especially within modern construction, where white walls and dark grey window frames are in demand. However, if your planning requires a different colour to blend with the rest of the buildings in the area, you can often match your render to almost any shade with a colour matching service

available at distribution centres, or direct through manufacturers.

RENDER FOR INSULATION (EWI)

For builds that require good insulation properties, consider incorporating external wall insulation (EWI) on a mechanical rail

WITH A GOOD QUALITY RENDER, DEVELOPERS AND BUILDERS CAN BE ASSURED OF A DURABLE FINISH THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME AGAINST ALGAE AND WEATHERING



system in the form of mineral wool or Expanded Polystyrene (EPS). Suited to a range of residential and commercial properties, EWI systems deliver excellent insulation and a sleek aesthetic finish.

Such systems can create a drained cavity behind the render carrier board which allows the components to breathe from behind, and drain any moisture caused by condensation.

WITH A GOOD QUALITY RENDER, DEVELOPERS AND BUILDERS CAN BE ASSURED OF A DURABLE FINISH THAT WILL STAND THE TEST OF TIME AGAINST ALGAE AND WEATHERING

This type of system can be easily installed due to its light weight, and can be part applied to a timber frame structure offsite for accuracy, with the render applied to the facade onsite, either by hand or by machine once the project reaches the final stages. These systems can be fixed to a multitude of substrates, making it versatile within most house-building projects. It is common to add insulation via a cavity wall or internal

panel, however some systems are applied to the building exterior to maximise the living area.

RENDERS TO SUIT ALL

Some renders are limited to certain substrates, whereas others can be applied to almost any building material, and finished with bespoke colour options making these renders versatile options for any project. These systems can involve several stages, but can be completed from start to finish in a relatively short space of time.

Some projects require a render system that can be applied quickly by machine or hand, and finished the next day. A fast and efficient option for decorating the facade of a building, single coat renders offer simple application and are ideal for protecting substrates against all weather conditions. Generally applied to masonry substrates, the finish is recommended to be 15 mm thick to comply with regulations, however thickness is dependent upon location.

Listed and heritage buildings often require a completely different render system that allows walls to breathe. Many of these older buildings have issues with damp and condensation, so need a lime-based render system.

Dale Telling is commercial manager at Fassa Bortolo UK



Glidevale helps Aran Services to combat roofspace condensation



Left to right: Insulation technicians George Roberts, Dalan Johnson and Martin Adaskiewicz from Aran Services together with Glidevale's Technical Officer Thomas Brookes



Insulation technicians from energy efficiency and property improvement firm Aran Services have been brushing up their skills in fitting Glidevale roof tile ventilators. Working with local authorities and housing associations across the UK to make homes more energy efficient, Aran is installing Glidevale roof tile ventilators for a number of social housing providers' refurbishment programmes. Where additional insulation is installed during roofing insulation upgrades, ventilation requirements change and should conform to standards set

out in BS 5250. When retrofitting, tile and slate ventilators are the easiest way to provide controlled ventilation and combat harmful condensation that would otherwise form within the roofspace.

"We are pleased to add Glidevale tile ventilation to our range of improvements that we are able to offer homes and businesses nationwide", said Alan Phillips, Aran Contracts Manager.

As part of its service to Aran, Glidevale's Technical Team has undertaken site surveys

and given guidance across various housing developments, to ascertain the type of tile vents required for the different roofs.

Other complimentary technical services offered by Glidevale include regulations guidance, toolbox talks, CPDs, site take offs, plot by plot delivery, CAD detailing and U-value calculations.

Please call or email Glidevale for more information.

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Fire sprinkler systems – Cover your investment

Residential fire safety, particularly in multi-storey buildings and tower blocks is a key focus for housing associations and local authorities as the retro-fitting of fire sprinkler systems now an essential part of a multi-million pound investment in fire protection upgrades.

With many HAs and LAs making significant contributions to the cost of this package of improvements, questions regarding 'best value' and 'cost effectiveness' must be considered while ensuring that quality and safety are not compromised.

As sprinkler system pipework usually needs to be surface mounted when retro-fitting in flats and communal areas within existing residential blocks, it is important that pipework and sprinkler heads are concealed to provide a more aesthetic finish and conceal the system's components while acting as a visible barrier to potential tampering.

Versa fire sprinkler boxing is manufactured from preformed 5mm thick, FSC® 'Chain of Custody' certified material and are available in a range of sizes to meet specific project requirements and pipework configurations.

An 8mm thick FSC® option is also available and the range also includes dedicated accessories, such as internal and external



corners to help create an integrated finish to the sprinkler installation.

From our experience of working with contractors on countless social housing projects, Versa can typically be fitted in less than half the time of site made alternatives. Potentially the most important advantage is that costs can be reduced, by cutting the time spent during the installation without compromising the quality or integrity of

the installation.

The focus is rightfully on improving fire safety in high-rise residential buildings, and Versa can make a contribution to that process in terms of effectiveness, ease of installation and economics by helping conceal sprinkler pipework and 'covering' the significant investment in sprinkler systems.

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Recently, the National Housing Federation found that more than 8 million people in England – or one in seven people – are living in an unaffordable, insecure or unsuitable home.

This is increasing pressure on contractors to deliver bigger, quicker and cheaper builds, which can result in mistakes being made and sometimes corners even being cut – a situation which has the potential to cost lives. The construction industry shoulders much responsibility so the importance of making fundamental changes to methods of working is immeasurable.

THE BENEFITS OF MODULAR

Of the 200,000 homes built each year in the UK, around 15,000 are modular. With fewer lorry deliveries to building sites, modular constructions have a lower carbon footprint and nearby residents are exposed to less noise and visual pollution. The whole offsite construction process can also be completed in roughly half the time of a traditional build.

Furthermore, modular construction allows for the standardising of housing design, making production more efficient. There is an important lesson to be learned here in how offsite manufacturers use monitored and checked components to ensure products meet performance specifications.

By introducing quality checks and tests during component assembly in the factory setting, it's easy to develop and implement industry-standard certifications.

When taken to the construction site for installation, the workforce will be fully qualified to execute the build, having up-to-date knowledge of the products and the building as a 'system.' This approach can be adopted for fire protection design.

THE SYSTEM-LED APPROACH

A system-led fire protection design method involves checking that the specified components work both individually and holistically. System components will generally include:

- Active fire protection – measures triggering a response, such as sprinkler systems and smoke alarms
- Passive fire protection – measures to slow down or contain fire, such as fire doors and fire-retardant materials.

A system-led approach can combine compartmentation – for example, with fire doors, sprinkler systems and FR-rated OSB board – followed by assessing each component for its individual performance, as well as how it works in combination with other components.

It's clear, however, that enforcing a

HOW OFFSITE BENEFITS BETTER FIRE PROTECTION

Ian King of Zeroignition looks at the benefits of modern methods of construction, and how the solutions offered by adopting an offsite approach can be applied to benefit fire protection and safety.



system-led approach to fire protection design can only take place if there's a drastic improvement in key knowledge across the industry.

AWARENESS MUST IMPROVE

We recently announced a raft of alarming findings from a study of fire protection awareness among architects and specifiers. The basic fire protection terms mentioned earlier – 'active fire protection' and 'passive fire protection' are linked with the standard terms 'reaction to fire' and 'fire resistance.' However, a huge 92 per cent of UK architects were unable to define them.

One in three architects were unable to correctly define the concept of active fire protection, while more than half couldn't give an accurate definition of passive fire protection. A similar number were unable to explain "reaction to fire" protection, and almost three-quarters were unable to define "fire resistance."

None of the architects interviewed said they had had comprehensive fire protection training; 8 per cent said they've had no training whatsoever.

The findings come as an industry-wide shock. Architects are responsible for designing reliable, robust buildings, and there's clearly a lack of understanding

ENFORCING A SYSTEM-LED APPROACH TO FIRE PROTECTION DESIGN CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE IF THERE'S A DRASTIC IMPROVEMENT IN KEY KNOWLEDGE



when it comes to fire basics – which is worrying to say the least. Architects, their employers and the professional bodies need to invest in ensuring this vital knowledge is fully distributed, absorbed and practiced.

THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH NEEDS TO CHANGE

Construction projects are incredibly complex, involving a myriad of

decisions. Each choice has a knock-on effect and there can be unforeseen results when a systematic approach to fire protection isn't adopted.

While architects know that a methodical way is best, there's clearly some scepticism as to how achievable this is. There is still more to be done by manufacturers and architectural bodies to ensure that best practice is fully established and followed.

Beyond this, the construction industry needs to learn from other industries, such as automotive and aviation, which focus on a 'checklist' approach to reduce harm to passengers. If people rely on memory, mistakes happen and the simple action of checking off points can stop fire planning elements being missed.

With a third of architects saying their current employer doesn't spend enough on fire protection training, there's clearly an opportunity for the construction and manufacturing sectors to step into the breach, and help fund such training.

Beyond this, we need to look to the latest in communications theory and understanding decision making to ensure that fire communications are presented in a way that sticks, and use 'nudge theory' to ensure that it's easier to do the right thing.

Only when fire protection is taken with the extreme seriousness it deserves can we start looking at new approaches to construction that reinforce a building's primary role: keeping people safe and secure.

Ian King is chief commercial officer of Zeroignition



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Simpson Strong-Tie introduces their all-new catalogue

Construction connector manufacturer **Simpson Strong-Tie** has released their all-new 2020 catalogue; a comprehensive product guide which showcases the company's most recent innovations and product line extensions. Alongside the UK's largest collection of connectors for timber and masonry construction, sit numerous new products, including the GPC, Gable Panel Connector, a high movement timber frame tie, decorative and a heavy duty post bases, an adjustable mini hanger, purlin anchor, twisted restraint strap and a 4mm reinforced angle bracket. The catalogue also contains comprehensive technical data, performance characteristics, safe working loads, plus easy to follow installation instructions. Available now in print on request, and online in the Resources/Literature section of the Simpson Strong-Tie website.

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OFFSITE TIMBER IS CONSTRUCTION'S FUTURE

Stewart Dalgarno of Stewart Milne Timber Systems discusses why modern methods of construction coupled with a build fabric such as timber frame is key to meeting Government housing targets sustainably.

Industry reports are increasingly signalling a move towards modern methods of construction (MMC) in the housebuilding sector. A phrase coined by the UK Government, it acts as a definition and framework to encourage developers to adopt and champion construction practices which will speed up delivery, plug the skills gap, and, crucially, drive for a low carbon sustainable economy.

In the housebuilding sector, MMC can have a transformational impact. With the UK currently experiencing a housing shortage and Government statistics stating a further 120,000 homes are needed annually, modern methods of construction, and in particular, offsite timber building solutions, are vital in addressing the shortfall.

But, as demand for increased production is driven by the industry, it is absolutely crucial that low carbon sustainability remains front-of-mind throughout. This is where the build fabric itself becomes just as important as the construction method.

Taking a 'fabric-first' approach and

using offsite timber frame construction is a proven means of ensuring that sustainability and low-carbon compliance is part of the very heart of the development, in the materials used, through the construction stages, and for the remainder of its lifecycle.

A natural, renewable, low-carbon material, timber is readily available, economically viable, versatile, and is a carbon-neutral building material in itself – for every tree used in a timber frame home, more are planted. This is converse to concrete blocks and mortar, which is an energy-intensive and non-renewable method of construction.

Offsite timber frame construction provides the building with a superior thermal envelope, requiring minimal maintenance, and a 'fit-and-forget' solution for the lifetime of the building. For a home to be as energy efficient as it can be, it must be as insulated and airtight as possible, and with timber construction retaining and reducing heat demand, the resulting building becomes

extremely fuel efficient.

Offsite timber frame construction is a proven mainstream construction solution, with a track record in superior energy efficiency and low embodied carbon. It is reliable, cost-effective, and the dominant method of construction in many countries, in addition to being the first choice for self-builders, where energy efficiency, low-carbon construction, and cost are key specifications.

In housebuilding, we're already seeing a

OFFSITE TIMBER FRAME PROVIDES THE BUILDING WITH A SUPERIOR THERMAL ENVELOPE, REQUIRING MINIMAL MAINTENANCE, AND A 'FIT AND FORGET' SOLUTION



move towards low-carbon homes, both in a home's production and in its use. The latest announcement reinforces the commitment from the UK Government, and further builds on the original Code for Sustainable Homes methodology for assessing new builds.

The Future Homes Standard ensures

new build homes are future-proofed with low-carbon heat and power and world-leading levels of energy efficiency – tying in with the Chancellor's pledge to reduce fossil fuel use in homes by 2025.

The industry is already well-equipped to scale up its adoption of timber as a build fabric combined with modern methods of construction. The UK offsite timber frame infrastructure in the form of supply-chain, materials, skills and capacity already exists to meet current and future housing targets, and modern timber techniques have been used in thousands of new home builds for decades.

The advantages of using offsite timber frame are three-fold: low energy demand, a carbon-neutral raw material, and a proven, reliable, cost-effective way of building high quality energy efficient homes. It's therefore clear that in the multi-faceted approach which must be taken to create sustainable climate resilient homes for the future, timber, and a fabric-first approach, will play a central role in enabling those other facets, such as renewable energy and smart technologies, to work as efficiently and harmoniously as possible.


While offsite timber frame construction provides housebuilders with many of

the answers, it's also collaboration within the industry that will be crucial in bridging the housing gap. Industrialisation through offsite construction, digital working and lean site assembly can deliver high-quality homes costing the same or less than houses which have been built traditionally.

Taking a timber frame, fabric-first approach to homes is the most effective means of meeting major housebuilding and net-zero carbon targets sustainably. It's affordable, proven, and requires no maintenance in the long-term. An approach which is cost-efficient year-on-year for the lifetime of the development, it positively impacts the social agenda as more efficient homes reduces energy bills for tenants, thereby decreasing fuel poverty.



For many, building low-carbon homes is already high on the agenda, and has been for some time. However, measures such as the Future Homes Standard will simply underpin and provide additional momentum to drive the uptake of offsite timber frame construction as the go-to solution of choice across the UK.



Stewart Dalgarno is director of product development at Stewart Milne Timber Systems



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"More and more has to be done off-site"

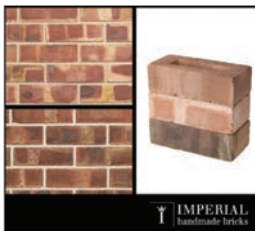


Nick Whittle, joint md of timber frame manufacturer **Target Timber Systems**, says that "all building methods have to meet the same strict criteria laid down by local authority building control and/or the clients specific requirements. The construc-

tion industry has seen more change in the last 30 years than it has in the past 130 years, under floor heating, cross laminated timber, SIPs, cavity insulation, pre-insulated timber frame, engineered beams to name but a few and it will continue to change but needs to be faster if we are going to meet demand. Whether we like it or not more and more has to be done off-site in factory controlled conditions or its not going to happen at all."

01403 782600 www.targettimber.com

Imperial introduces first dual-faced brick



Imperial Bricks, a leading supplier of traditional handmade, pressed, waterstruck and wirecut bricks, has introduced a new range of Pre-War Common bricks with a difference. Unique to the UK and available from Imperial Bricks, the bricks are 'dual-faced', with one 'clean' face/header, and one weathered. This allows builders to use either face, whether matching up to

existing brickwork for RMI, using the 'clean' or weathered faces or create a blend of mixed finishes to add character. This new brick is one of more than 50 shades and styles of bricks offered by Imperial.

01952 750816 www.imperialbricks.co.uk

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