



A mix of luxury and social homes are delivered in a highly desirable Cambridge village by Hayfield



Brian Berry on how SMEs can make houses 'fit for the future' and mitigate climate change



Patrick Mooney says increased spending on B&Bs for the homeless should drive the urgency to build

# HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

JULY/AUGUST 2021



## MAKING A SPLASH IN MANCHESTER

Urban Splash harnesses the power of MMC to help revitalise a newly 'hip' area of the city



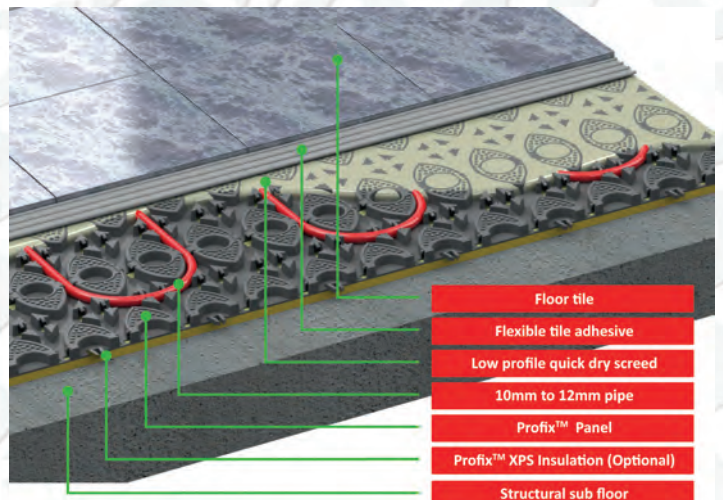


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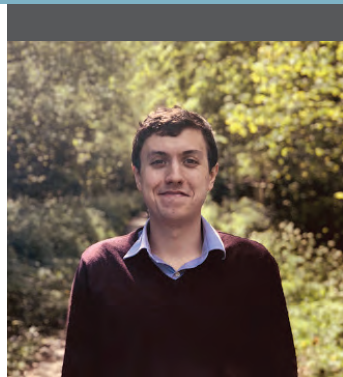
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Jack Wooler

# FROM THE EDITOR

Following a secret Unesco ballot at a UN committee in China, Liverpool has been stripped of its World Heritage Status.

The city had been previously warned that new developments around the city's waterfront had resulted in a "serious deterioration" of the historic site, with principal concerns centering around the £5bn mixed-use Liverpool Waters development.

This controversial move – detailed on page 8 – has been panned by many, including the city's Mayor. The docklands are undoubtedly of historic value, but large swathes of the land represent little more than post-industrial decline and urban decay, and are in dire need of renewing if they are to form a functional part of a city – one which is finally starting to see an easing in the decline from its historic early 20th century economic peak.

Liverpool is not alone in the committee's sightlines. Unesco has recently confirmed that Stonehenge could be added to its 'heritage danger list' if a £2.4bn highway tunnel is permitted – though this at least has been backed by archeologists and perhaps should be avoided. Similar concerns have been raised previously in Edinburgh and Westminster.

It is clear that any site of historic importance needs to be carefully treated and its historic value retained to the highest possible extent. But, with the housing shortage as alarming as ever, if houses can't be built in the place of old buildings or infrastructure beside relics, where should they go? Not in my back yard, is the cry of many!

To give them their dues, as the climate emergency becomes ever more dire, and tragic fires have highlighted the cracks in UK housing policy, the Government has taken strong strides to improve the regime in the near future – the Future Homes Standard and the Building Safety Bill are both set to markedly increase the quality as well as efficiency of the UK's homes – yet, despite these commendable moves, the Government is still failing to answer where these new homes should go, and is far behind the housing targets it set in 2017.

The causes are a subject of much debate, but whether it's strict planning laws, underfunded planning departments, land-banking, extensive green belts around big cities, or NIMBYism, the Government is far behind its 300,000 homes a year goal.

Of course, Covid has complicated matters – with the NHBC registering a total of 123,151 new homes in 2020, compared to 160,319 in 2019, though a recent post-lockdown bounce detailed on page 5 saw new home registrations rising to a 14 year high – but none of these statistics come anywhere near the Government's targets. It is clear that innovation is necessary, as well as renewed focus from the Government, if the housing shortage is to be addressed.

Luckily, whether it's building above car parks, building homes underneath gardens, or the modular revivals seen in our project report on page 38, there are solutions out there that can avoid tampering with our historical or natural treasures.

With face-to-face trade shows opening back up this year – from UK Construction Week, to CIH's Housing, to the RCI show, (all previewed in this issue) – perhaps it is through a renewed and reenergised focus that the real innovation needed to tackle the housing shortage can be found and implemented.

*Jack Wooler, deputy editor*

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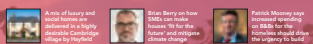
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## ON THE COVER



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JULY/AUGUST 2021



### MAKING A SPLASH IN MANCHESTER

Urban Splash harnesses the power of MMC to help revitalise a newly 'hip' area of the city

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# Post-Grenfell Building Safety Bill begins journey to legislation



The Building Safety Bill, hailed as the “the next step in ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers and protections to make homes across the country safer,” has entered Parliament on its way to becoming law.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is targeting the construction industry with the new legislation, formulated in the wake of the Grenfell disaster. It said the law “overhauls regulations, setting out a clear pathway on how residential buildings should be constructed, maintained and made safe.”

It also sets out the framework for the industry to improve compliance, with tougher penalties for those who break the rules, and compels developers to join a New Homes Ombudsman scheme.

Residents in high-rise buildings will have more say in the management of their building under the proposals, being able to “raise building safety concerns directly to the owners and managers of buildings, who will have a duty to listen to them.” If they feel their concerns are “ignored,” they can raise them with the Building Safety Regulator.

In addition, the period during which homeowners including leaseholders can claim against substandard construction

work will be increased six to 15 years, which will apply retrospectively. This will mean that properties built up to 15 years prior to the law coming into effect will be able to bring a claim for compensation.

Building owners will be “required to manage safety risks, with clear lines of responsibility for safety during design, construction, completion and occupation of high-rise buildings.” The Ministry will “require a golden thread of information, with safety considered at every stage of a building’s lifetime – including during the earliest stage of the planning process.”

Building owners will need to demonstrate that they have “effective, proportionate measures in place to manage safety risks,” otherwise they may face criminal charges.

The Bill has been created to provide a “clear, proportionate framework for the design, construction and management of safer homes.”

It will also strengthen the construction products regulatory regime, bringing in “new requirements to make sure more products are safe,” while “paving the way for a National Regulator for Construction Products to oversee and enforce rules.”

A new developer tax plus a further levy on developers are also being introduced “to ensure that the industry makes a contribution to setting things right.”

## New home registrations hit 14-year high



The strongest quarter for new build home registrations since 2007 have been reported by the National House Building Council (NHBC).

According to the NHBC, registrations peaked at a 14-year high to 46,452 homes in Q2 2021, “demonstrating that supply is increasing rapidly,” as housebuilders and developers respond to the strong demand for new homes.

Growth has been recorded compared to the second quarter of 2020, when lockdown restrictions were at their height and work on many sites was halted, with registrations up 130% and completions up 213% to 34,644 homes. Within this, private sector registrations were up 227% compared to Q2 2020, from 10,865 to 35,495, while the rental sector was up 17% from 9,375 to 10,957.

All UK regions saw increased registrations in Q2 compared to last year, with the highest uplifts in the North East (+436%), Scotland (+417%), Northern Ireland and IOM (+230%) and North West (+212%).

Commenting on the Q2 new home registrations statistics, NHBC chief executive Steve Wood said: “Our latest quarter’s registration statistics show the remarkable recovery the housebuilding industry has made since activity ground to a halt on site in April and May last year. A 14-year-high in new home registrations is quite something in the present environment.

“Despite the combined effects of the pandemic and Brexit causing labour shortages and some disruption to the supply of materials, the outlook for the medium term is a positive one. Demand for home ownership is holding strong alongside significant investor interest in the growing build to rent and retirement living sectors.”









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# Liverpool loses World Heritage status due to waterfront schemes



Liverpool has been stripped of its World Heritage status after a UN committee found developments threatened the value of the city's waterfront, following a secret ballot by the Unesco committee at a meeting in China.

A report in June by the World Heritage Committee said planned developments on the city's waterfront had resulted in "irreversible loss of attributes."

Unesco had reportedly previously warned the city that the developments, including the new Everton FC stadium, had resulted in a "serious deterioration" of the historic site. However it's believed that the committee's principal concerns centred around the £5bn mixed use Liverpool Waters development which includes 9,000 homes.

Unesco's decision was described as "incomprehensible" by the city's mayor Joanne Anderson, who said she plans to work with the government to examine whether the city could appeal.

Liverpool was awarded the title in 2004 in recognition of its historical and architectural impact, joining places

including the Taj Mahal, Egypt's Pyramids and Canterbury Cathedral, recognising the city's history as a major trading centre during the British Empire and its architectural landmarks.

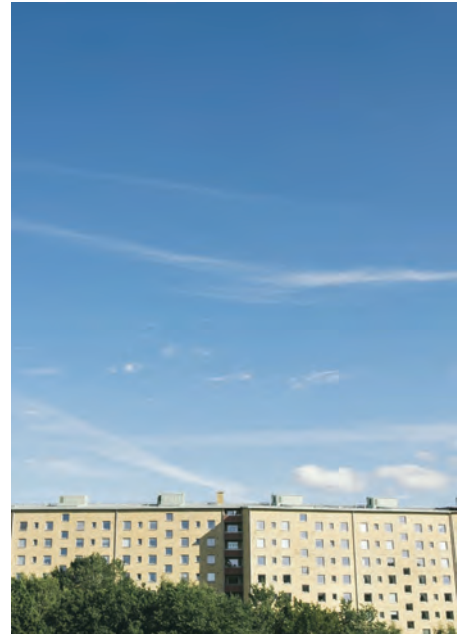
Liverpool becomes only the third site to lose its World Heritage status since the list began in 1978, the other two being Oman's Arabian Oryx Sanctuary in 2007 and Dresden's Elbe Valley in Germany in 2009.

Nearly 30 figures from politics, football and academia signed a letter to The Times in June urging Unesco not to strip the city of its status.

They said the £500m Everton stadium – in one of the city's poorest areas – would "bring millions of people to the shores of the Mersey," where they would learn about "the city's and Britain's maritime past."

Following the announcement, the Government said it was "extremely disappointed" and believes Liverpool still deserves its heritage status "given the significant role the historic docks and the wider city have played throughout history".

## John Lewis to build 10,000 homes for rent



Retailer John Lewis is reportedly set to construct 10,000 homes for rent over the next few years, largely utilising its existing sites.

Reports in *The Sunday Times* said the department store chain's move into the residential property market is being driven by concerns around the national housing shortage. The plans are also expected to give the firm a stable, long term income against the backdrop of a troubled retail market and enable it to provide new job opportunities.

The company has reported that 7,000 of these initial 10,000 homes will be built on its existing property portfolio, and that the new homes will range from studio flats to family houses.

As part of this offering, the company will provide its own products as furnishings if tenants wish, and many of the developments will be mixed-use, utilising John Lewis' own businesses – for example integrating a Waitrose store into the ground floor of an apartment block.

The first of these developments are expected to be built in south east England, but the company said it believes there are "opportunities across the country."

Nina Bhatia, executive director of strategy and commercial development for the John Lewis Partnership, was quoted as saying: "As a business driven by social purpose, we have big ambitions for moving into property rental."





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# New partnership formed to explore modular homelessness solutions



From left to right: Captain John Clifton, The Reverend Anthony Ball, Emmanuel Gotor, Stephen Serrant, Andy Hill, Lieutenant Colonel Drew McCombe, Tom Hill, Eddie Hughes MP, The Reverend Dr James Hawkey

**H**ill Group, The Salvation Army and Citizens UK have launched a new partnership to help single homeless people, including a new modular home design to support the project's goals.

The SHC Partnership was formed following the setting up of the £12m Foundation 200 project by developer Hill Group to gift 200 specially designed and fully equipped modular homes over the next five years to organisations supporting homeless people. At least half of these units will be delivered through the partnership.

The partnership intends to create “community-led supported accommodation projects,” with The Salvation Army and Citizens UK working in partnership with people who have experienced homelessness, learning from their experience and building “rich and inclusive” communities.

Marking the launch in the grounds of Westminster Abbey, SHC Partnership unveiled the SoloHaus, a modular home specially designed by Hill. Furnished and ready to move into, the homes are designed to offer running costs of less than £5 a week, and to comply with the Future Home Standard, exceeding Building Regulations for energy efficiency and sound insulation, and providing a design life of 60 years.

The Partnership is now calling on the Government, local authorities, and landowners to back its programme, provide funding and help identify small pockets of land as sites for the homes.

The SoloHaus homes are built in Hill's factory with products developed by its manufacturing and modular homes specialist partner, Volumetric Modular.

SHC Partnership said it has already identified “large-scale demand” for the homes, beyond the Foundation 200 initiative. The homes are in production and available now for local authorities and charities to purchase.

“Working with The Salvation Army and Citizens UK means that our modular homes can make a real, tangible difference to homeless people nationwide and has added amazing firepower to our Foundation 200 programme,” says Andy Hill, chief executive of The Hill Group.

“When the company marked its 20th anniversary in 2019, offering a solution to homelessness was our way of giving something back. We have already donated homes to local charities in Cambridge and other committed projects.”





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# Out of timber? Consider buying British.

**If you've tried to buy timber cladding lately, you'll know it is in short supply – but the solution may be closer than you think, says Tom Barnes of Vastern Timber.**

Timber products, including roof battens, structural timber and cladding, are in high demand, but as we all know, supplies are not keeping up. Finding external cladding timber continues to be challenging. Favourites such as Canadian cedar and Siberian larch are in very short supply, while prices for these products have risen by 50–100% so far this year. The good news is that many locally grown timber species are well suited to external cladding,

and these are often cheaper and more available than imported alternatives.

## **British-grown timber**

There are many timber species grown in the UK that are suited to exterior applications. Native western red cedar, larch, oak and sweet chestnut make excellent cladding due to their natural durability. What's more, at Vastern Timber we use thermal modification to transform locally





## Case Study Much Wenlock

Timber homes in Shropshire are nothing new, but these energy efficient, affordable homes use local materials and modern processes to excellent effect.

Recently named one of 'Britain's Greenest Streets.' It has twelve homes of various sizes, all clad in Brimstone poplar, the thermally modified, British grown timber cladding.

The housing association commissioned leading Passivhaus and sustainable architects, Archetype, for the project. UK sourced natural materials were used, including locally quarried clay roof tiles, local lime render and locally grown cladding.

Treehugger called the project 'radical simplicity' but we call it common sense.

grown ash, poplar and sycamore, which wouldn't normally be suitable for cladding, into a durable cladding that we call Brimstone, an increasingly popular alternative to imported hardwoods.

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### **Locally sourced timber to reduce our carbon footprint**

Long and short term factors impact timber supply chains.

Over 80% of the timber used in the UK is imported, and this year global demand hit a record high in a post-lockdown housing boom. In the years to come an increased focus on the carbon footprint of construction will lead developers to specify more sustainable materials, leading to yet more demand for wood.

Minimising the use of carbon-intensive materials such as concrete and steel and using bio-based materials like timber could be key to a low-carbon economy. With these pressures affecting the whole planet, we in the UK cannot rely on importing 80% of the timber we use. I believe that we must aim to be more self-sufficient, which means planting more trees and using more locally grown wood. Let's use these timber shortages as an opportunity to start making the switch.

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Graham Edward, MD of Edward Architecture

# An MMC revolution?

Graham Edward, managing director at Edward Architecture, answers some of the industry's most pressing questions around modular housing, as the MMC revolution gathers pace.

**W**e are finding that local authorities and housing associations represent the core of the modular client market. This is generated by Government grant funding being aimed at promoting modular construction – there is definitely a modular revolution amongst local authority and housing associations.

It will be interesting to see if the pandemic can inspire a market shift in the use of modular in housing more generally. The pandemic has definitely inspired a market shift amongst what the customer wants from their property which includes things like larger gardens, home offices and to be within close proximity to leisure activities etc.

## CAN MODULAR HELP TACKLE THE HOUSING CRISIS?

Modular has obvious advantages in terms of build quality and speed of erection, which is incredibly fast, and means less disturbance to the neighbourhood in terms of noise and length of time onsite.

Most contractors and developers have a limit to their capacity in terms of workforce and

materials, and offsite modular construction is a great way to expand this capacity.

Publicity for existing schemes and the Government's enthusiasm are also accelerating the modular market's growth. As such, modular housing is seen as a potential solution to the UK's affordable housing crisis.

## WHAT ARE ITS SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS?

Modular construction has several sustainability benefits:

- streamlined design and efficient production reduces waste to landfill
- producing buildings in a factory setting, the quality of elements such as insulation can be better assured
- it is easier to control energy use in a factory setting than in an open construction site
- reduced time onsite;
- increased speed of build meaning fewer plant staff onsite.

The cost of modular construction however still appears to be prohibitive for national

## THE COST OF MODULAR CONSTRUCTION HOWEVER STILL APPEARS TO BE PROHIBITIVE FOR NATIONAL HOUSEBUILDERS





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housebuilders, though they do see modular as a potential expansion to their construction capacity. Ultimately modular construction has better whole life costs because of the quality of build, high sustainability levels and cost certainty at the early stages of the project and hopefully the UK's 'cost led' construction mentality will soften on this.

#### MAKING MODULAR COST-EFFECTIVE, AND ATTRACTIVE

The way to make modular cost effective to the mass market is to have repeat modules and standardisation. Modular housing companies are rising to the challenge where external designs on standard modules can be exciting, fun and a great place to live.

An example of this is our scheme for Bromley Council in Chislehurst which is nearing completion and is designed specifically to look as 'unmodular' as possible. To do this we have made changes in materials, changes in height and used local materials to create something that is fresh, modern and sits with the local character of the area.

In commercial housebuilding, house prices are led by the market. Whether it's modular or traditional construction, therefore modular will struggle to become



more economical until there is a better understanding of whole life costs. I suspect the local authority and affordable housing markets will drive forward affordable housing in modular.

#### WHAT ROLE DOES MMC HAVE IN LUXURY HOUSING?

The key quality to luxury housing is its bespoke design. Modular companies that adapt to bespoke designs will be in the best position for this market.

While module sizes are limited due to transportation restrictions, it is perfectly possible to design large rooms which use two, three or four modules to create exciting spaces to suit the luxury market, and the build quality will be guaranteed.

This market is really exciting for architects such as ourselves that understand modular restrictions and design as our knowledge can help create different and exciting designs that are still technically possible using offsite construction.

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Carl Pittam of car sharing provider Ubeeqo

# Solving the car conundrum

Carl Pittam, development director at Ubeeqo, discusses the benefits of including shared transport facilities in new build developments to address eco goals.

**T**here is no question that tackling long-term environmental impact is a big challenge for housebuilders. And this is particularly the case when it comes to the impact of car ownership on local communities.

With the UK targeting net zero emissions by 2050, transport has been identified as the main polluter. And Section 106 requirements mean that planning authorities, almost by default, now expect applications to include solutions to ensure new developments will not add to the congestion and pollution impacts of car ownership.

But there is also a bigger issue to consider – consumer choice. As the movement towards lifestyle choices that lessen the impact on the environment gains ground, developers will also want to think about how they can satisfy that need in the developments they create. It will increasingly become an important marketing edge when homebuyers are considering where – and how – they want to live.

The inclusion of electric charging points is already on the agenda for new builds in England, supporting the Government's target to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030.

But there also needs to be a concerted effort to encourage homeowners to consider alternatives to personal vehicle ownership.

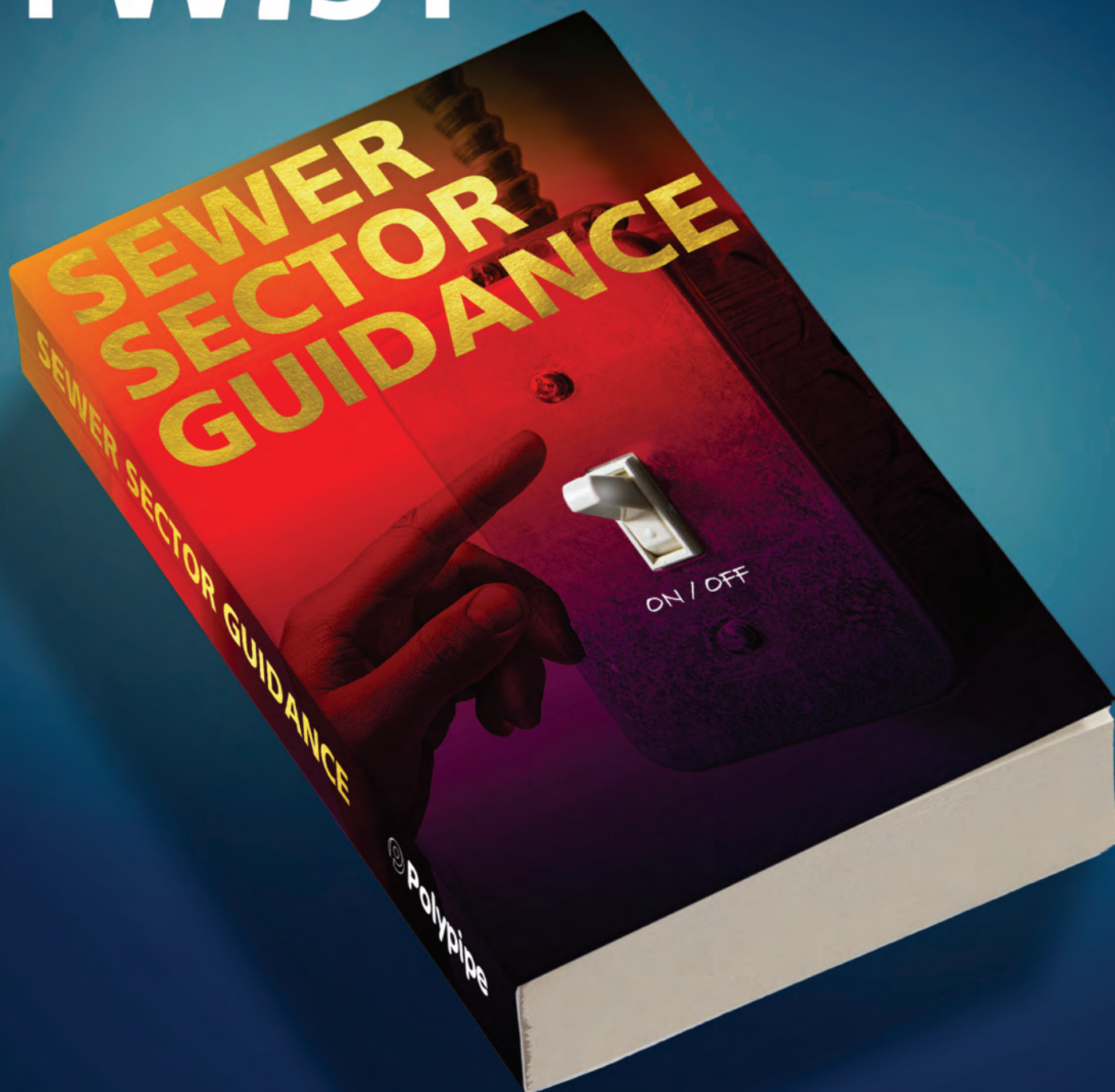
That's where car clubs come into the mix. According to the latest data from Collaborative Mobility UK (CoMoUK), the shared transport charity, growing numbers of people across the UK are signing up to car clubs. This is having a significant positive impact on congestion and pollution – the CoMoUK data suggests that each car club vehicle replaces 18.5 private cars. For a developer including a car club in their scheme, this could be an important persuading factor for a new planning application.

The study – which included a survey of over 10,000 car club users – also found that car club members were far more likely to regularly walk or cycle as part of their daily routine. Incorporating a car club into a scheme could, therefore, have clear demonstrable health benefits for the local community. It is also important to note that, per car, car clubs emit much less than the UK average car, and club vehicles are used by far more people per car than private cars, leading to far fewer cars





# PLOT TWIST



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for a community's motorised travel needs.

#### THE PARKING CHALLENGE

Another reason why car clubs really must become an integral facet of any new development – particularly in inner cities – is the parking challenge.

New research from the RAC Foundation cites that residential streets are being turned into car parks because new vehicles don't fit household garages. It suggests that cars have increased in size by about a third in the last 50 years.

For new build developers who need to demonstrate they are not adding to parking pressure, incorporating larger parking spaces doesn't make financial sense, and could well have a detrimental impact on the success of their application.

#### A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Working with an established car club, developers can immediately enhance their chances of success in the planning process because they will be able to demonstrate they are addressing specific concerns relating to parking, congestion and environmental pressures.

A car club also adds an important sales message to attract buyers and tenants. 'Every property comes with access to a car' is a great story to tell.

## THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT TACKLING LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IS A BIG CHALLENGE FOR HOUSEBUILDERS

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Brian Berry of the FMB

## COMMENT

# MAKING HOMES FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Brian Berry, CEO of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), explores a potential, more sustainable future for housebuilding in the UK.

**T**his summer's floods – and last year's heatwaves – remind us of the importance of future-proofing Britain's homes.

Ventilation and cooling to manage overheating in homes will become increasingly important in the years ahead, especially in our towns and cities.

It is welcome that the built environment is a key theme at this year's COP26 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow to consider the challenges we face. We must ensure that our homes are fit for the future.

## OVERHEATING IN NEW HOMES

I welcomed the Government's recent consultation on managing the risk of overheating in new homes, as part of the Future Buildings Standard. We must take a fabric-first approach to ventilation and cooling, to avoid increasing energy demand with air conditioning units.

Creative solutions are needed to avoid overheating, but to continue delivering the bi-folding doors and large windows that many house buyers are looking for. Small to medium-sized (SME) housebuilders build beautiful and bespoke homes, and creative design is their forte, they must therefore be at the heart of solutions to these challenges.

## FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE CHALLENGE OF NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY

Rural housing has its own challenges in tackling climate change and reversing the decline in biodiversity.

Development has stopped in some rural areas of the country because of an increase in nutrients like phosphates and nitrates entering the local waterways. While it is incredibly important to achieve 'nutrient neutrality' and protect our waterways, we must seek urgent solutions so that local builders can continue to deliver the homes that are needed for these communities.

I am joining calls for the UK Government to work with OFWAT to encourage a rapid programme of upgrading wastewater treatment works so that these can filter out nutrients from new developments before they

enter watercourses.

The decision to cease development is particularly difficult for SMEs, who cannot down tools and pick up in other parts of the country like national developers with larger portfolios. I am concerned that the longer building work is not able to continue, the greater impact this will have on the cashflow and work programme for small firms in the affected areas. This doesn't just affect housebuilders, but their contractors and supply chain, too.

## GREENING THE WAY WE BUILD

No debate about future proofing our new homes is complete without considering the way we build, and the tradespeople behind the bricks.

There is plenty that the industry can do, working collectively, to reduce excessive waste created during the construction process. My members frequently tell me that they are concerned about the amount of plastic packaging that their products arrive in. Wrapping products in layers of plastic means increasing construction's landfill contribution and the cost of waste removal. SMEs cannot sort and store waste on site as easily as larger firms, and need extra support to recycle materials. But we also need to reduce the amount of plastic that we use overall. This is a practical measure that would really help green our new homes.

Building energy efficient homes that are well ventilated will require additional training for many in the industry. It will also require a greater number of new people coming into the industry. SMEs will be at the heart of our training challenge, as 71% of apprentices are trained by small employers. However, we know that investing in training can be difficult when juggling the day-to-day challenges on site. Builders need greater support to recruit new apprentices who are a good match for the business. They also need greater financial support to train, so that they can divert an experienced tradesperson's time away from the job and toward the next generation of talent, without impacting on their bottom line.

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COOLING, TO  
AVOID  
INCREASING  
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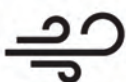
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Patrick Mooney, editor of  
Housing, Management &  
Maintenance

# INVEST IN LONG-TERM SAVINGS

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and editor of Housing, Management & Maintenance, explores why recent hikes in spending on temporary accommodation for the homeless highlights the urgency to build more social housing.

**T**he case for building tens of thousands of new social housing properties each year has surely been made by alarming figures showing huge increases in the numbers of homeless people placed in bed and breakfast hotels, at a frightening cost to the taxpayer.

Latest official figures show there are 10,510 households that have been placed in B&B hotels compared with just 2,310 around a decade ago – an increase of more than 450%.

At the same time, English councils have reported their spending on placing homeless households in B&Bs has risen by over 530%, from £26.7m in 2010/11 to a staggering £142m in 2019/20.

This cost is borne by all of us through a combination of council tax, borrowing and central Government grants, all of which are ultimately paid for by the taxpayer. And of course it is only buying us a sticking plaster – a short period in a B&B.

It is not buying us any new homes that could contribute towards a long-term solution, but it

is lining the pockets of the 'get rich quick' B&B owners. To make matters worse, the accommodation provided is often unsuitable for stays of more than just a few days' duration with limited space, a lack of many modern facilities, no access to gardens, and very little privacy.

## FEWER SOCIAL HOMES BUILT

Households are often placed in hotels that are remote from their families and friends, so they also lack vital support at times of severe personal stress.

With a shortage of rented accommodation suitable for families to be moved into, the average stays in B&B hotels are also getting ever longer, and this is particularly damaging to the education and life chances of children. This adds indirectly to the B&B costs and will be with us for many years to come.

Of course this is all happening at the same time as levels of second home ownership and properties owned by overseas investors, are both at record high levels. And yet the number

ENGLISH COUNCILS HAVE REPORTED THAT THEIR SPENDING ON PLACING HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS IN B&BS HAS RISEN BY OVER 530%







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of new homes being built for letting at the more affordable social rents are at very low levels. This is despite overall house-building hitting new highs.

There were 49,470 completed homes in the first quarter of 2021, the highest figure in over 20 years and a 4% increase compared to the last three months of 2020. During the same period 46,010 new homes were started, which is the highest number in nearly 15 years and a 7% increase on the previous quarter.

But the vast majority of these new homes were for sale – either outright, or via one of a number of shared ownership models. Realistically very few of the homeless households which are housed in B&Bs will be in the market for these properties. Instead they need decent homes, let at rents they can afford and which provide them with secure housing.

#### NEW POWERS FOR DELIVERING HOMES TARGET

Last year the 50 biggest developing housing associations built 34,753 new homes at a cost of £6.1bn, but only 5,009 of the new homes – or 14.4% of the total – were for social rent (compared with 16.7% for market sale, 30.8% for shared ownership and 32.9% for affordable rent). More positively, some 7,667 new social rent homes were started last year, but there is clearly a lot of catching up to be done.

As a result of the above, the Local Government Association (which represents councils across England) has put together a six-point plan to help prevent

and reduce homelessness. At the top of its list, the LGA wants councils to be given further powers and resources to build 100,000 social homes for rent each year, on top of those being built by HAs.

With previous LGA analysis showing council housing waiting lists could double as a result of the pandemic, giving councils these new powers would help the Government to meet a third of its annual housing target (of 300,000 new homes a year) and reduce homelessness.

By reforming the Right to Buy so that councils can retain 100% of sales receipts, having the flexibility to combine these receipts with other Government grants and being able to set the size of discounts locally, councils could go even further. The LGA says these measures would enable councils to significantly boost the number of new homes built, supported by the right infrastructure.

Polling by the LGA has also found that 80% of MPs and 88% of Peers think councils should have more financial freedoms and powers to build new homes. Other measures include making it easier for councils to use Compulsory Purchase Order powers to buy empty properties and protecting or even increasing welfare benefits to the most vulnerable.

#### SIX POINT PLAN EXPLAINED

Councillor David Renard, the LGA's housing spokesperson, said: "Sadly, these figures reflect the scale of the housing challenges that our country faces. Councils will only use B&Bs as a last

resort, but the severe lack of suitable housing means they now have no choice.

"This is hugely disruptive to families with children, and the rising demand for support has come with soaring costs for councils. Throughout the pandemic, Government has trusted councils to get on with the job of protecting the nation, supporting people and putting infrastructures in place to help with recovery. We want to continue this momentum and work with Government to tackle the shortage of housing and build the homes the country desperately needs.

"With the right funding and freedoms, councils can help Government to achieve its ambitions for our national recovery from the pandemic. Giving councils the powers to build council housing on the scale required, would go a significant way towards reducing homelessness and the need to place households in bed and breakfasts."

During the coronavirus crisis, central and local government have shown what can be achieved when they work together towards a shared goal with councils demonstrating their ability to lead and deliver on the most pressing issues facing residents right across the nation.

With a national focus on improving building safety some four years on from the Grenfell Tower fire, it is clear there will be many calls on the public purse. Reducing the spend on B&Bs will help, although it is clear that this is one of those situations where as a nation we need to invest to save in the long run.



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## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

# Custom build community at Ebbsfleet gets green light



Alkerden Gateway, a custom build “community” at Ebbsfleet Garden City, has been granted planning approval.

Developed by Westerhill Homes and designed by BPTW, the development consists of 67 homes, of which 17 (25%) are affordable.

Intended to address the lack of supply of custom build homes within the market, it is hoped this development will provide an opportunity for originality and an innovative approach to the treatment of individual plots.

From floor plans and materials to kitchen and parking spaces, Alkerden Gateway presents an opportunity for future residents to be involved in the

design and build process. Sustainability and biodiversity have also been considered with solar PV panels, tree planting and the installation of bird or bat boxes also among the customisation options.

Alkerden Gateway is the first key development parcel at the transition from Castle Hill to Alkerden village. It is bordered by a strategic area of green parkland to the east (Central Green Zone), a large-scale Education Campus to the west and other residential developments to the north and south.

The decision follows the submission of a Reserved Matters planning application in March 2021, and a pre-application consultation process in which residents,

businesses and stakeholders shared their views and informed the final proposals.

Julian Moat, planning director at Westerhill Homes commented: “As a Kent-based housebuilder, we are delighted to have secured planning permission from Ebbsfleet Development Corporation for the delivery of our exciting, bespoke custom build homes at Ebbsfleet Garden City.

“We anticipate a strong market demand for customisation in the new build market, and coupled with the strong pull of Garden City living, we fully expect these new homes to prove popular as we now commence on the marketing and delivery aspects of the site.”





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## Next phase of Coventry regeneration gets green light

Planning permission has been granted for the delivery of 94 homes from Keepmoat Homes from Coventry City Council, as part of the Spirit Quarters regeneration programme in North East Coventry.

The multi-million-pound Spirit Quarters project will enter its fifth phase following the completion of phases one to four, which have delivered 979 new homes in the area, 275 of which were allocated for affordable housing in partnership with Citizen.

The latest phase will include 74 properties for the open market, comprising two, three, and four-bedroom houses, along-

side 20 affordable homes.

Construction is due to commence in the summer of 2021, with the first homeowners due to move in June 2022. The development will take around two and a half years to complete.

"We're delighted to have received planning permission for the fifth phase of construction at Spirit Quarters," says Charlotte Goode, regional managing director at Keepmoat Homes.

"This significant regeneration project will not only deliver 94 much-needed new homes to the area, but every aspect of the development has been designed to fulfil the needs of this brand-new community."

## 600 new homes for Redrow in Stevenage

Outline consent has been granted for 618 homes on a 93-acre site in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, recently acquired by Redrow.

The site, which lies to the east of Stevenage off Gresley Way, is set to host a mix of family homes and apartments, catering to local housing needs - with 40 per cent of the new homes being affordable.

Alongside new homes and community facilities, Redrow has stated that development will unlock improvements to local highways infrastructure, as well as new on and off-site pedestrian and cycle routes, and a central bus-only route onto Gresley Way to support an extended bus service.

The housebuilder is working towards submission of a detailed



planning application to East Herts District Council for the first phase of development in early Autumn 2021.

This latest acquisition takes the number of live or forthcoming sites being delivered by the housebuilder's Eastern division across Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk to 10.

Tom Hughes, head of land at Redrow Eastern, commented: "This latest acquisition perfectly reflects our strategy to deliver family homes in well-connected areas, meeting the strong demand for spacious characterful homes with easy access to green spaces.

"Our proposed scheme will showcase Redrow's placemaking credentials by creating a sustainable new community, with a mix of housing and on-site amenities."





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## CASE STUDY

# Great expectations



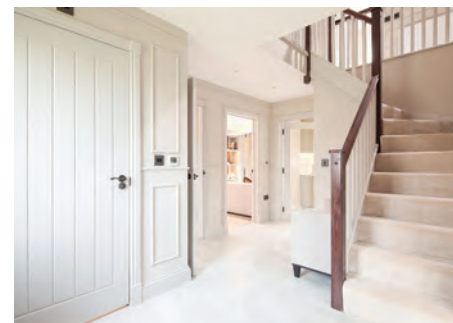
A mix of 40 high-end and local authority homes are being constructed in a desirable Cambridgeshire village. Jack Wooler reports on how Hayfield Homes delivered its first scheme in the county.

**4**0 new properties are being delivered by Hayfield Homes in the historic Cambridgeshire village of Great Gransden. Named Hayfield Avenue, the project consists of 24 luxury open market homes, alongside 16 being delivered for local housing association Cross Keys Homes.

As part of the focus on community, 'Play Streets' have been incorporated within the 4.4 acre site to enable children to play safely, and the developer also created a linear route running through the centre of the scheme. This central street will see the road surface designated as an area for cars and pedestrians to share, according to the housebuilder and council's shared brief.

A total of 12 house types will feature across this site, giving a choice of two, three, four and five-bedroom homes. The open market homes are particularly high spec, says the developer, with highly-insulated studies for improved acoustics when home working, and air source heat pumps.





Located off Sand Road, the development aspires to the feel of a traditional village community, with Great Gransden having previously been a winner of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England's Best Kept Village competition. The area is highly sought after due to its Ofsted Outstanding schools, local amenities, peaceful yet convenient location, collection of historic buildings, and the Gransden & District Agricultural Society Annual Show.

The first residents have already taken occupation of their homes in recent weeks, and Hayfield is on track to complete the £13.8m development by the end of 2021.

#### GETTING PLANNING

The prime residential site was purchased from Catesby Estates plc in 2019 with an outline consent in place. Hayfield worked with architect and planning consultant Woods Hardwick on the reserved matters planning application, and construction work commenced in summer 2020.

The developer retained "close engagement" with stakeholders and planning officers at Huntingdonshire District Council throughout the planning process for the scheme, including tackling some local opposition. This was the only development taking place within a five-mile radius of the village.

"The Great Gransden site is a prime residential opportunity in a beautiful village which has seen very little new development," explained Mark Gay, planning director of Hayfield. "We have actively targeted Cambridgeshire and are thrilled to have launched Hayfield Avenue as our first scheme in the county."

As soon as the team acquired the Sand

Road site back in 2019, says Gay, they sought to "comprehensively understand the key design characteristics and architectural features which make Great Gransden so attractive and appealing." The resulting Arts and Crafts-inspired designs complemented existing properties in the village.

#### MATERIAL CHALLENGES

The construction programme is currently in full flow, with work on all 40 homes well advanced, and a number of homes already completed and occupied. As with most projects in recent times, however, this has not been without its challenges.

According to Andy Morris, managing director of Hayfield, notwithstanding Covid, the building materials shortage is having a major impact on the developer's business. "It is not just caused by issues relating to the pandemic, but also by other factors such as manufacturing delays, Brexit, and the Suez Canal blockage," he says.

These challenges come alongside continued growth in demand in the new homes market, and a 20 per cent increase in home improvement products to upgrade residential properties.

The MD told Housebuilder & Developer that this unprecedented "perfect storm scenario" is impacting all stages of the build, from the fabric construction through to the internal fitout. Current materials shortages being experienced on the project include bricks, blocks, plastics, timber and glazing.

"Our highly experienced team is working very closely with our supply chain to mitigate the impact to our customers," he explains. Robust funding streams and cash reserves have enabled

**THE OPEN MARKET HOMES ARE PARTICULARLY HIGH SPEC, WITH HIGHLY-INSULATED STUDIES FOR IMPROVED ACOUSTICS WHEN HOME WORKING**





the firm to “forecast and forward orders many months ahead,” however Morris admits that current demand “is in excess of supply.”

He adds, “with strong financial backing, we wholeheartedly committed to this project in order to secure and create new jobs in both Hayfield and the construction supply chain.”

#### SPECIFICATION

Despite the challenges in acquiring materials, according to the developer no expense has been spared in ensuring the luxury homes meet the needs of Hayfield’s discerning target market.

Following analysis of the existing architectural vernacular of Great Gransden, the new houses take specific design cues from properties in the village. The collection of brick and render homes’ interiors feature bespoke Manor Interiors kitchens, ROCA Laufen bathrooms, Minoli ceramic tiles, underfloor heating, Hammonds fitted wardrobes, heritage bronze ironmongery, and Farrow & Ball paint.

Alongside this, OFNL (Open Fibre Networks) fibre broadband up to 360 Mbps download speeds is being installed in all homes. The dedicated home study (or smallest bedroom) at each home is being constructed with high insulation levels to deaden sound and enable homeowners to work more effectively while other family members are at home.

A five-bedroom show home has been styled by Lifestyle Interiors to “articulate modern country living and accentuate all these features.” Bespoke joinery and natural textures have been combined with a neutral colour palette to illustrate how Hayfield Avenue’s rural village setting can be combined with a contemporary interior.

Gemma Schofield, managing director at Lifestyle Interiors commented: “To achieve the perfect interior to match these stunning homes, we wanted to add depth to the traditional country design style – in order to modernise it.” She continues: “Hayfield Avenue maintains simplicity and elegance throughout, which is a hallmark of the country chic look.”

The interior finishes include natural hues and neutral tones such as whites, creams, browns and beiges, which Schofield says “creates a warm, welcoming and smart country home, while allowing the beautiful architecture and light-filled living spaces to do the talking.”

She continues: “We hope visitors pick up on all the luxury details, such as the bespoke joinery inset with bronze antique mirrors, the soft feature lighting, and the use of many different textures and tones.”

#### ECOLOGY

Matching the rest of the homes’ high specification, and meeting the rising demand for sustainable homes – arguably




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even more of a factor at this price point – Hayfield worked hard on the properties' sustainability credentials.

Ahead of incoming mandatory requirements of the 2025 Future Homes Standard, the homes have eschewed natural gas heating, instead opting for heat pumps. Reducing running costs and minimising fossil fuel consumption, the heating technology has been proven to cut carbon emissions by up to 45 per cent, while also delivering energy cost savings to residents.

As part of this system, underfloor heating has also been installed in all the homes, as an efficient way to not only heat the homes, but also reduce the spread of dust – aiding allergy sufferers.

As well as technological improvements, Hayfield has also reduced the predicted energy usage across the development by 10% through a fabric first insulation strategy.

Further adding to its green credentials, each dwelling has been designed for efficient water use – no more than 110 litres of non-recycled water usage per person per day. 'Sustainable Travel Welcome Packs' are provided to new residents to identify public transport or car-share scheme opportunities, and wildflower and wet meadow grassland planting, combined with bat and bird boxes (in both retained habitats and within the new homes) ensure the development provides a net gain in biodiversity.

#### STRIKING A CHORD

A Home Builders Federation five-star builder, Hayfield recently won Gold and

Bronze accolades at the 2020 WhatHouse? Awards and three Pride in the Job NHBC Awards. The firm knows the value of building a home in the best way available, in the best location available, and the results are clear on this scheme.

"The combination of the traditional architecture with a high-spec, eco-efficient interior is really striking a chord with purchasers," says Kelly Sharman, sales and marketing director for Hayfield.

"The people who are currently moving into their new Hayfield Avenue homes include those already living in Great Gransden, and families relocating from over 100 miles away - offering something for everybody."

Great Gransden itself is well served by the two nearby towns of Cambourne and St Neots, the latter the largest town in Cambridgeshire with a 47 minute direct train service to London's Kings Cross. The village is also a convenient location for commuting into Cambridge, Bedford, Stevenage and Peterborough and across East Anglia, the nearby A428 providing excellent access to major routes, and has a well-connected bus service.

The scheme isn't all about high-end luxury, however. Due to the proximity of Addenbrookes and Papworth Hospitals, this scheme is also proving popular with NHS workers. Hayfield delighted is offering an "exclusive" £5,000 Key Worker Discount to all buyers who meet the criteria. With only five homes in the development still on sale at the time of writing, this two-pronged project's an unqualified success. ■



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## CASE STUDY



# Modern methods of regeneration

A modular regeneration company has integrated its new house design within a burgeoning project to revitalise a deprived part of Manchester. Chris Shaw, director of delivery at Urban Splash, describes the factory-built offerings to Jack Wooler.

**I**n Stubbs Mews, New Islington – a new district of central Manchester retaining its historic name in a regeneration scheme – 18 modular homes have been constructed. These will create a major contribution to an important new zone of the city.

The homes are the latest addition from the housing arm of regeneration company Urban Splash, which has spent the past 20 years among a vast assembly of companies transforming the zone from a run-down area into one which has been named one of the ‘20 hippest places to live in Britain’ by The Sunday Times and “A hidden oasis worth venturing out to discover” by Manchester Evening News.

The ‘Town House’ properties being integrated into this new zone feature 139 m<sup>2</sup> of space over three floors. Each offers high ceilings, large doors, and “oversized” windows to maximise natural light. All the homes were constructed entirely offsite at the Urban Splash factory in Alfreton, and come with a choice of three, four, or five rooms – for a new home office, or space for bedrooms, playrooms or snug.

Set to complete in Autumn 2021, Stubbs Mews sees Urban Splash hoping to make a “small development feel big,” with each home featuring a private elevated garden terrace overlooking Ashton Canal.

## A NOTORIOUS ESTATE

According to Urban Splash, New Islington

**THE RUN-DOWN AREA HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO ONE WHICH HAS BEEN NAMED ONE OF THE ‘20 HIPPEST PLACES TO LIVE IN BRITAIN’**





and Ancoats were once Manchester's most run-down areas, with the former being a "notorious estate where taxis refused to stop," and once featured as a backdrop for the 'Shameless' TV series.

"Life's very different here now," explains Chris Shaw, director of delivery at Urban Splash, who tells Housebuilder & Developer that the area has just undergone its third regeneration.

In the early 20th century, New Islington was "the world's first industrial suburb," with Victorian terraces filled with workers from the surrounding mills. Then, during the 1960s 'slum clearances,' many Victorian homes were demolished, signalling an end to the working mills and making way for the Cardroom Estate – an estate which, through ongoing antisocial behaviour, eventually lost its pubs, shops and school.

"Fast-forward to 2021," says Shaw, "and the area is being described by the press as 'the best place in Manchester.'"

Over those two decades, Urban Splash (and more recently House by Urban Splash, the housebuilding arm of the regeneration company launched in 2016), has "transformed New Islington into one of the city's most vibrant neighbourhoods."

This regeneration was achieved through "considered and strategic placemaking,"

says Shaw, with the area's mixed-use, mixed-tenure communities "held up by the necessary infrastructure to ensure long term economic sustainability."

"Although just a stone's throw from Manchester city centre," says Shaw, "it has already earned its special reputation as a buzzy independent commercial area, offering an eclectic range of food, entertainment and workspaces."

#### DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

Manchester City Council, House by Urban Splash and other partners including contractor Artez and architects Shedkm have been working together over the past 20 years to redevelop the wider estate.

In June 2020, House by Urban Splash was given the go-ahead to complete its plans for Stubbs Mews, securing the latest undeveloped site from the council itself and submitting its newly designed Town House home prototypes developed in 2016.

"This acceptance helped set the precedent for subsequent planning approvals not only at New Islington, but at sites around the country including from Salford City Council at Irwell Riverside, Port Loop in Birmingham, Inholm Northstowe in Cambridgeshire and Smith's Dock in North Shields," adds Shaw.

**EACH PROPERTY OFFERS HIGH CEILINGS, LARGE DOORS, AND "OVERSIZED" WINDOWS TO FLOOD THE INTERNAL SPACE WITH NATURAL LIGHT**



## THE MASTERPLAN WAS CONCEIVED BY THE LATE ARCHITECT WILL ALSOP

The masterplan was conceived by the late architect Will Alsop, who originally envisioned an inner-city village connecting the Ashton and Rochdale canals, extending Manchester's city centre boundary north.

"Now in its final phases, House by Urban Splash has transformed the fortunes of this 'no-go' area into somewhere residents, Mancunians and visitors are proud to live, work and play," says Shaw.

The project has been well received so far, with Cllr Suzanne Richards, Manchester City Council's executive member for housing and regeneration, recently saying that Urban Splash has been "a major part" of the Ancoats and New Islington renaissance over the last two decades, with their approach to regeneration "setting a blueprint for urban renewal, and leaving a "legacy of striking residential developments that have international renown."

She continues: "New Islington in particular should be considered a true regeneration success story, transforming a fringe area of the city centre into one of the most exciting places to live and work in the country - and the part Urban Splash has played in this transformation story cannot be underestimated."

### HOME OFFERINGS

As well as offering space and copious natural light, says Shaw, the large three-storey Town House homes at Stubbs Mews in a flexible home layout that allows the homeowner "to live exactly how they like."

In Plot 3, Guest Street, for example, on the ground floor, there is an open-plan kitchen with an island with Silestone Quartz worktop, a dining and living space leading out to a private terrace overlooking the water.

Upstairs there are two spacious double bedrooms (including one with a balcony) and a full-size family bathroom. And, on the top floor, there are two more double bedrooms with ensuite shower rooms. The home also features oak flooring throughout.

Each home at Stubbs Mews comes with an elevated garden terrace, which provides residents with tranquil views over the canal, in addition to vast green spaces around the site including the Cotton Field Park and Marina.

Built around the company's Town House template, one of several that offer different options and particular benefits – each Town House comes as two or three-storey, with a choice of layouts determined by the customer.

The Town House template has now sold out at sites in Salford and North Shields

as well as Manchester, and is soon to launch at Port Loop in Birmingham, Wirral Waters in Merseyside, and Inholm Northstowe in Cambridgeshire.

### HOUSE DESIGN

Behind this development was a significant £90m collaboration, between Urban Splash, Japan's biggest housebuilder Sekisui House, and Homes England, which was formed in 2019. According to Shaw "paved the way for House by Urban Splash to create hundreds of new, affordable and accessible homes in areas that have been left untouched for years; places like New Islington."

Each House by Urban Splash home is constructed in the company's factory in Alfreton in the East Midlands, before being craned onto a lorry to be delivered to site.

Shaw explains that this efficient process reduces construction waste by 70-90%, while cutting site traffic, noise and pollution "considerably." As well as being more sustainable, he says, it is also cleaner and reduces "snagging and defects as there are no muddy boots walking through the new homes on the site."

He explains that the company is "proud to be pushing the boundaries" of offsite construction, and attributes its success to "a keen focus on a collaboration of knowledge sharing between all site teams involved." In addition, Shaw says that recruiting and training of new personnel across all aspects of the process, including design, manufacturing, management, logistics and sales, has "ensured that there is a consistent delivery of the ambitious production targets."

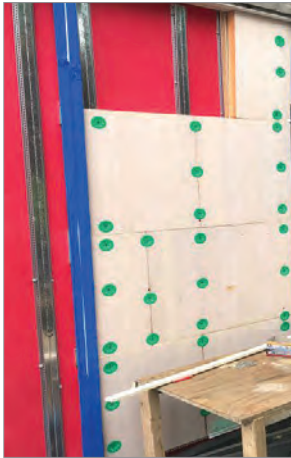
Shaw summarises the approach to delivering success in offsite production: "Ongoing improvement strategies are the foundation to developing a holistic approach to refining and improving the product design, manufacturing process and affordability through feedback from all parties as well as the end-user."

He adds: "Embracing the template used by the for car industry, and adapting it to suit the homebuilding sector, means that customers now have a realistic way to visualise a variety of specifications, and consider how different options will ultimately affect the design and cost of their home before it's even been constructed."

### ECOLOGICAL PROPERTIES

Since its inception in 1993, Urban Splash has intended to put sustainability at the core of its projects, and Stubbs Mews is a key example. As well as having a spacious and airy feel, the high energy efficiency standards ensure that residents gain short, medium and long term financial





## Contemporary Kings Mews receives superior airtightness solution

A series of 4 highly attractive newly built townhouses in London SW4 has been fitted with the high-performing Wraptite® air-barrier from the **A. Proctor Group**. The Kings Mews development offers the latest stunning contemporary homes from Falconet Property Development. Beach Seakins, managing director at Falconet commented on how the selection of Wraptite has benefitted the development both in terms of its thermal performance and the ease and speed of application: "Using Wraptite has meant that we could achieve superior levels of airtightness, whilst at the same time maintaining enhanced protection from water ingress and in controlling condensation. The self-adhesive nature of the membrane removed the additional time, cost, and equipment which would have been required in a traditional installation, speeding up the install substantially. We are delighted with the performance of the Wraptite membrane and will be looking to specify this for our developments." Wraptite is the only self-adhering vapour permeable air barrier certified by the BBA. Wraptite simplifies the process of maintaining the envelope's integrity, as there are less building services and structural penetrations to be sealed. The high vapour permeability of Wraptite allows the substrate beneath to dry quickly and moisture vapour to escape, and reduces the likelihood of mould, mildew, condensation, timber distortion and metal corrosion.

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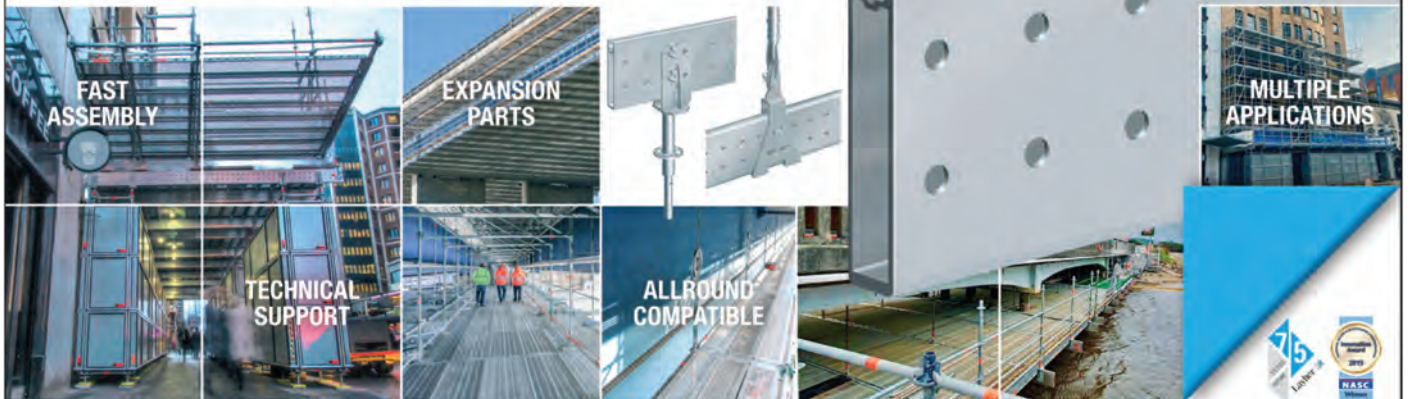


## SIG Zinc & Copper becomes GB distributor for VMZINC

SIG Zinc & Copper is pleased to announce that they have entered into an agreement to become major GB distributors of the VMZINC range of rolled zinc roofing and cladding products. Zinc is among the most sustainable metals used in construction today and the VMZINC systems have been designed to complement a wide range of building materials and styles. Chosen for their sustainability and low maintenance requirements the VMZINC products offer exceptional quality and a choice of patinas and finishes suitable for almost any project. The range includes: Natural VMZINC which has a shiny metallic appearance when new and develops a patina over time; QUARTZ-ZINC offers an appearance and texture that does not change over time; ANTHRA-ZINC with its visible grain matches the colour of slate and can blend in well with photovoltaic panels; AZENGAR an engraved zinc which gives the product a matt heterogeneous and light aspect; PIGMENTO finishes offer a unique range of colours – blue, green, brown, red and grey plus two new additional colours – Storm Grey and Charcoal Blue – that enhance any building. Simon Walker, Category Manager at SIG Zinc & Copper agrees: "Through our relationship with market leading manufacturers, SIG Zinc & Copper can offer an impartial advice on what is the best matched solution for your client's brief."

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## STUBBS MEWS SEES URBAN SPLASH HOPING TO MAKE A “SMALL DEVELOPMENT FEEL BIG”

and sustainability benefits.

Taking a look at New Islington as a whole, the development is supporting the UN’s stated sustainable development goals – for example providing affordable housing, with 30% of homes available through the Help to Buy scheme at Piercy Street and Mansion House, meaning buyers only need 5% deposit and no stamp duty. It provides opportunities for economic growth through commercial development with workspaces and retail accommodation, and provides health and wellbeing amenities through the master-planning of parks and public spaces such as the marina. It also creates a “sustainable community” through transport links in addition to the school which encourages a wider mix of people into the area.

In March 2018, Shaw explains the company also “affirmed its commitments to sustainable construction and mitigating its direct impact on climate change” by acquiring the factory to create its houses, purchasing all of the assets, trade and 68 staff from SIG Building Systems.

Positioning itself to expand its offsite construction capacity, this acquisition was done with a view to ensuring the business could vertically integrate, and therefore fully control its production of homes. The firm says its commitment to and investment in modular housing has resulted in a capacity to create 400 houses per year.

“The modular housing concept means

that houses are created in controlled, efficient environments, meaning there’s no cost variance,” explains Shaw. “So, no matter which part of the country it builds in, the construction cost remains the same.”

### REFLECTIONS

Looking back on the challenges of the project so far, as with most projects in recent times, Covid provided a significant barrier, with the team having to take “significant steps” to mitigate the pandemic’s impact.

An example of this was during last spring, when the developer introduced virtual viewings so that customers could continue to view homes safely.

Shaw tells Housebuilder & Developer that further technological advances followed in the summer, when the company launched what it claims as an ‘industry-first’ online configurator, “allowing people to design their dream home,” to then be built offsite.

“This tool has proved popular,” says Shaw. Website traffic to [housebyurbansplash.co.uk](http://housebyurbansplash.co.uk) increased four-fold in the first six months of it being live with a total 327,000 page views in its first year, he adds.

The “configurator” tool is one of the innovations in what Shaw calls a “new era in the way homes are designed and bought.” ■





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## Manhattan apartments warm to Wraptite® airtight offsite solution

An exciting project to create a seven-story modular building featuring a series of modern New York apartments has been fitted out with the high-performing Wraptite® airtight membrane. The superior airtightness performance of Wraptite from the A. Proctor Group is an ideal solution for offsite developments, delivering huge benefits to the combination of in-factory manufacture and on-site construction.

East Broadway Residences is located on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, New York. The building has been designed and manufactured as a volumetric offsite project by Brooklyn based architects Think! Architects to create an

apartment block consisting of 63 volumetric modules. OCCA Offsite based in Istanbul, Turkey is the manufacturing contractor for the volumetric modules.

One key benefit of Wraptite concerning offsite is that it is designed to ensure that the performance of the factory fitted membrane is not compromised during transportation from factory to site. Wraptite offers a simplified system and provides a fully self-adhered vapour permeable air barrier certified by the BBA and combines the important properties of vapour permeability and airtightness in one self-adhering membrane.

The self-adhesive membrane was applied in the factory, bonded externally to the exterior walls and roof. Ensuring the membrane was held firmly in place was critical to maintaining the quality of the system during ocean transportation and stacking at the construction site.

Applied externally on the outside of the structural frame, Wraptite simplifies the process of maintaining the envelope's integrity, as there are fewer building services and structural penetrations to be sealed. Window frames were installed offsite and detailed with the Wraptite self-adhesive membrane to attain a watertight



window and facade system. Each of the volumetric modules was fully furnished with bathrooms and kitchens including MEP systems and as well as fire sprinkler systems. A site installed rainscreen facade from natural stone was mechanically installed on site.

The installation of Wraptite was a rapid process due to its advanced, easy to apply self-adhesive design and ensured complete water tightness during all phases of manufacturing and the final installation on-site.

The high vapour permeability of Wraptite allows the substrate beneath to dry quickly and moisture vapour to escape, and reduces the likelihood of mould, mildew, condensation, timber distortion and metal corrosion.

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## Gold at Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Awards



Siderise has been recognised with a Gold Award at Mind's fifth annual Workplace Wellbeing Awards. Ranking 21<sup>st</sup> out of the 114 organisations who took part, this award means it has successfully embedded mental health into its policies and practices and demonstrated a long-term, in-depth

commitment to staff mental health. Adam Turk, CEO at Siderise Insulation commented: "We are thrilled to have gained this recognition from Mind, but mostly we are happy to see that our staff feel positively about their workplace and the support they receive. Without their talent and hard work, we wouldn't be the global business we are today."

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## Designer Contracts & supplier named as finalists



**Designer Contracts**, a flooring contractor, and **Texfelt**, a manufacturer of eco-engineered PU foam replacements, have been named as finalists in a prestigious industry partnership awards. The two companies have an exclusive arrangement to sell a unique, fully recyclable

underlay made from single use plastic bottles to the new build sector. To date Designer Contracts has diverted over 750,000 bottles from the environment through sales of Texfelt's ground-breaking SpringBond underlay. Their joint efforts have now been recognised in the annual Premises & Facilities Management magazine annual partnership awards in the 'Partners in Sustainability' category. The winners will be announced on November 3.

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## Stick or Seal EB25 smashes both

EB25 from **Sika Everbuild** is a powerful sealant and adhesive in one which has fast become a popular option for trade professionals looking for a multitasking sealant and adhesive. Since its launch two years ago, EB25 has secured its place as the ultimate sealant and adhesive on the market thanks to its flexibility to bond and seal almost any material to almost any surface. It can also be used indoors, outdoors and even when submerged under water. EB25, which is manufactured using a unique polymer blend and cutting-edge technology, is a single high-performance product with multiple uses. It's this dual action which tradespeople have come to rely on to get the job done with no fuss – seal or stick, it offers the best of both worlds. As well as its exceptional strength and versatility, EB25 has the added benefit of being certified for use in sanitary and food preparation areas. It's also resistant to mould, temperature extremes and chemicals, once fully cured, making it ideal for even the most challenging of jobs. EB25 is available in a choice of five colours – clear, black, white, grey and anthracite – offering the perfect match for any project. And what's more, it also carries the EC1Plus badge which certifies it as having very low emissions meaning it is better for the environment.

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## Aico recognised in The Parliamentary Review



**A**ico has been recognised as a best practice representative for the upcoming 2021 edition of The Parliamentary Review; an independent publication which looks at how key British organisations are responding to different political and economic challenges.

The publication is apolitical and reviews the latest events in parliament from a non-partisan perspective. Success for organisations of any size does not always come easily, and The Parliamentary Review is indispensable for anyone who seeks to make a difference in their sector. It highlights significant developments and concerns for leaders up and down the country.

Market leader Aico contributed a thought-

leadership article to the publication, examining how the approach to fire protection is changing; with legislative reform paving the way to a more holistic landscape that challenges the status quo, and places resident safety firmly at the fore.

Aico's National Sales Director Steve Trafford, formerly National Sales Manager at the time of publication, commented "We are delighted to contribute to The Parliamentary Review, particularly on such critical and relevant topics to our sector. As the European market leader in home life safety, we are positioned to facilitate conversation and collaboration to connect the UK housing sector, providing an article championing best practice and pulling issues to the forefront in a publication that resonates both in Westminster and nationally."

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Kwasi Kwarteng says "this year's Parliamentary Review reflects on a tumultuous and extraordinary year, globally and nationally."



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## H+H UK announces group sustainability strategy

**H**+H UK Ltd has declared its participation in the H+H Group sustainability strategy, committing the company to achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

The sustainability strategy published by the Danish parent company of H+H UK Ltd comprises a comprehensive sustainability

roadmap, committing all its operations to specific performance targets which are aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Perhaps the most significant of these is the commitment to achieving net-zero emissions in the company's operations and products by 2050. The target and the plan set out to achieve this goal is expected to be submitted to achieve verification as a 'science based target'.

In preparing to plan its zero carbon journey, H+H has undertaken a life-cycle analysis (LCA) on its aircrete products in order to provide an accurate benchmark against which to measure progress.

While on the journey to Net Zero by 2050, the company is also committing to reducing water used by 5% by 2024 and, in the same timescale, to reduce energy consumption per m<sup>3</sup> by 7%.

Following the model of the UN SDG, H+H has set out four specific focus areas, considering its contribution to: sustainable buildings; climate and environmental impact; safety and people and business integrity.

MD Calum Forsyth welcomed the report: "In its sustainability report, H+H Group is setting out its direction for the business into the future. We are particularly pleased with the objective



rigour on which this report is based. Aligning the Group with UN Goals, and taking a measured, scientific approach to analysing carbon emissions ensures that our results will be robust and demonstrable."

This overarching strategy is a Group initiative and each country will take its own approach to meet the Group targets. In anticipation of this announcement, H+H UK had established a working group to focus on re-shaping its operation to achieve the goals. As each work theme is agreed, H+H UK will be announcing its action plans.

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# Sapphire creates the 'WOW' factor at West End Gate

Sapphire's design and logistics expertise is expertly combined in balconies for Garrett Mansions, the first phase of West End Gate in Marylebone, West London. Sapphire designed, manufactured and supplied 40 balconies for the luxury development. A particular feature of this phase is outdoor space, with each apartment boasting a balcony beautifully appointed with glamorous uplights and sleek aluminium balustrades for the ultimate 'wow' factor.

The project's principal challenge was the level of detail in the design, including the uplights set into the decking, vents, and GRC (Glass Fibre Reinforced Concrete) columns which had to interface with the balcony design. This demanded exceptional attention to detail as there was very little tolerance for error. Furthermore, the non-standard 50 x 12 mm bar balustrades required more bespoke changes. Installing two different sizes of balcony on a busy site also meant that Sapphire had to deliver precision logistics as well as design.

Sapphire manufactured the balconies offsite to rigorous standards, ensuring that both sizes interfaced exactly with the GRC columns. This included producing contrasting non-metallic soffits and metallic fascia and installing high-end decking. Sapphire's ability to manufacture



all parts offsite was integral to the smooth running of the project as given the busy location there was no storage space on site.

The two balcony types for West End Gate were produced using Sapphire's Glide-On™ aluminium Cassette® system. Cassettes® were preassembled offsite, including balustrades, decking and soffits, and transported to site with balconies 'nested' onto each pallet and pre-slung offsite ready for installation.

Cassettes® simply Glide-On™ to the pre-erected support arms, before completing the simple mechanical fixings. Using this innovative solution from Sapphire meant that once on location the balconies took just three days to install, ensuring minimal disruption to the rest of the build team.

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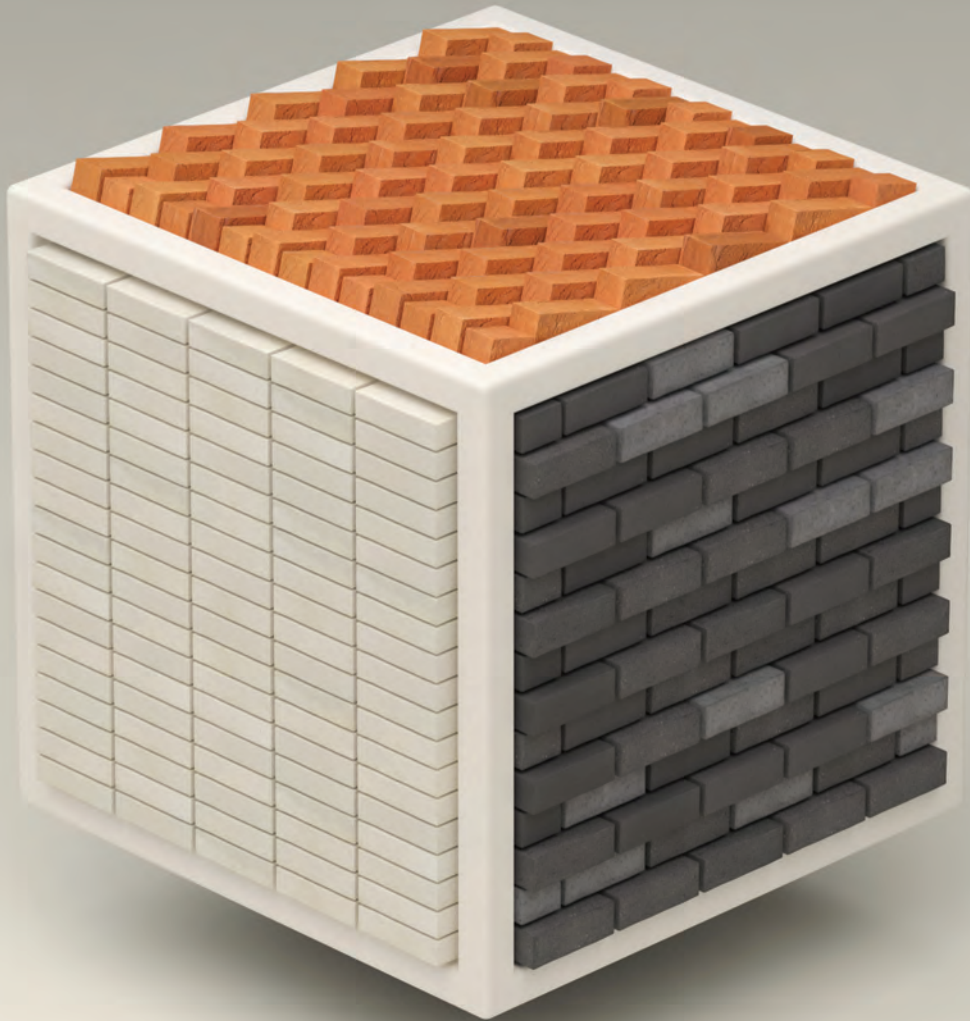
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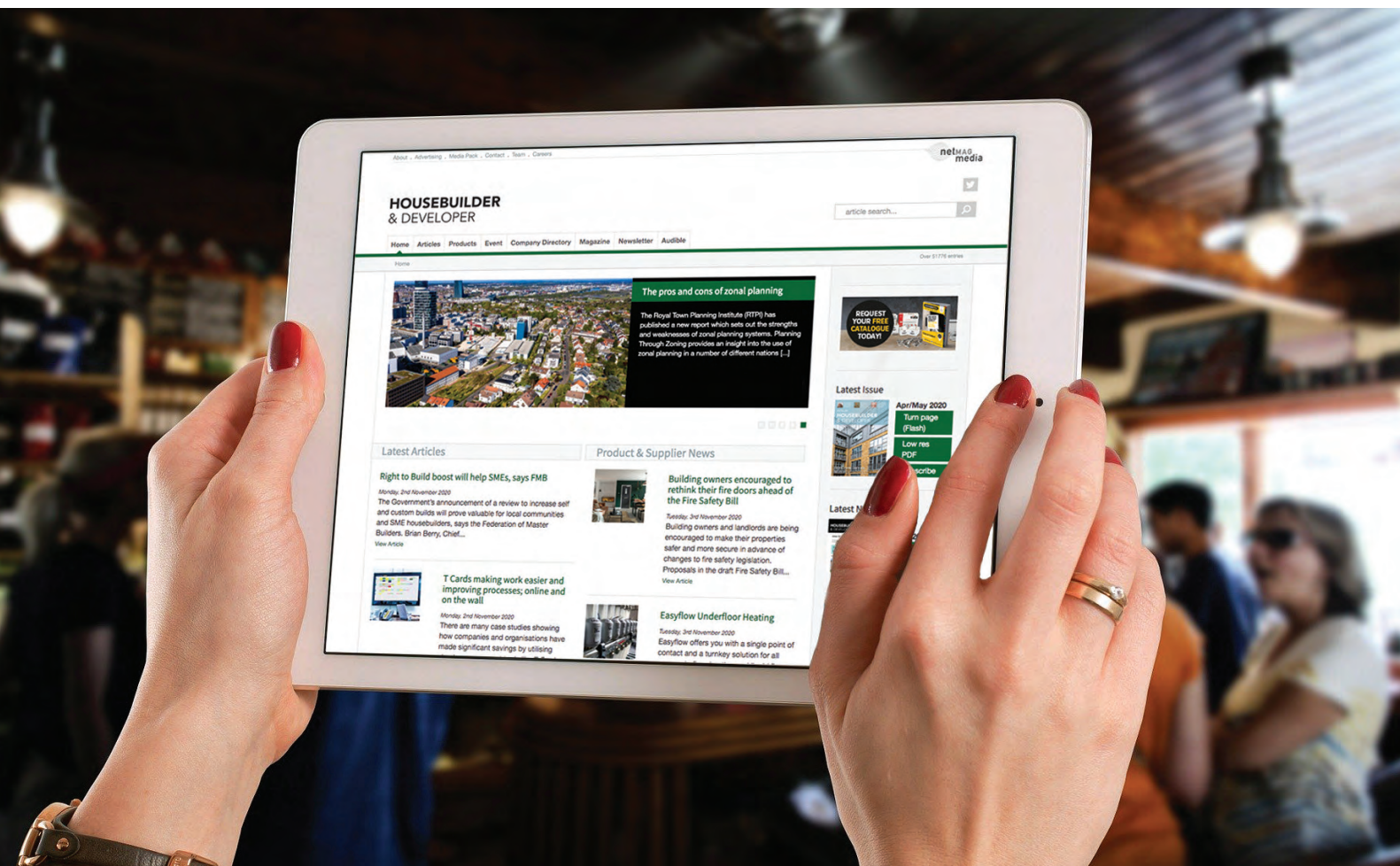
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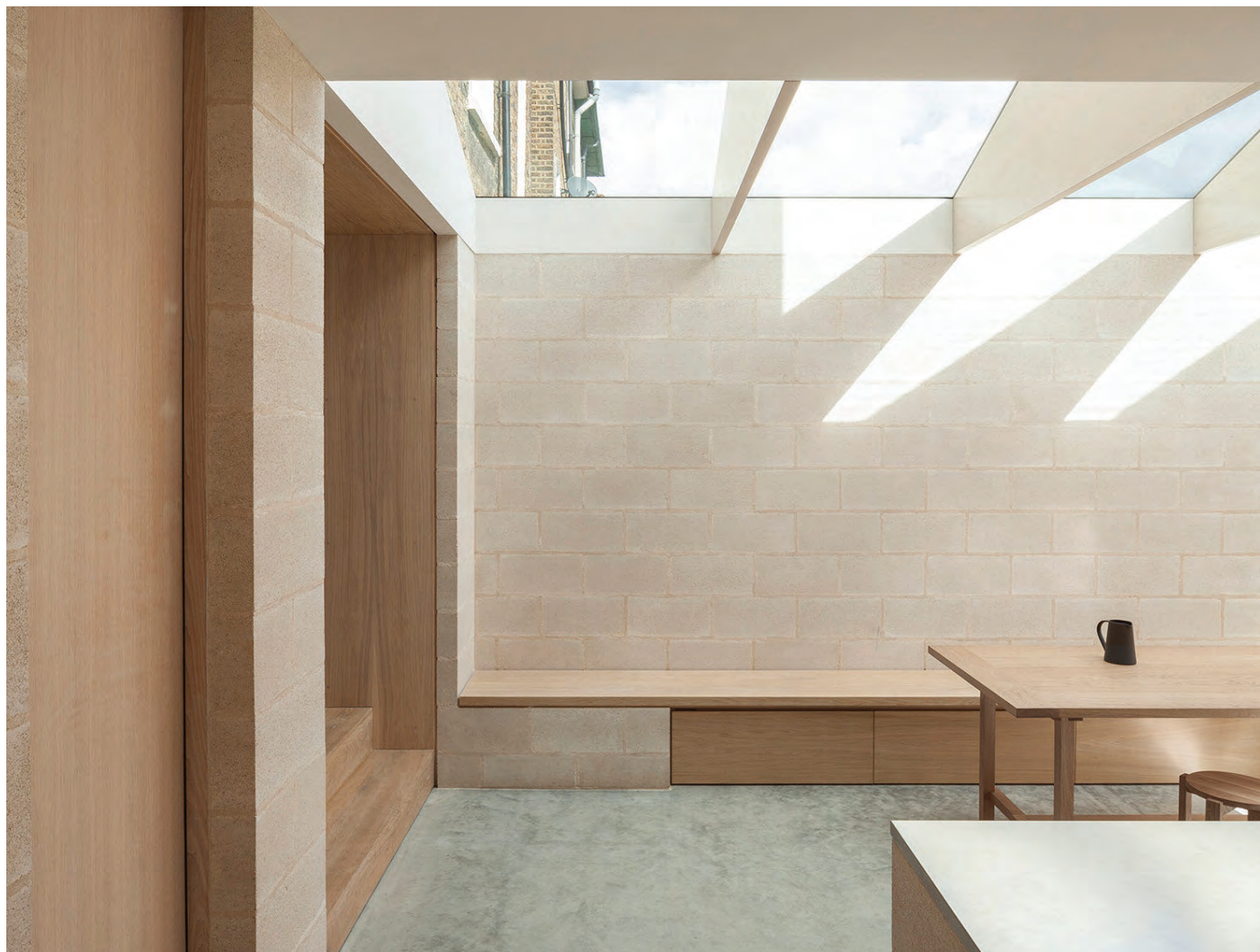
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# BUILDING A NEW REPUTATION

Sean Welch of Forticrete explores how architectural masonry has the potential to move beyond its heartland in the commercial sector, and create a 'new generation' of residential properties.



**W**hile concrete masonry blocks have been around for decades, they have traditionally been specified more for commercial projects based on their superior strength, minimal drying shrinkage and low maintenance properties. However, in more recent years, concrete masonry blocks have been rising in popularity with developers, facilitating

a real step-change within the industry in regards to the building fabric of residential developments, particularly throughout London and the surrounding areas of southern England.

Offering housebuilders the opportunity to replicate the high quality appearance of natural stone, combined with the associated performance and resilience

benefits of commercial developments, concrete masonry blocks are an economical and effective construction method that can provide design freedom and quality.

Providing a comprehensive range of finishes, profiles and shades, concrete masonry blocks are enabling developers to construct a new generation of residential properties that can create outstanding

**THE ADDITION OF ARCHES, LINTELS, RADIUS BLOCKS AND COLUMN SURROUNDS CAN SUPPORT DEVELOPERS IN CUSTOMISING EACH HOUSE**





aesthetics, without causing additional strain on budgets or resources.

These diverse finishes include rugged, tactile textures such as split face, shot-blasted and fair face, which emulate the natural appearance of stone to deliver an affordable alternative that provides a high quality and robust surface finish for the entire lifespan of the property. It also enables new build developments to seamlessly blend into their surrounding environments as soon as they are constructed.

Available in an assortment of colours, from Bath Stone, Straw and Terracotta, to Damson, Pewter and Flint, the exterior character of each property can be further customised to create a visually striking home that immediately captures the attention of prospective buyers.

For more contemporary developments, smooth concrete masonry blocks that feature delicate, tactile finishes are a popular choice for creating sleek exteriors which combine rich blends of selected natural aggregates.

The use of concrete masonry blocks can also produce a unified aesthetic across the entire exterior of a property as the blocks have a higher resistance to moisture due to their low dry shrinkage, which enables them to be installed across the whole building fabric, including below DPC level.

The low dry shrinkage properties also helps to minimise the frequency of movement joints installed throughout the masonry wall, with joints required every nine metres externally and every 12.2 metres internally, in ideal conditions. This means the overall design of the exterior isn't restricted to a certain visual design or specific use of multiple building products to ensure the suitability and water tightness of the house.

The addition of complementary concrete masonry solutions, including arches, lintels, radius blocks and square or circular column surrounds, can also support developers in customising each house, while still achieving a cohesive identity across the whole development.

The combination of functionality, performance and aesthetics is further bolstered through the blocks' proportions, which provide increased dimensional stability. This significantly aids ease of installation when on site, while simultaneously reducing the quantities of mortar required.

Concrete masonry blocks also offer impressive environmental credentials, supporting housebuilders in specifying products for developments conforming to green targets like the Code for Sustainable Homes, and the Green Guide to Specification.

As developers across the UK continue to set the pace for a new standard of housing that revolutionises the visual and performance capabilities of building fabric, specifying concrete masonry blocks can support professionals in achieving the most effective, economical and ecological building exteriors possible.

Sean Welch is area sales manager at Forticrete



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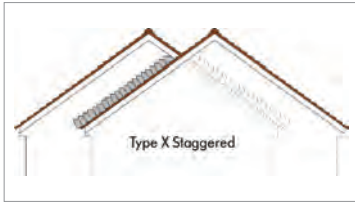
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## Perla Windows joins SWA



Perla Windows has joined the **Steel Window Association (SWA)**. Perla Windows is one of the UK's most prestigious suppliers and installers of steel and aluminium fenestration systems for interior and exterior windows, doors and facades. The team prides itself on innovation, design and meticulous planning within pre-defined budgets. Director, Nick Vassilopoulos, comments: "Having worked in the high-end residential construction industry for nearly 20 years, we noticed a gap in the market and started Perla Windows in 2015. We pride ourselves on being a small, well-run and responsive business offering excellent service, quick lead times, competitive pricing and fantastic aftercare."

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



## Curved Marmox Multiboards facilitate cylindrical facade

The developer building a private property in the beautiful Kent town of Westerham, near Sevenoaks, has made full use of the flexible version from the **Marmox** Multiboard range in creating a two storey, drum-shaped elevation that is being finished using a proprietary render system. THS Homes Ltd. is building the £1.4 million three-bedroom, timber-framed home on a site where a previous dwelling has been demolished, employing high standards of insulation as well as a number of modern construction techniques. The St. Leonards-on-Sea branch of Parker Building Supplies – a major stockist of Marmox products for wet rooms and other applications – supplied 50 of the 20 mm thick, 1250 x 600 mm boards to THS, whose own workforce fixed them over timber uprights at 300 mm centres, with a Tyvek membrane covering the main structural frame. The Site Manager for THS Homes, Tom Ellison, commented: "For the front elevation where we needed to create the quite tightly curved, rendered wall, we approached Parker Building Supplies as our main merchant. They basically advised us that Multiboard Curved was the only insulation board available which would bend to this sort of radius and offer a suitable substrate for the application of a Weber render system. The boards were easy to cut and fit and have proved ideal for the application."

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## The Vexed Issue of the Trickle Vent



As consultations around the Government's new Future Buildings Standard close, VEKA Plc's Technical Director, Paul Kennington, applauds plans to make homes more energy efficient but questions whether the vexed issue of ventilation has been solved.

The results are in; over the last two years, the Government has been running consultations that first covered domestic new build through the Future Homes Standard, with their responses now published, and a second round of discussions covering Future Building Standards. The responses from industry are now being considered, with new legislation expected by June 2022.

The changes are designed to improve the energy performance of new homes, as part of the UK's commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Existing homes will also be subject to the new higher standards, with more energy efficient replacements and repairs designed to make homes warmer and reduce bills.

Overall, the likely changes will pose few problems and VEKA is already set up to achieve any new, improved U values. The big issue, however, is likely to be ventilation, and the continuing saga of the trickle vent.

Prior to the consultations, we spent a lot of time speaking to our customers and explaining that while many of the suggested changes were improvements, the issue of trickle vents simply hasn't been thought through.

In theory they make sense but in practice they've become an unwelcome addition to doors and windows, disliked in equal measure by fabricators, installers and homeowners.

The problem is that as homes have become

better insulated, they have also become less ventilated. Drafts have become a thing of the past, cutting off the natural flow of air that once moved on odours, pollutants and condensation.

It was an issue once solved by leaving a window open, something people are now less likely to do for security reasons. As a result, trickle vents have been seen as the answer. Apart from the fact that aesthetically they're not great, they also mean that after decades of working to improve the U value of windows, we are now being asked to install them with a hole in; not great when you're trying to make homes more energy efficient.

The thermal properties of windows are calculated as a whole unit, without taking into account the effects of trickle ventilators. So, for example, while a window can claim a value of 1.4, its performance is actually below this level because of the vent. Although new windows will have better performance when it comes to issues such as air leakage, the improvement over an existing window may only be marginal because of the ventilator.

Trickle vents are also most needed when people are in the house, yet occupancy tends to be highest at night when, for a large period of time, curtains are drawn, cancelling out any benefit the vents will bring.

Many homeowners also install new windows to help cut out noise, yet trickle vents can actually make the noise inside a room more intense, leading to disappointed customers and frustrated installers. Schemes highlighting the acoustic performance of windows don't account for trickle ventilators, so as with thermal calculations, the actual acoustic performance will be reduced.

In new build homes, there are already

requirements to provide a certain amount of ventilation, and the easiest and cheapest way to do this is through a vent in a window. But the legislation could now move on to include replacement windows, too. Currently, if an existing window doesn't have ventilation already, then while it is considered good practice to include it in any replacement, it isn't mandatory. However, Part F of the new proposal suggests that if replacing windows is likely to make the building less compliant with ventilation requirements than before the work was carried out, then additional ventilation should be provided.

There are some anomalies in the proposals, too. For instance if you refurbish a bathroom or kitchen, and it hasn't got extraction ventilation, then you don't have to include it in the refit. Yet these are the two areas in a home that produce the most pollutants and odours.

There are also questions around increased costs, with the government suggesting that including trickle vents as standard on a new window would add just £2, yet our own conservative estimate puts the true cost at closer to £25.

Hopefully the Government's response will provide some clarification.

I truly believe that trickle vents pose more of a headache to the fenestration industry than any other single issue at the moment, from aesthetics to cost, customer satisfaction to manufacturing modifications. We need to find an alternative, and come up with a smarter way of creating the optimum environment inside a building; the Government will soon let us know how quickly we need to do this.

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## New homes feature Freefoam Fortex embossed cladding

**F**reefoam are delighted to release a new case study featuring Fortex embossed Double Shiplap PVC cladding on four new homes in Stourbridge. Built by Worcester based house builders 11:11 Property the four large detached houses are built with an attractive mixture of brick, render and cladding in Argyl Brown and Cappuccino colours.

11:11 Property specialise in small exclusive developments in the Black Country, North Birmingham and North Worcestershire, particularly the use of old brown field sites to reinvigorate and improve local areas. These four individually designed exclusive properties feature a soft colour palette consisting of pale grey windows, white render and two different brick finishes – the darker brick with the lighter cladding in Cappuccino and lighter brick with

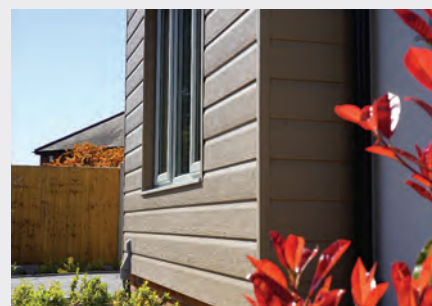
the darker cladding in Argyl Brown.

Gavin Warr, Managing Director 11:11 Property, explained "We take great pride in the standard of finish of our properties. We have used cedar cladding on previous developments but found the Freefoam cladding online and have been very pleased with it. It was excellent for ease and speed of installation and looks really good, which is very important to us, as we want to provide high quality homes that are attractive to prospective buyers."

Sourced from local Freefoam stockists UPL Ltd and fitted by on site carpenters the Fortex cladding range comes with up to 10 year guarantee. This works well for property developers like 11: 11 Property many of whom offer their own standard 10 year guarantee on all properties.

Freefoam launched the Fortex range over 15 years ago and the range now includes double shiplap cladding and weatherboard cladding. The colour options have been extended over that time as consumer trends have developed and changed. From the original white and pale cream options to the more contemporary sought after shades of grey with the Fortex portfolio now including four grey options.

Gavin summarised "We're already considering using Freefoam cladding for



another development, so I would have no hesitation in recommending it."

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

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSlyCPSlyE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSlyCPSlyE)



Gavin Warr, Managing Director 11:11 Property

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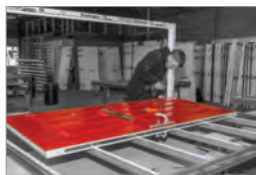
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## Sidey invest in fire door manufacturing facility



Following on from being among the first UK companies to achieve new fire door certification, Joint Managing Director, Steve Hardy talks about **Sidey's** recent investment in a bespoke fire door factory and the benefits that it will bring: "The benefits of this facility include extra storage capacity, additional machinery & equipment, along with a recruitment drive for a team that have been trained & retain specialist skills in the manufacture of our FD30 range. Our FD30 Composite Fire Door collection offers glazed & unglazed options, are fully certified under the BM Trada Scheme STD 170 and tested to BS EN 1634-1 for fire resistance, both internally & externally."

info@sidey.co.uk www.sidey.co.uk

## Garador introduces new FGS 820 front door



**Garador's** FrontGuard front door range offers excellent security and thermal insulation. Now Garador has added a new model to its extensive collection of front doors, the FrontGuard FGS 820.

This new door model incorporates four large windows to allow natural light to flow in. The windows are all triple glazed and the door leaf is filled with dense polyurethane insulating foam. This FGS 820 also comes in a selection of sizes and is available in 25 different colour finishes.

01935 443722 www.garador.co.uk

## Nationwide involved in 8 award-winning sites



"Being involved in eight NHBC Pride in the Job Quality Awards is testament to the consistent high quality of our products and installations," says Steve Colledge, National Site Operations Manager at **Nationwide Windows and Doors**.

After Lockdown 1.0, Nationwide Windows and Doors developed a complete onsite process to keep both its teams and other site personnel safe. Before any Nationwide teams went out on site, they were brought in for extra safety training to maintain the highest of standards to reduce the chances of contracting COVID-19. So good were the systems it put in place, that often they were adopted by other people working on the same sites.

enquiries@nationwidewindows.co.uk www.nwd.co.uk

## Innovative use of Marley Alutec's Evoke



**Marley Alutec's** Evoke roofline solution has been selected for a custom new-build property within a conservation area in Ipswich. The composite aluminium system was chosen to provide a durable, low maintenance, modern look that would complement the surrounding area. The design features three-step bargeboards

on the gable edges, created using two pieces of Evoke and a separate dry verge system with each set back approximately 50mm from the previous layer. Evoke systems have a functional 50-year life expectancy and are finished in a polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) architectural grade paint.

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## New 'Protech Radon 400' Gas Membrane



Radon protection has become a hot topic for the industry. Experience has led to a more robust approach to assessment and mitigation in recent years. In response, the **A. Proctor Group Ltd** has unveiled their latest ground gas protection membrane:

Protech Radon 400. This membrane is reinforced to resist stretching and elongation, and can be used with both solid and suspended ground floor applications. Protech Radon 400 is extremely robust but remains flexible and easy to handle, even at very low temperatures. The membrane junctions can be taped or welded and, at just over 0.4 mm thick, makes detailing quick and easy.

01250 872261 [www.proctorgroup.com](http://www.proctorgroup.com)

## ARC's complete firestopping solution



Providing a room-in-roof solution for 2.5 storey homes, Roofspace Solutions originally specified firestopping materials from various manufacturers for its i-Roof system. However, when browsing the market for a supplier that could provide a complete

firestopping solution, Roofspace opted for **ARC Building's Solutions'** array of products for its quality, certification and reputation within the housebuilding industry. Mark Gray, head of design and technical at Roofspace Solutions: "One of the main reasons that we decided to go ahead with switching our specification to ARC was due to the company's extensive testing certification. Any claims that they make in regard to the fire performance of its products is backed with testing data and this was really important to us".

0113 252 9428 [www.arcbuildingsolutions.co.uk](http://www.arcbuildingsolutions.co.uk)



## Stunning Aluminium fascias and soffits with new Squareline range

Squareline is the new range of stunning Aluminium fascia and soffits from **Yeoman Rainguard**, whose XL & SL Aluminium gutters and downpipes are already a firm favourite with the housebuilding & renovating sector. Crafted to an exceptionally high standard these systems will be an attractive addition to any roofline bringing a level of style and sophistication to fascia and soffits with Squareline's sleek designs proving suitable for a wide range of properties. Manufactured from 2mm thick Aluminium with a polyester powder coating, the Squareline range is both lightweight and incredibly durable providing a maintenance-free lifecycle of 30+ years. As with all products from Yeoman Rainguard's Aluminium range, these items are sustainable and recyclable offering an eco-friendlier option. With typical designs adaptable to specific requirements to complement a wide variety of house styles designs, be that traditional or modern, Squareline offers attractive and easy to maintain fascias and soffits and is designed to be compatible with most rainwater systems, allowing a greater scope of choice. Supplied in black as standard, Squareline can also be manufactured in any RAL or BS colour as well as colour matching to on trend ranges such as Little Greene and Farrow & Ball shades as required.

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## SHOW PREVIEW

# THE SAFE RETURN OF HOUSING

Housing 2021, the Chartered Institute of Housing's annual conference, returns to a Covid-secure Manchester Central from 7-9th September to tackle key issues including post-pandemic housing, and the climate crisis.



**H**ousing 2021 is returning to Manchester Central in September after a year of virtual discussions, debates and dialogue.

With 8500+ attendees, 10 theatres, 500+ speakers, and 400+ sponsors and exhibitors over the three days – the event's hailed by its organisers as the biggest meeting place for the whole housing sector.

The housing sector has arguably collaborated more strongly than ever to show its resilience in 2020, with strong leadership and effort to deliver for those living in our communities.

Ranked as a global leader for the delegate experience, the event has been staged for 70 years in the UK. This year, more than ever, will provide a platform for key stakeholders to come together to discuss, debate, partner, learn and improve the lives of residents.

Housing 2021 is aimed at local authorities, housing associations, key partners and suppliers, government, housebuilders, and developers, and is set to unite all these under one roof to discuss, debate, partner, and learn.

## WHY ATTEND?

Covering post-Covid living, housing's role in the climate emergency, digital connectivity, the future of work, the economic landscape, building safety, homelessness, housing delivery, affordability, funding and lots more, you will not want to miss out!

Alongside roundtable sessions and Chatham House-style discussions, with delegates able to meet with peers and sector leaders at this key networking event, there will be over 150 hours of accredited CPD content available at the show.

Government speakers already confirmed include the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Minister for Housing and Planning, and the Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility.

You'll also hear the latest updates from industry leaders such as:

- Joanna Averley, chief planner, MHCLG
- Peter Baker, chief inspector of buildings, Health and Safety Executive

- Richard Blakeway, Housing Ombudsman
- Lord Deben, chair, Climate Change Committee
- Kate Dodsworth, incoming director of consumer regulation, Regulator of Social Housing
- Gavin Smart, chief executive, Chartered Institute of Housing
- Bishop Guli Francis-Dehqani, Bishop for Housing
- Kate Henderson, chief executive, National Housing Federation
- Lord Bob Kerslake, chair, Commission on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- Fiona MacGregor, chief executive, Regulator of Social Housing
- Polly Neate, chief executive, Shelter
- David Olusoga, historian, broadcaster and film-maker
- Jenny Osbourne, chief executive, TPAS.

Aside from these offerings, the exhibition is notable too for covering the entire housing supply chain, the show being a 'one-stop-shop' to see the latest business-critical developments and solutions from the UK's entire housing community.

**A message on Covid from the organisers:**  
Your health and safety is incredibly important to us, so we want to reassure all attendees that we'll be continuing to monitor government advice and guidelines so you can be confident in your attendance

Read the latest updates on health and safety at Housing 2021

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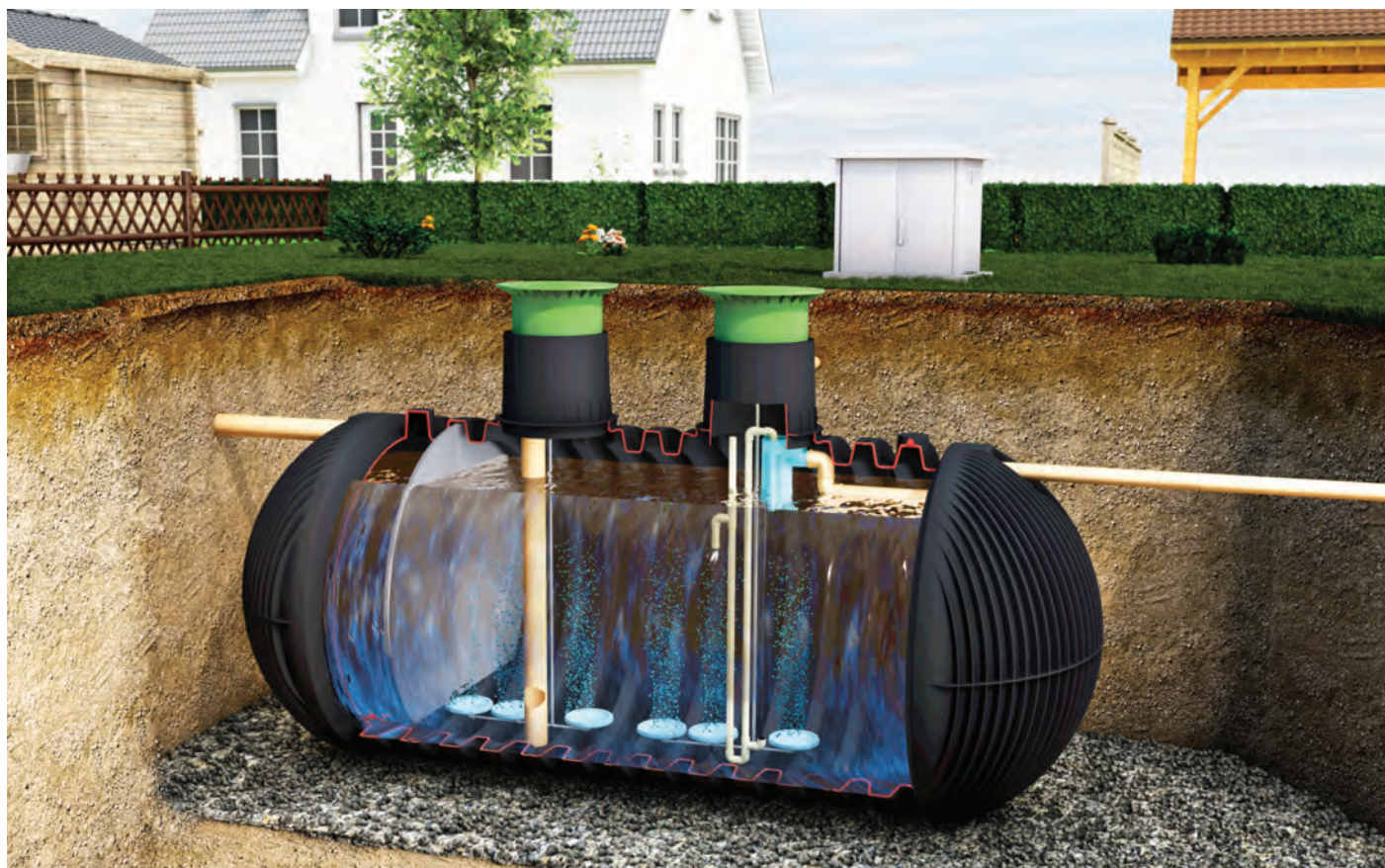


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# GO NEUTRAL ON NUTRIENTS

David Stagg of Graf UK looks at a key environmental responsibility issue which is hitting developments across the UK – namely nutrient over-enrichment from sewage – and what housebuilders can do to address the issue.



**T**wo years ago, Natural England advised a number of local authorities in the Solent catchment area to halt the determination of planning applications unless the developments could prove they were ‘nutrient neutral.’ Concerns about the effects of nutrient over-enrichment within some European-designated nature conservation areas, including those in the Solent and Poole

**THOUSANDS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS CURRENTLY REMAIN ON HOLD WHILE HOUSEBUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS STRUGGLE TO FIND A LONG-TERM, VIABLE SOLUTION**

Harbour, have existed for many years.

However, Natural England has now updated its advice on the complex issue following a judgement by the European Court of Justice in two linked cases related to the EU Habitats Directive; these are now known as the Dutch nitrogen case, or even more simply, the Dutch case.

The ruling has meant even greater scrutiny of the water quality of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) across the UK, with the building of residential properties particularly being linked to excess nutrients entering nearby water sources.

High levels of these nutrients, which come directly from wastewater treatment discharges and indirectly from farm drainage/runoff, and sewage or silage systems, enter streams and rivers, causing excessive growth of green algae which smothers rare habitats and wildlife.

While the construction industry largely ignored the advice at the time, thousands

of planning applications (for tens of thousands of much-needed new homes) now remain on hold while housebuilders and developers struggle to find a long-term viable solution. Some local authorities are even dismissing appeals for single dwellings if the schemes cannot be shown to be nutrient neutral.

Morgan Sindall even managed to persuade Hampshire County Council that its Later Living £13m Addenbrooke extra-care scheme in Gosport could be nutrient neutral with the installation of water-saving flow regulators, at a cost of £50,000.

Another idea is to take farmland out of agricultural production and get developers to turn it into nature reserves – against which they could buy credits to offset their nitrate discharge. It’s a slant on carbon neutrality, but comes at a cost to them of £1,235 per kilo of nitrogen. And this is not an option for brownfield sites because they will not





result in any agricultural land being taken out of production.

#### A VIABLE SOLUTION

However, a long-term viable solution already exists. The development of this technology was implemented more than 15 years ago in Scandinavia, where the phosphate element of nutrient elimination is already common practice.

More than 5,000 wastewater treatment systems with this technology have already been supplied into Scandinavia to meet these challenging discharge constraints (as with the more challenging nitrate removal in Sweden). This includes achieving an independently tested (PIA GmbH) 0.4mg/l of phosphate removal, only days after commissioning.

Reductions in phosphates as low as 0.2mg/l have been achieved on an installation at the award-winning Scottish attraction Loch Leven's Larder – a working farm, restaurant, deli, gift shop and playground on the banks of Loch Leven, which attracts more than 300 visitors a day in high season. Renowned for its wintering and breeding wildfowl, the Loch has been designated an EU Special Protection Area by SEPA (the Scottish Environment Protection Agency).

To comply with SEPA's particularly stringent phosphate and nitrate discharge requirements, the attraction needed to replace its deficient wastewater treatment system with one that limited phosphate discharge to 2 mg/l. The new system is now up and running and is operating to 0.2 mg/l.

Either a single-chamber tank featuring a single pumping process, or a split chamber version which utilises multiple pumping processes, can be specified. The system's performance has proven extremely effective, processing the waste up to a 99% treatment coefficient. The technology can also be combined with precast concrete tanks. Both tank options use sequence batch reactor (SBR) airlift technology; widely recognised as being highly efficient for wastewater treatment and resulting in extremely low volumes of sewage sludge.

The process is wholly controlled in the tank, with precipitants attaching themselves to the phosphate so they sink to the bottom of the chamber for removal by normal desludging.

Another benefit of more advanced systems is having 'underload' detection as standard – this can enable efficient operation with up to 75 per cent under-

load. This is a benefit particularly for second homes which are often left unoccupied for long periods of time.

Carbon dosing is an additional option which can aid nitrate removal by adding a carbon (sugar) solution to the system which feeds/stimulates the micro-organisms, so they continue to produce high-quality effluent during underload. If the system is likely to drop below the 75% underload threshold, the dosing makes up the shortfall to ensure low-odour and even odourless treatment and extended times between tank emptying.

Natural England's focus on nutrient neutrality is now moving from Hampshire to Herefordshire, Kent, Dorset and Somerset (where there are currently 1,000 developments on hold), forcing some local planning authorities to propose their own, immediate/short-term solutions. And Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are believed to be taking on nutrient neutrality across the whole country, centred around 11 river regions.

It's just as well a long-term viable solution is available that knows no borders!

David Stagg is a technical product specialist at Graf UK



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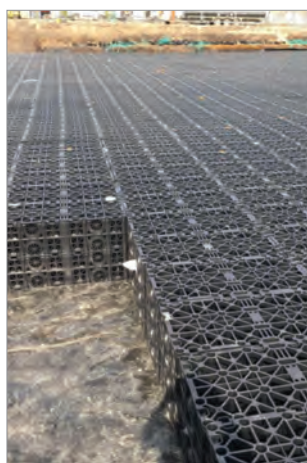
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### Stormcrate55 controls surface water at caravan showground

When it came to the management and control of surface water run-off at a caravan showground in Hull, StormCrate55, an engineered Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) from **Brett Martin** was up for the challenge. The static caravan manufacturer's facility features a newly refurbished showground where customers can view a huge range of homes. Having previously used Stormcrate55 to successfully manage stormwater on a number of other projects, installer Catalogue Engineering undertook the installation for groundworks contractor Evabuild in order to reduce the risk of flooding on this trafficked site during periods of heavy rainfall. Manufactured from 100% recycled plastic, 523m<sup>3</sup> of the StormCrate55 modular units were clipped together in a brick bond pattern to create a three tiered underground attenuation tank. With a loading capability of 562kN per m<sup>3</sup>, their high strength provided more than enough vertical strength for this tarmacked area at the showground. For the installation team, the lightweight crates, weighing only 15.5kg each, were easy to handle and fit together using the connectors and shear pins supplied. Luke Dekonski of Catalogue Engineering commented: "The crates are easy to install and very well made, with no sharp corners so there is very low risk of puncturing the impermeable lining, reducing our risk when offering a warranty installation."

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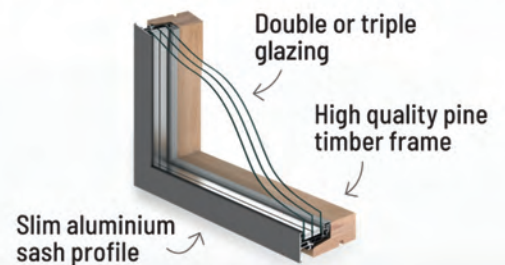
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## Vent-Axia shows 'Sustainable is Attainable'



Vent-Axia is committed to helping make sustainable attainable for its customers by taking action to reduce its environmental impact as part of a group wide initiative. These actions have resulted in significant improvements to help the company meet its environmental goals including eliminating plastic blister packs and single use poly bags from its supply chain; recycling 180 tonnes of cardboard; using recycled materials from 63,000 old fridges and designing efficiency and modularity into its products to lower energy usage and reduce landfill waste. Vent-Axia has introduced its '3 pillars of sustainability': Plastic – reduce and recycle; Environmental – initiatives to reduce impact on the environment; Energy efficient products – that reduce energy use.

0344 856 0590 [www.vent-axia.com/about-us/sustainable](http://www.vent-axia.com/about-us/sustainable)

## Solution Fires – Excellence in Electric



Solution Fires is a new generation of highly efficient, authentic and stylish electric fires. The focus of your living space, these fires have been designed and manufactured with optimal controllability of heat, light and sound as the critical elements. Controllable

from your handset, via Alexa or through the app on your smart phone or watch, you can customise your fireplace to suit your individual taste. No electric fire, currently on the market, has the level of product features or attention to detail that solution fires have as standard, supported by a high level of genuine customer service.

[info@solutionfires.co.uk](mailto:info@solutionfires.co.uk) [solutionfires.co.uk](http://solutionfires.co.uk)

## WILL YOUR NEW DEVELOPMENT COMPLY WITH THE LATEST BUILDING REGS COVERING NUTRIENT NEUTRALITY (Nn)?

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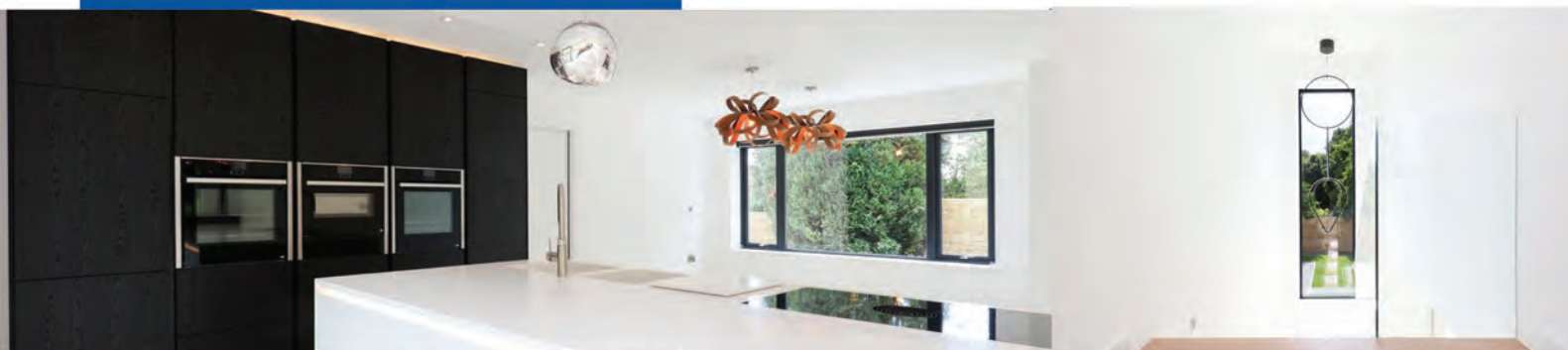
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[www.scotframe.co.uk](http://www.scotframe.co.uk)



## DRU Maestro 60 luxury gas fires now in extra tall options



DRU Maestro 60/2 Tall 2-sided model

The DRU selection of Maestro premium gas fires has been enhanced by new Tall models for installation anywhere around the home.

The Maestro series features the exclusive DRU Dynamic Flame Burner®, which generates high, dancing flames with the option of new DRU Eco Glow LED generated glowing embers across the entire fire bed. The fires can be controlled using the DRU Eco Wave app for smartphones and tablets, which enables the users to set their own preferred flame pattern and regulate the gas consumption.

The Maestro 60 Tall model has a compact

60 cm width for installation into false chimneybreasts. There are now Maestro 60 Tall front-facing, 2-sided and 3-sided models. The front version has a window height of 80 cms, with the 2 and 3-sided versions having heights of 75 cms. They have black, Ceraglass or matt glass interiors and can be combined with a wide choice of surrounds and frames.

An additional feature is the DRU Easy Release door system. This has concealed hinges at the top of the glass door with a button-operated drop-down facility, which enables cleaning the glass, re-arranging the logs and other forms of maintenance.

All three models have A energy labels and over 90% energy efficiency. Because they are balanced flue gas fires, they can be installed in a wide variety of locations. And with the DRU PowerVent® extended, fan-assisted flue system they are suitable for luxury apartments, hotels, restaurants and other domestic and commercial settings.

The new Maestro 60 Tall series will be available to approved DRU UK fireplace dealers by autumn 2021.

[info@drufire.co.uk](mailto:info@drufire.co.uk)  
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DRU Maestro 60/3 Tall 3-sided model



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# THE SUSTAINABLE SHOWERING SOLUTION

Martin Walker of Methven shares advice on the types of showering technologies to specify to successfully reduce developments' water usage without compromising on performance or aesthetics.



**I**n 1960 around 85 litres of water were used per person, per day. Fast forward to 2021, and this figure is around 150 litres and rising. The latest research from Waterwise estimates that over two billion litres of water are used each day across Britain through showering, the equivalent

to almost 800 Olympic size swimming pools. Simply put, the UK is facing significant water scarcity.

The country's current infrastructure relies on historic Victorian plumbing and, while revolutionary at the time, it is ageing fast and causing significant leaks

and water loss. Water-stressed areas in the south of the country are under the most pressure. There is however a role we can all play in significantly improving water efficiency.

Bathrooms are the biggest source of daily water output for residential





developments, and housebuilders should now take the opportunity to take a proactive approach to water efficiency in order to future-proof projects.

Current Building Regulations require all new dwellings to achieve water efficiency of 125 litres per person per day, with an optional requirement to achieve water

efficiency of 110 litres per person per day, under the latest version of Approved Document G. It is widely anticipated that this optional requirement will be adopted under Building Regulations.

Therefore, by specifying solutions that adhere to the Government's 'optional' requirement to achieve water efficiency

## OVER TWO BILLION LITRES OF WATER ARE USED EACH DAY ACROSS BRITAIN THROUGH SHOWERING

of 110 litres, professionals can not only ensure the property is compliant with current regulations, but simultaneously support future homeowners in proactively reducing their long-term water and energy usage.

Water companies are keen to support housebuilders in reducing the water consumption of each dwelling, and are now offering additional incentives to deliver against these targets. For example, Severn Trent is offering anyone building a new home £353 off their clean water infrastructure charge if they have built to 110 litres or less PPPD, while Southern Water is offering a total discount of £230 per property.

These cost saving benefits will also be passed on to the homeowner. It's no secret that the housing development market is crowded, with a requirement of up to 345,000 new homes a year, yet general consumers are becoming much more environmentally savvy, extending to the homes they are purchasing. Therefore, developers are now looking for ways to meet this need, while creating a point of difference, and by specifying water efficient fixtures and fittings, it will not only help to protect the nation's water availability, but also help to reduce homeowners' future water bills.

This can be achieved by selecting showering solutions that feature low flow rates. However, while successfully reducing water and energy usage is the leading consideration, this shouldn't be achieved at the expense of performance or visual appeal.

Historically, there has been a reluctance within the industry to embrace this change, as there was a misconception that water efficient products would lead to this compromise. However, technology has come a long way and manufacturers are placing a significant focus on creating showers and tapware that have been designed upon the principles of form, function and finish.

With water-conscious manufacturers now designing to ensure that specifiers no longer have to sacrifice form and function to achieve water efficiency, it is more crucial than ever that these industries work together to take a collective approach to protect the UK's water supply.

Martin Walker is CEO at Methven



## Designer Contracts creates dream escapes



**Designer Contracts** worked with Homes by Esh to create two pandemic beating dream escapes for the developer's show houses at West Park Garden Village in Darlington. With a long standing relationship, Homes by Esh tasked Designer Contracts with two 'escape-from-it-all' briefs for their site – part of an

award-winning redevelopment project spanning 49 hectares in Darlington, and the first new park to be created in the town for 100 years. Said Faye Goddard, design sales manager for Designer Contracts: "The brief for both homes was to give people a taste of holidays and city breaks overseas – something everyone has been desperately missing over the past year."

01246 854577 [www.DesignerContracts.com](http://www.DesignerContracts.com)

## F. Ball trends in London office refurbishment



**F. Ball and Co. Ltd.**'s Stopgap 800 Wearcoat has helped to create a stripped-back warehouse feel with a visually striking floor finish in a unique London workspace. Stopgap 800 Wearcoat is designed to deliver a standalone wearing surface in industrial settings where floorcoverings are not required to be installed. It has been used by contractors from M.D.A. Contracts Ltd. to create a hard-wearing floor in the reception, coffee bar and flexible work area at Expressway. M.D.A. Contracts Ltd. Managing Director, Glenn Alexander, explains the choice: "The client was over the moon with the final result. They had envisaged a standard, monotone floor, so they were surprised to see the character and depth of the colour and patterns – they fell in love with it."

01538 361 633 [www.f-ball.co.uk](http://www.f-ball.co.uk)

## Fast 2000 enclosure for small developer



Family-run Fernbrook Builders is redeveloping the site of a former garage and MOT test centre in Finedon, Northamptonshire. The rundown site will be home to a small supermarket, attractive retail shops and five houses to the rear of the site, which seamlessly join up with an existing housing estate. Each of the three-bedroom homes has a family bathroom with shower bath, but the master bedroom features an en-suite with a walk-in shower in a recess. The company specified the **Kinedo Fast 2000** enclosure with sliding door thanks to the simplicity and ease of installation by a single plumber. The company, based locally in Rushden, prides itself on regenerating sites for both domestic and commercial projects and works throughout the East Midlands on projects including schools, residential new builds and conversions and industrial renovations and builds. Employing all their own tradespeople to ensure quality throughout each project, Shaun Cherry, owner of Fernbrook Builders, specified the Fast 2000 because it combined modern looks with great quality at the right price. The 1300 mm sliding door and fixed panel is ideal for a recess setting and is one model in a wide range of Fast 2000 enclosure solutions. All doors and panels are 6 mm glass and 2 m in height with anti-limescale coating as standard. An ideal solution for housebuilders and developers.

020 8842 0033 [www.kinedo.co.uk](http://www.kinedo.co.uk)

## New award-winning brochure library for Vitra

Oxfordshire based **Vitra Bathrooms** has published a new library of award-winning stylish print brochures. For both their Bathroom Collection and their Designer Collection, the company has produced one brochure with the end-user, the bathroom-purchaser in mind, and another brochure which

acts as a complete technical guide for retailers and specifiers. Each brochure offers an easy, instinctive journey through the best bathroom product design with the consumer brochure being peppered with style and design recommendations, sizes, prices, and suggestions for complementing ideas and products. The brochures share stunning lifestyle imagery of Vitra's in-house designs as well as collaborations with international designers. Available in print and online, the design of Vitra's brochures has been recognised with an award for Best Catalogue Creative & Print Production Partnership – awarded by the Direct Commerce Association to Vitra Bathrooms and its creative agency commissioned for the project Mark-Making.

Margaret Talbot, marketing manager for Vitra in the UK and Europe, explains, "These brochures are a step change in bathroom marketing tools, each is a detailed and inspirational bathroom guide for consumers, designers and importantly our retailers. This suite, complemented by online formats along with a range of videos, aims to provide maximum support for anyone interested in bathrooms for themselves or their customer."



01235 750990 [www.Vitra.co.uk](http://www.Vitra.co.uk)



## Kinedo launches two new shower tray ranges



Shower brand Kinedo from **Saniflo** kicks off Spring with the launch of two new shower tray ranges and a new shower tray brochure, all available to retailers now. The spa-like, textured Kinerock Evo shower tray is made from Biolex, which is a robust and damage-resistant mineral composite containing 80% mineral with an acrylic resin and gel coat surface. Available square, rectangle and quadrant and in five colours – white, black, grey, anthracite and sable. Equally impressive is the new designer tray Kinline, which features a linear tray and a granite look and feel. Also made from Biolex and available in the same five colours as Kinerock Evo, the Kinline is 26mm thick and available square and rectangle with side and linear waste.

020 8842 0033 [www.saniflo.co.uk](http://www.saniflo.co.uk)

## Designer Contracts' success with stock strategy



At **Designer Contracts**, its strategy has always been to invest heavily in significant stockholding levels. As a result of recent supply chain issues, Designer Contracts took the decision to significantly increase stockholding which is currently at £2.75m.

It is important to the company that customers have the reassurance that whatever else they might struggle to source, flooring is not one of them. There have been difficulties recently with supply, but the strengthened stock strategy has been hugely successful for Designer Contracts, not only securing continued business from existing customers but also attracting new ones where their normal supply chain has been compromised.

01246 854577 [www.DesignerContracts.com](http://www.DesignerContracts.com)

## Reginox hails the Hudson a huge success



With all the extra time spent at home, consumers are increasingly turning their attention on improving their homes. With kitchens being the room where people spend the most time – it's clear to see that it's the number one choice on people's priority list. With the increased focus on kitchens, **Reginox**, a leading sinks, taps and accessories manufacturer, has seen a

huge increase in demand for its classically designed Hudson tap. The Hudson – part of Reginox's extensive kitchen tap range – is a mixer tap with single lever and is available in chrome and brushed nickel. The Hudson is the ideal combination of style, compatibility, quality and performance. They are well engineered and carry excellent guarantees.

01260 280033 [www.reginox.co.uk](http://www.reginox.co.uk)

## DIVON – the perfect stainless steel model



Today, the kitchen sink must be multi-functional and durable; and accessories, waste disposal units and matching taps should be accessible for all ranges. One example is **BLANCO's DIVON** sink which makes a striking addition to any workspace area. It is a beautifully shaped sink with clean

lines and a geometric look. The straight-lined bowls feature an elegant 10mm corner radius so that all kitchen schemes can be accommodated. **BLANCO's** covered C-overflow™ and InFino® strainer complete the simple look and make for easy maintenance. The DIVON comes in three models and the large bowl can be situated on either the left or the right.

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

## Creativity comes out on top with RAK-Plano



**RAK-Plano** countertop surfaces from **RAK Ceramics** combine elegance, durability and practicality, transforming the **RAK-Joy** or **RAK-Joy Uno** vanity unit into a versatile piece of bathroom furniture.

Available in three different **TECHWOOD** finishes and in the manufacturer's innovative matt white **RAKSOLID** material, **RAK-Plano** is a one-piece vanity top, without joints that can be



drilled and cut (if necessary) directly on site. This gives designers complete freedom in positioning the washbasin and mixer.

**RAK-SOLID** is an incredibly durable solid surface material, composed of a mixture of natural minerals and resins, exuding consistent quality and performance. Just as hardwearing and simple to care for, **TECHWOOD** is a wood effect material that gives the tactile impression

of real timber, produced from polypropylene recyclable material.

**RAK-Plano** is available in a range of colours, combining easily with any décor and responding to trends in bathroom design. Choose from Matt White, Grey Elm, Scandinavian Oak and Mokka Walnut.

01730 237850 [www.rakceramics.com/uk](http://www.rakceramics.com/uk)





## Brooklyn. Uncompromisingly stylish.

**Bring industrial chic into your bathroom with the new Brooklyn cubicle range. Its striking look with black or grey finishes and bold, clean lines complement any modern bathroom space.**

The Brooklyn comes with 'any way you like it' quadrant and corner layouts, pivot or sliding door options and a choice of glass finishes. Its clever design, with no need for silicone, make it quick and easy to install, so you can get industrial...whichever part of town you're in.





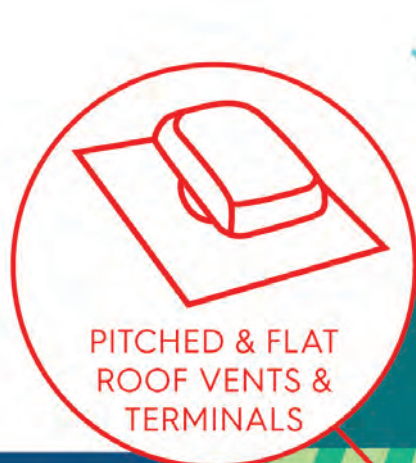
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## SHOW PREVIEW

# COVERING THE INDUSTRY ONCE MORE IN 2021

The RCI Show, taking place from 29-30 September at Stadium MK in Milton Keynes, gives visitors the chance to make new connections and reaffirm old ones, with manufacturers and suppliers alongside an array of expert speakers.



If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that we need to be more connected. The RCI Show, taking place on 29-30 September in Milton Keynes, provides visitors with an opportunity to make new connections and reaffirm old ones with leading manufacturers and suppliers, as well as browse the latest products that are relevant to your business. In addition, visitors will be able to access useful thought leadership content via a series of keynote seminars, free of charge.

There's so much going on at the RCI Show – the largest gathering of roofing, cladding and insulation supply chain professionals in the UK – that planning your day is a must if you want to get the most out of your visit.

### WHY ATTEND?

Visitors can compare and source new products from over 50 leading specialist roofing, cladding and insulation suppliers and solution providers in the UK at the event. They will also have the opportunity to get 'hands-on,' as many of our exhibitors will be running interactive demonstrations of their latest tools and products exclusively at the show, which should not be missed!

Also, you can learn from the experts and hear about the important issues currently impacting the market during our conference sessions. What's more, our whole seminar programme is also CPD-accredited, meaning you can earn CPD points for free with content delivered from leading industry speakers.

The seminar session booking form is now live – once you have registered to attend, you can pre-book into the sessions that are of most interest to you.

Last but not least, the show is the chance to network with like-minded individuals to share knowledge and ideas whilst leveraging the best

contacts for you and your business.

Over the years, the RCI Show has become a key date in the industry calendar for thousands of contractors, installers, surveyors and specifiers, and this year's two-day event is expected to attract a significant number of manufacturers, associations and suppliers who are eager to engage face-to-face once again.

### A SAFE RETURN

As event organisers of the RCI Show, Mark Allen Group's number one priority is to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of its exhibitors, visitors and staff. The company is working closely with the venue to ensure the safety and comfort of all those on-site, and to give everyone the reassurance and confidence they need to participate in a safe and controlled environment.

With government guidelines to public gatherings continuing to evolve, the organisers will follow all recommendations accordingly, and will let visitors know the full list of protective measures as the company assesses the situation nearer the show.

So, whether you're searching for the most up-to-date product innovations and services, working to stay ahead of the latest news, trends and best practice guidance, or wanting to extend your network, the RCI Show can fulfil your goals by reconnecting you with key experts across the entire roofing, cladding and insulation supply chain.

Don't miss out! Register for your FREE ticket by visiting:

**[WWW.RCISHOW.CO.UK](http://WWW.RCISHOW.CO.UK)**



## Reginox launches the Hampton



Reginox is excited to unveil its latest sink – the Hampton. The Hampton is a granite sink and joins Reginox's already impressive best-selling, industry leading portfolio of granite sinks. This new sink is manufactured in a new and improved material finish that has a more natural feel and textured finish, giving the appearance

and touch of a durable product while still being available at an affordable price. The Hampton is available in both single bowl and bowl and a half configuration and also comes with a slightly revised, updated drainer profile. Hampton is exclusively available in black, grey, white and cream.

01260 280033 [www.reginox.co.uk](http://www.reginox.co.uk)

## Leto MEV HCS tackles high humidity in homes



Ventilation manufacturer VORTICE has recently added to its long standing and popular range, the Vort Leto MEV, with the introduction of a humidity controlled mechanical extract unit – Vort Leto MEV HCS. While the unit has all the same great features and benefits of the other models in the range, it also

comes equipped with a humidity control function to boost the unit when the relative humidity is high. This ensures that humidity, which causes mould growth and mildew, is kept at bay. The Vort Leto MEV range is designed to keep indoor air quality fresh by creating a constant air path through the home and continually extracting from kitchens, bathrooms and utility rooms. The new unit is both easy to fit and to maintain.

01283 492949 [www.vortice.ltd.uk](http://www.vortice.ltd.uk)

## Keller offers a stylish choice



Keller is known throughout the industry for its many choices of colours and finishes for a kitchen design and they are continuing to impress with the launch of the new MASTER collection. The new Keller MASTER collection consists of

nine calm and stylish colours ranging all the way from Ice to Carbon. Available in melamine, synthetic high-gloss and matt, satin, textured and high-gloss lacquer, with plinths and carcasses colour-matched, the designer really does have a portfolio to hand for every taste and budget.

[www.kellerkitchens.com/inspiration/program-overview/colour-collections](http://www.kellerkitchens.com/inspiration/program-overview/colour-collections)

## Joanne Bull of Königstone talks busy times



Königstone, a leading kitchen worktop specialists, provides quartz and natural stone products for beautiful surfaces in kitchens and bathrooms. The pandemic has created challenges; closed showrooms and sites, and supply issues, are among the most common along with ensuring top quality customer service with furloughed staff. There is not a business in the land which has not

experienced similar issues but we have emerged stronger as have many of our good, professional contemporaries. Today, in mid-2021, Königstone has never been busier. We are at full capacity, staff and order book-wise, and our systems, showroom, training and sales functions are operating in a more refined, clever fashion; we see this with our customers and suppliers too.

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# USING SUDS TO ADD VALUE

GreenBlue Urban looks at how the appropriate specification of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) can add tangible value to developments, beyond flood mitigation.



Using Sustainable Drainage features calls on developers, designers, and planners to adopt a new way of thinking, and that can cause some level of resistance. However, when you look into it, sustainable drainage is not very far removed from existing civil engineering principles. What does civil engineering do? It provides answers to problems. In this case, the problem of what to do with excess water.

Traditionally, drainage engineers have turned to 'grey engineering' solutions, employing gravity to transport water via underground pipes to attenuation tanks or possibly a watercourse. The hard engineering used is pipes and tanks. Green engineering or Green Infrastructure (GI) provides alternative solutions to the same problem. It channels excess water away from properties or land to a place where it can be stored harmlessly until it moves on naturally. That is the key word: naturally.

Sustainability means replacing pipes and tanks with structures that mimic nature. It may take a little more thought to design a system that includes swales, rain gardens and tree pits. But that is what turns 'boring' drainage design into something more rewarding; something that adds to the value of a new development for potential purchasers –







## WHICHEVER ROUTE IS CHOSEN, PUTTING NATURE AT THE CORE OF YOUR DRAINAGE DESIGN STRATEGY IS KEY TO ADDING VALUE TO DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

if it's done right, of course.

The pressure on land for both new developments and in built-up areas is such that reducing the footprint of a SuDS/LID (Low impact development) scheme is a major factor in the design and delivery of SuDS. Components that intercept stormwater and slow the flow before it reaches a final attenuation or infiltration point reduce the amount of land required for the scheme. This

increases the return on the developer's investment in the land and, given that well designed SuDS offer additional benefits of amenity and biodiversity, properties protected by SuDS can attract a higher premium. Indeed, some house-builders have advertised the use of SuDS as a selling point.

### MODELLING

Deciding which SuDS features to employ

and how to combine them to create an effective solution is where engineers can complement their engineering problem-solving skills with a creative angle. The engineer's drive to build a workable, successful solution can be satisfied by using a hydraulic model to provide the reassurances the regulator demands. At the design stage, the model demonstrates the effects that different SuDS features might have on a given site, especially at times of peak flow. It also allows the engineer to model different approaches and 'optionee' alternative, creative solutions.

Drainage engineers who rise to the challenge and become good at SuDS design prove their worth to developers time and again. Engineers who embrace GI tend to develop a more creative approach to solving problems, often becoming SuDS champions, and earning themselves valuable competitive advantage into the bargain.

### SCALING SUDS

SuDS systems can work on practically any scale; from plot-level components like rainwater harvesting and green roofs, to very large schemes that include several SuDS systems working together. The impressive scheme in the Grangetown area of Cardiff is an excellent example.

What options are available? Well, not all SuDS interventions have to be huge. Small scale features are possible with systems such as bioretention rain gardens that captures and cleans storm water and provides amenity and biodiversity to new and existing spaces. The modular nature of these systems means that they can be used on a single plot as a 'microSuDS' or combined to provide effective flood mitigation on highways or retrofitted into urban environments.

The value of microSuDS close to the source of the rainwater means that there is less of an impact if there should be an issue. When the capacity of a single water harvester is exceeded, there is much less risk of harm than, say, a large bioretention pond overflowing. What is more, combining microSuDS with other SuDS structures greatly reduces the volume of water that needs to be attenuated. So, it's a win-win for any developer who takes a creative approach proposed by a drainage engineer who 'gets SuDS'.

Whichever route is chosen, putting nature at the core of your drainage design strategy is key to adding value to development projects. The solutions should not be restricted to holes in the ground – trees and green infrastructure play an important role in addressing flood risk.

From GreenBlue Urban.



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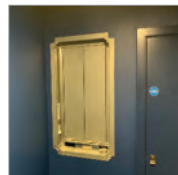
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## Gilberts rise to smoke evacuation challenges



The "best yet" is how **Gilberts Blackpool** is describing its latest range of smoke evacuation dampers for multi-storey buildings. Gilberts is taking its reputation to new heights with its new Series 60 smoke evacuation damper range. Believed to be the only vent of its kind designed and manufactured in the UK, Series 60 offers what Gilberts claims will be the biggest standard

range of EN13501-3 compliant fire-tested dampers. Series 60 combines a low leakage rate and high free area when open to deliver high smoke evacuation rates. Manufactured from galvanised steel, Series 60 has passed all relevant smoke and fire tests (EN1263-1, EN1363-2), retaining its integrity and performance when incorporated into evacuation shafts and risers.

01253 766911 [info@gilbertsblackpool.com](mailto:info@gilbertsblackpool.com)



## Fire Safe Air Brick® installed at Blackhorse View development

**Titon Ventilation Systems** new Fire Safe Air Brick® has recently been installed in the new Blackhorse View residential development. Blackhorse View situated in Walthamstow is a brand new development from Barratt London of 350 new homes in East London. The development offers one, two and three bedroom apartments which includes a private outdoor area where residents will be able to enjoy the communal gardens. Miers Construction Products who have an expansive range of building products in their portfolio, supplied the Titon FireSafe® Air Brick to the Blackhorse View project. The Titon FireSafe® Air Brick is a specialist product developed and manufactured by offering low resistance to airflow, but high resistance to fire as set out in Approved Document B (fire safety) volume 1: Dwellings, 2019 edition. The Titon FireSafe® Air Brick is designed and tested to BS EN13141-2:2010 specifically for mechanical ventilation systems. Made from 1mm electrogalvanized sheet steel, fire class A1 'no contribution to fire' and polyester powder coating meeting EN13501-1 classification A2-s1,d0. The Titon FireSafe® Air Brick is ideal for fire safety applications. Miers Construction Products Limited is an independent supplier of extensive products delivering from a number of locations across the UK.

0800 970 4190 [www.titon.com/uk](http://www.titon.com/uk)

## Cardiff Apartments meet BS 8629 Code of Practice with installation of EvacGo

**T**wo seven-storey residential apartment buildings in the cultural and social hot-spot of Cardiff Bay are now protected by evacuation alert systems from UK manufacturer, Advanced.

The EvacGo panels have been installed to meet the criteria set out in the BS 8629 Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning, and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by fire and rescue services in England and Wales.

Situated in Cardiff Bay's Tiger Quay development, Roath House and Queen Alexandra House are a mix of 73 social and market-rented one and two-bedroom apartments managed by Trivallis, one of Wales' largest housing associations. Trivallis appointed Cardiff-based, Tremorfa Ltd, to complete the installation, requesting that Advanced's EvacGo solutions be installed to ensure both residential buildings met the BS 8629 recommendations.

With all Advanced evacuation alert systems custom-manufactured to reflect each individual building's evacuation zones, Advanced supplied two EvacGo systems to Tremorfa complete with 1-loop card, expandable from four to eight evacuation zones. The two systems were

installed alongside a combined total of 63 sounders to provide audible warning to building occupants in the event of an emergency.

Graham Smart, Fire & Security Installation Manager, at Tremorfa Ltd, said: "Having installed Advanced solutions for a number of years, we knew we could depend on its evacuation alert system to meet the requirements of the BS 8629 code of practice. The systems in both apartment buildings are now performing as required and we will be completing the installation of further EvacGo systems at Trivallis' properties."

Evacuation alert control and indicating equipment (EACIE) is now strongly recommended in England and Wales for all new tall residential buildings – and is mandatory in Scotland. The EACIE must operate completely independently of fire detection systems and be designed to support any evacuation strategy chosen by the fire and rescue service.

BS 8629:2019 is the new Code of Practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of evacuation alert systems for use by fire and rescue services in England. In place since November 2019, this code of practice recommends the installation of a dedicated



evacuation alert system intended for the sole use of the fire and rescue services and separate from the building's fire alarm system. New high-rise residential developments are among the buildings being prioritised for evacuation alert system installation. Although not yet a legal requirement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, EACIE installation is already mandatory in new buildings containing flats over 18 metres in Scotland and considered best practice by a number of fire and rescue services.

Advanced, owned by FTSE 100 company Halma PLC, protects a wide range of prestigious and high-profile sites across the globe – from London's Shard to Abu Dhabi International Airport and the Hong Kong – Zhuhai – Macau Bridge.

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## SHOW PREVIEW

# MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME

Demand for face-to-face events and networking is growing across the industry as the pandemic eases. In the light of this and Government publishing guidance on how major events can be held safely, the organisers of UKCW are bringing the show back to the NEC Birmingham on 5-7 October 2021.

**U**KCW 2021 is expected to attract more than 300 exhibitors covering over 25,000 m2 of the NEC, providing launches, demos and offers on more than 6,000 products.

Major brands such as Google, HS2, Geberit, Hanson Plywood, Ford, Xero, Procore and the Construction Innovation Hub will be promoting at the event, making up for two years of new product launches, innovation and recruitment.

## THEMES & FEATURES

Each day of UKCW in October will have a topical theme: Tuesday 5 October will focus on quality, social value and building safety;

Wednesday 6 October will promote diversity, equality and inclusion in construction, and Thursday 7 October will be dedicated to sustainability. The UKCW's half-day summits on Quality and Wellbeing will also be scheduled during the show.

Key features of this year's event include the UKCW main stage, sponsored by construction charity COINS, which will see keynote presentations by senior leaders from, among others, McKinsey, the Construction Products Association, CIOB, Willmott Dixon, Barratt Homes, Bioregional, Grimshaw, the Sustainable Energy Association and the Construction Leadership Council.

The COINS 'Future of Construction' series of





## MAJOR BRANDS WILL BE MAKING UP FOR TWO YEARS OF PRODUCT LAUNCHES, INNOVATION AND RECRUITMENT

Seminars will be looking at how the last 18 months have changed the way we build and how that catalyst for change can now be used in a positive way. These sessions will cover updates in technology, procurement, sustainability, wellbeing and more.

During the pandemic, construction has accelerated its digital transformation and the adoption of new technology. Therefore, the Digital Construction Hub, sponsored by Procore, is well placed. In a seminar programme delivered in partnership with the UK BIM Alliance, delegates will be hearing about others' BIM implementation stories, digital strategies and practical tips for overcoming challenges. The UK BIM Alliance will also be hosting a series of essential networking events.

In addition, there will be a

Sustainability Hub, supported by the Renewable Energy Association, plus the Regeneration Hub, sponsored by Easy-trim, which will focus on social value and quality issues in construction.

Working with the Offsite Alliance, the Modern Methods of Construction Hub will deliver three days of MMC and offsite construction case studies. The Innovation Zone will also return this year – a collection of interesting and inventive products to have emerged in the last two years.

The UKCW Role Models initiative is also back for 2021. Following a record number of entries last year, the shortlist of 102 Role Models was chosen from all parts of the industry, and the overall winner will be announced on Wednesday 6 October.

Role Models are inspiring people who have a strong story to tell and can help to attract others into similar roles. Successful entrants from previous years have been out visiting schools and meeting young people to encourage them into construction as a rewarding career.

Free registration to UK Construction Week is now open

**UKCONSTRUCTIONWEEK-2021-VISITOR.REG.BUZZ/PR**

To get regular updates on the event, including safety protocols and new features, follow UKCW on social media using the hashtag

**#UKCW2021**



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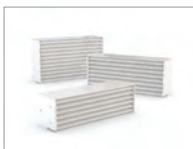
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0808 2540 500 [www.juwo-smartwall.co.uk](http://www.juwo-smartwall.co.uk)

**UKCW stand no B502**

### Non-Combustible Solis Air Brick™ launched



**Domus Ventilation** has launched the new Solis Air Brick™ range of low resistance, non-combustible metal air bricks that are fully compliant with the revised Building Regulations Fire Safety Approved Document B. The new Solis Air Brick is made from 1.5mm galvanized steel (fire class A1) non-

combustible material to meet these changes to the regulations and ensure compliance. The Solis Air Brick is the latest addition to Domus Ventilation's Building Regulations compliant ducting fire protection products. For customers wishing to find out more about the recent changes to Building Regulations, a Domus Ventilation CPD accredited course on 'Residential Ventilation Principles and Building Regulations' has recently been launched.

[vent.info@domusventilation.co.uk](mailto:vent.info@domusventilation.co.uk) [www.domusventilation.co.uk](http://www.domusventilation.co.uk)



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[uk.westfraser.com](http://uk.westfraser.com)

Carbon neutral status for IG Masonry Support



Building product manufacturer **IG Masonry Support** is the first masonry support manufacturer to achieve carbon neutral status and is on its way to becoming a net zero energy company. As a Group committed to reducing the environmental impact of all operations, other companies within Keystone are now taking the necessary steps to achieve carbon neutral status. Speaking of the achievement Andy Neal, IG Masonry Support managing director (pictured) said: "It is testament to our team's passion and commitment to operating a sustainable business and to delivering sustainable products and solutions to our marketplace."

0128 320 0157 [igmasonrysupport.com](http://igmasonrysupport.com)



New 19mm collated flooring screw banishes squeaky floorboards for good!

Floor fitters and home owners alike will be all too familiar with the curse of squeaky floorboards. Time after time the culprit is the fasteners; nails working loose over time, leading to expensive callbacks and customer dissatisfaction. While it's well known that screws provide a tighter grip power by pulling the boards together, fitting 6mm plywood to underlay has long presented a dilemma. The conventional 25mm timber screws used to fasten flooring carry a risk of damaging underfloor electrical cables or puncturing water pipes, with potentially dangerous and costly consequences. The alternative use of 19mm nails, however, can cause the plywood subfloor to lift from the floorboards. Construction products manufacturer **Simpson Strong-Tie** has developed an affordable solution: the groundbreaking new 19mm MTHZ19E collated underlayment screw. Designed for Quik Drive auto-feed screw system, the MTHZ19E allows fast and secure underlayment to subfloor installations, with a sharp point for fast start and a trim head for a neat finish. Fasteners Sales Manager Natalie Dixon explains "This new shorter length alternative to traditional flooring screws prevents the tip from protruding through the floor boards when fixing 6mm plywood, making it a safer way to fix to subfloors."

01827 255600 [www.strongtie.co.uk](http://www.strongtie.co.uk)

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## Timber products

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**The Brick Development Association**  
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