



McCarthy Stone and Anchor on their 137-unit retirement scheme in Sutton Coldfield



Why Charlie Luxton and Samsung believe lower noise and sleeker aesthetics are the answer for increasing heat pump take-up



Fintec firm Twenty7Tec explores the impact of new regulations to combat greenwashing

# HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2023



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1. Leaving water temperature, when the outdoor temperature is between -15°C - 43°C. Results may vary depending on the actual usage conditions.

2. Based on internal testing of the EHS Mono HT outdoor units. The noise level is measured 3m away from the front of the outdoor unit, in an anechoic room with an outside temperature of 7°C. Results may vary depending on environmental factors and individual use.

\*Efficiency ratio of heating output (capacity) versus power input (electricity). Internally tested under lab conditions based on EN 14511, results may vary depending on the actual usage conditions.

3. Based on internal testing on an EHS Mono HT outdoor unit (AEI20BXYDGG), compared to a conventional EHS outdoor unit (AEI20RXYDGG). Results may vary depending on the actual usage conditions

The Quiet Mark certificate is applicable for UK & EU territories only.

# DECEMBER /JANUARY 2023 CONTENTS

**4-8**

INDUSTRY NEWS

**10-18**

COMMENT

Regulars Brian Berry and Patrick Mooney plus fintech firm Twenty7Tec on tackling greenwash

**20-26**

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

How heat pumps are evolving to meet consumer needs, and the realities of putting fabric first

**28-36**

CASE STUDIES

**49**

FUTUREBUILD  
SHOW PREVIEW



## WICHELSTOWE FIELDS FOREVER

Labelled "South West England's boldest new housing development," Wichelstowe has recently grown to more than 4,000 homes.



## RETIRING TOGETHER

As two components of a JV, McCarthy Stone and Anchor explore the ethos behind a brownfield scheme in Sutton Coldfield.

## FEATURES

**43**

BUILDING FABRIC

### SLIP INTO 2023 IN STYLE

Jemma Ison of Keystone Group explains how brick slip products can bring sustainability and style to projects both large and small.

**45**

BUILDING FABRIC

### MITIGATE ONSITE RISKS WITH OFFSITE SOLUTIONS

Following a recent survey conducted by Housebuilder & Developer which highlighted readers' health and safety issues, Philip Pointon of Saint-Gobain Off-Site Solutions looks at how offsite manufacturing can mitigate onsite risks.

**57**

STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

### FIRST FOOTING

Consumer interest in floor tiles as a stylish as well as hygienic, durable and even sustainable finish for domestic properties has never been stronger; the Tile Association offers options.

**59**

UTILITIES & SERVICES

### AN ELECTRIFIED FUTURE

David Abernethie from EV charger supplier Sevadis discusses the electric vehicle charging outlook for the housebuilder and developer sector and delves into how a collaborative approach is best practice in an ever-evolving industry.

**65**

SAFETY & SECURITY

### WHY FIRE DOORS NEED PROTECTION

Mike Sutcliffe from Vanquish Hardware protection discusses why fire rated hardware needs protection; what it looks like, and what housebuilders and developers need to look out for.

## PRODUCTS

40 Appointments & News

40 Building Fabric

48 Finance & Insurance

52 Groundworks

52 Heating, Ventilation & Services

54 Structural Elements

55 Offsite & MMC

59 Utilities & Services

58 Interiors

64 Safety & Security

62 Landscaping & External Works



Jack Wooler

# FROM THE EDITOR

The sector has a lot on its plate. With skills shortages, supply issues and – rightly, of course – ever tightening regulations and standards, the challenges in meeting the country's housing demand have rarely been more stark.

While politicians bandy around housing targets as though homes spring out of thin air, arguing over sound-bites rather than offering real help for local builders, the sector is struggling to maintain business as usual.

Perhaps an illusion of a happy sector has been in part upheld by its amazing achievements in the wake of the pandemic. The NHBC reported that new home registrations in the UK during Q3 of this year reached 44,729, reportedly the highest third quarter figures since 2007, and Government data showed a net 232,820 units were added to the housing stock in England in 2021/22, a rise of 10% on last year.

Despite this brief post-Covid boom however, the cost of living crisis and recession are leading to predictions of a significant slowdown, overshadowing any gains, as buyers become more cautious and funds more sparse.

This will exacerbate the already clear lack of housing, but, ignoring the difficulties the sector is already experiencing in meeting this demand, the Government actually appears to be working against them in reducing targets – with a growing number of MPs calling for amendments to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in the hopes of scrapping the already-low housing targets, as well as the requirement for councils to deliver a five-year supply of housing land.

Once a manifesto pledge, the Government's often contentious 300,000 homes per year target has now been pulled by Housing Secretary Michael Gove, in the upcoming Levelling Up Bill. Its numerous critics, including many Tory MPs, targeted issues from the byelection-losing 'mutant algorithm' used to calculate housing need, to Liz Truss claim of "Stalinist housing targets."

While NIMBY homeowners can dominate the conversation here, whether rightly or wrongly worrying about where the homes are placed, continuing to fall behind housing targets – let alone scrapping them altogether – could have disastrous consequences for future generations, with home ownership likely to be a thing of the past for many.

Some were championing the need to increase output above all else, and maintain the 300,000 target. Former housing secretary Sajid Javid was one senior figure to push back at the idea of scrapping the specific number, saying it would be a "colossal failure of leadership." Similarly, Robert Colville, director of the CPS think tank said the move would be "selfish and wicked," believing the cuts could cut the number of homes being built by 20-40%.

Either way, though, it appears that those who will actually construct these homes are generally being considered in the discussion. In focusing on where these houses are built, the Government seems to be largely ignoring how they will be built, and by who. If housebuilders and developers of all stripes do not have access to the right land, and the right skills and materials, output cannot, and will not, rise.

If nothing else however, housebuilders can still take solace in the fact that, while this continues, demand will in the short-term at least continue to wildly outstrip supply, and their products will become ever more valuable and desirable to keep up with the expense of wading through crisis after crisis, standard after standard. What happens if house prices begin to fall dramatically in a deep recession, is another question.

It is SMEs who can't afford a seat at the shrinking table who'll be left hungry.

*Jack Wooler, deputy editor*

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## ON THE COVER



### HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2023



#### WICHELSTOWE FIELDS FOREVER

Exploring a new modern methods of construction that enabled a JV between Southern Cross and partners to further expand the hottest new housing development in the South West

Wichel Field  
go to page 28





## Industry gives mixed response to Chancellor's Autumn Statement

The housebuilding sector gave a mixed response to Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's first Autumn Statement, in which he outlined a series of measures designed to protect the UK against global economic forces, but also provided relief to businesses expecting tougher tax burdens.

Hunt promised a £14bn "tax cut" in business rates, particularly targeted at helping smaller firms. To assist with inflationary pressures, interest rate rises and the downturn in house prices, Hunt gave homebuyers a stay of execution on the stamp duty cut, until March 2025. He also announced that that tax perks would be restricted to clamp down on "R&D fraud" in SME businesses.

While praising his efforts to stabilise the mortgage market, Stuart Law, CEO of property lender Assetz Group said that housebuilders "will have their heads in their hands as Jeremy Hunt failed to afford any time to planning reform, while the retention of the stamp duty cut will protect demand over coming years at a time when a huge imbalance in market forces sits at the heart of our national housing crisis."

He added: "Until we stop kicking the can down the road, we will never build enough homes, or take steps to make housing more accessible and affordable for more people."

Law said that housebuilders and developers would also be "deeply concerned that the imperative for government departments to find efficiency savings will mean less public sector investment in the housing sector, as well as planning delays at already under-funded local authorities."

Paul Woodward, finance director for Dorset-based affordable housing specialist AJC Group, said that while

it was "encouraging to hear Jeremy Hunt start his speech with a promise to prioritise stability, growth, and public service, the fact that stamp duty would return for first-time buyers in 2025 was "disappointing."

He said that "with the Energy Price Guarantee rising to £3,000 for the average household from April, there should be a huge focus on delivering highly energy efficient new homes and retrofitting existing housing stock. However, the UK's broken planning system – and the prolonged debacle to determine phosphates, nitrates and nutrient neutrality – means a green light for new development is few and far between."

"For developers such as us who do have live sites, the cost of delivering much-needed EPC-A and B rated homes has skyrocketed. We are currently delivering 230 affordable, open market, and build-to-rent homes at seven sites across the Wessex region. The cost of labour, materials, plant, and machinery is incomparable to the original budget forecasts."

Hunt also announced that social rent would be capped in 2023, recommitted to the UK's COP26 climate goals, and announced a further £6bn would be spent on achieving the targets in 2025. He also announced a target of a 15% "reduction in energy consumption by businesses and industry" by 2030, but was unclear how this related to previously announced goals.

Against the backdrop of the Autumn Statement, property giant JLL was forecasting that UK house prices will fall in value in 2023 by 6% which equates to an average discount of £17,500 on the average current UK house price of circa £290,000.

## New home registrations up, but slowdown ahead

New home registrations increased by 33% in the third quarter of 2022 compared to the same period last year, according to research by the NHBC.

A total of 44,729 new homes were registered to be built in Q3 2022 compared to 33,603 in Q3 2021. This is reportedly the highest Q3 figure since 2007, despite expectations that property sales will slow in the coming period due to higher mortgage rates and faltering consumer confidence.

Private-for-sale registrations were up by 26% to 32,702 (Q3 2021 25,862), while the affordable and build to rent sector grew by 55% overall, up from 7,741 in Q3 2021 to 12,027 in Q3 2022.

New home registrations rose for every house-type in Q3 2022 with a shift in mix back towards apartments with 9,006 registered in Q3 2022, up 114% on Q3 2021. 45% of all new apartments registered in Q3 2022 were in London.

10 out of 12 regions experienced growth in registrations in Q3 2022 vs Q3 2021 with London, Scotland, Wales and West Midlands experiencing significant rises, due to lower levels in the previous year and the timing impact of some large site registrations. There were small dips in the South West and Northern Ireland with developers in these areas reporting a slight cooling of the market.

New home completions also increased from 32,100 in Q3 2021 to 34,977 in Q3 2022, despite some ongoing disruption in the supply chain.

Commenting on the latest data, NHBC Chief Executive Steve Wood said: "Despite prevailing conditions, the third quarter was a strong one for new home registrations. In part this is the 'bounce-back' post the pandemic, but it also reflects a confidence that the underlying demand for new homes is holding across a range of tenures.

"That said, housebuilders and new home buyers are becoming more cautious, especially in the face of higher costs of living and open questions about the nature and length of any recession in the UK. It seems likely that a slowdown is coming which will at least help ensure that homes continue to be built to the quality required."



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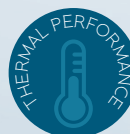
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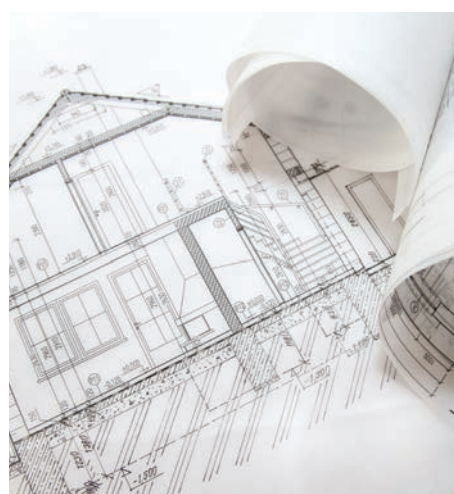
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# Housing developers 'not ready' to meet Future Homes Standard



The housing industry believes it is unlikely to meet the requirements set out in the government's 2025 Future Homes and Buildings Standards according to research carried out by members of The Housing Forum's Futures Network.

The Housing Forum consists of more than 150 organisations, from both the public and private sectors, representing the entire housing supply chain. Members represent £24bn turnover in the housing sector.

The research was carried out among senior industry figures attending a number of The Housing Forum's 2022 events including a series of Decarbonisation Seminars. A total of 91% of the respondents were directly involved in ensuring their organisations meet decarbonisation targets.

One out of five say that their own organisation does not have a plan in place that will enable them to deliver homes that will meet 2025 emissions targets.

Three out of four of those questioned think the industry does not have adequate skills and knowledge to meet 2025 targets within the next 10 years.

The research was commissioned in the wake of the changes to Building Regulations which came into force in

June 2022 as part of the pathway to meeting Future Homes and Building Standards in 2025 and Carbon Net Zero in 2050.

The Government's stated aim is a greener built environment and the Future Homes and Buildings Standard in 2025 will mean all future homes are net zero ready.

Prior to the 2022 changes coming into force The Federation of Master Builders had stated that less than half of their members were ready for the new regulations.

Daniel Love, from Polypipe Building Products – a member of The Housing Forum's Futures Network – who carried out the research said: "We were alarmed to see that so many senior figures do not think that the industry will meet the net zero challenge within the Government's time frame."

"The results of the survey also show a fundamental lack of understanding of the technologies that developers can adopt to meet their targets. There also seems to be a lack of urgency to increase that understanding and to begin preparations in earnest."

"Developers need to engage with their supply chain to understand the new technologies and construction methods before the 2025 deadline in order for demand for new products and skills to be ready in time."

"The answer has to be an emphasis on engagement, upskilling and education."

## New build sales set for winter freeze

While Britain's property developers can expect to see a seasonal slump in new build transaction levels over the impending winter months, they will, at least, see a boost to the price achieved, according to market analysis by Unlatch.

The firm analysed new-build sector data for both transactions and the average house price achieved by each season going back over the last 10 years.

Its research shows that when it comes to new-build market activity, the winter months of December, January and February have been the quietest time of year for developers within the sector.

Over the last 10 years, an average of 21,674 new-build sales have completed during the winter months, equating to 22.4% of total sales seen in the year. The busiest season is summer, accounting for



27.8% of average annual transactions over the last decade, followed by autumn (25.5%) then spring (24.3%).

When analysing the average annual rate of transactional growth over the last decade, the research shows that the level of new builds sold during the winter months has declined by an average of -3.3% per year, with autumn the only other season to see a decline at an average annual rate of -1.2%.

This suggests that not only is winter the quietest month for the sector, but it's becoming quieter as time goes by.

There is one silver lining for the nation's developers facing a long cold winter of muted market activity – the price achieved to the average new-build is by far its highest during the winter months, averaging £375,860 last winter, with autumn the second best month where price achieved is concerned at an average of £353,175.

Alongside this, the average new build house price during the winter months has increased by 86% over the last 10 years, with autumn seeing the second largest increase at 73%, followed by summer (63%) and spring (61%).

Lee Martin, head of UK for Unlatch says: "While many developers may well be facing a quieter period over the coming months, those sales they do get over the line are likely to be well worth the effort, very much a case of quality over quantity."





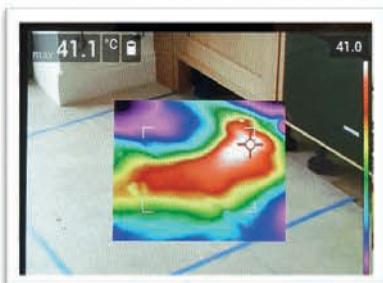
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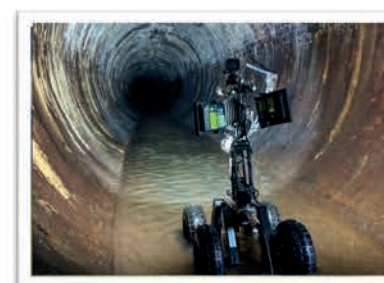
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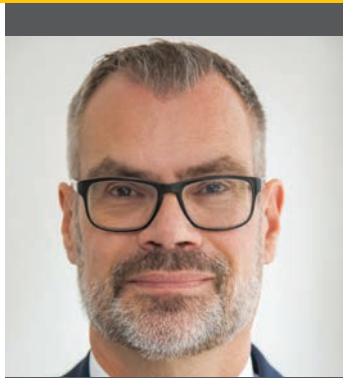
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Brian Berry

## COMMENT

## ALL CHANGE, AGAIN

Brian Berry, CEO of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) discusses the turbulent politics of recent months, and considers how the events will affect SME housebuilders.

**W**hat a difference a few months makes! In my October article I wrote that certainty had been restored following a prolonged summer of stagnant government. How wrong I was. We've had a botched budget, an ousted Prime Minister, a recession, and a new Housing Minister, the fifth this year.

So once again I say that this, the Government needs to hit the ground running. It needs to introduce bold reform on planning and increase support for SME housebuilders. It must turn around the SME sector, which is now only delivering 10% of total housing output.

**HOW IS THE MARKET LOOKING?**

In late November we launched our annual FMB House Builders' Survey for 2022. This is the only survey of its kind to track the market for small, local housebuilders. What we can see from the latest survey is that old trends still prevail.

A lack of available and viable land came out as the top issue stopping SME housebuilders delivering homes, which has been the case for some years now. This was closely matched by the planning system, which even those with a glancing interest in housing will not come as a surprise. Ultimately, the Government needs to invest in supporting smaller housebuilders through the planning process.

However, new issues have sprung up, notably the availability of mortgages. This hasn't troubled the top issues for many years. But, unsurprisingly given the economic chaos over the last few weeks, builders are clearly seeing consumers put a foot on the breaks when it comes to development funding via products like self-build mortgages.

Another issue that climbed the list is a lack of skilled labour, it was cited as the third biggest constraint for SMEs delivering housing. There has rarely been a time when skills haven't been an issue for the industry, and it's only getting worse. We need to see the Government tackle the problem head on, especially as construction is one of many sectors struggling for workers.

**THE RETURN OF GOVE**

I previously lamented that the Department for Levelling, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) never got motoring under Michael Gove as he



resigned before he had the chance to deliver meaningful change. Well, now he has that chance. He can quite literally pick up where he left off; not many, if any, Ministers have been in such a position.

I want to see the Department's output match its ambition. Gove has said some encouraging words over the last few weeks. He has in particular singled out the need for quality and diversity in housing. Who better to deliver this than local SME housebuilders as this is their speciality, they deliver quality and diverse housing for their communities.

Small, local housebuilders must be supported to deliver the ambitions of the Government; they are the ones who will use brownfield land to infill neglected sites and regenerate town centres. They won't build cookie-cutter developments, nor will they play fast and loose with the planning system, which Gove has criticised the industry for doing.

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO SEE IN 2023?**

What small housebuilders do need is a planning system that helps them deliver. Greater support and guidance through the planning system would go a long way to boost the sector. Potentially even within the constraints of the current planning process, more targeted support, with dedicated planning officers, for example, would be a boon.

But for now, we wait to see what the Housing Department's output will be. Let's hope stability and ambition prevails. Surely, it can't be as raucous as this year?

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A BOTCHED  
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Patrick Mooney

## COMMENT

# WHAT CAN GOVE DELIVER?

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and news editor of Housing, Management & Maintenance magazine asks what can Michael Gove hope to deliver on new housebuilding?



I SUSPECT  
WE ARE IN  
FOR AN  
INTERESTING  
TIME WHICH  
WILL KEEP  
THOSE  
INVOLVED IN  
HOUSING ON  
THEIR TOES

**T**rying to keep up to date with Government policies for new housebuilding can be a thankless task with many twists and turns, along with inevitable feelings of uncertainty that you have either missed a vital announcement, or an unforeseen change is just around the corner. With Michael Gove's return as the Levelling Up and Housing Secretary after a four-month gap, that uncertain feeling has returned. For instance has he come back just to deal with "unfinished business" from his very productive first stint in the job, or has he got a completely new set of priorities agreed with Rishi Sunak?

The rumours emanating from his civil servants is that Mr Gove is keen to start work again on the original list of policies and projects that won him a surprising number of plaudits from across the social housing sector. In his first period in office, which only lasted 10 months, he let it be known that the housebuilding sector should not be overly focussed on delivering against an arbitrary target – like the 300,000 new homes a year figure, despite it being taken directly from the Conservatives' manifesto for the 2019 general election. Instead he wanted the focus to be on the quality of new homes, rather than just the numbers getting built. More recently he has signposted a cautious commitment

to delivering 300,000 homes annually, but highlighted difficulties with meeting the target, namely shortages of materials, labour, land and people's unwillingness to have new developments on their doorstep.

Of course in his (albeit short) absence, the housing market has changed an awful lot and a difficult problem to solve has got a whole lot worse. Housing affordability has materially worsened for many people due to rising mortgage rates – the average rate for a two-year fixed rate mortgage shot up from around 4.25 per cent to around 6.5 per cent in the wake of Kwarteng's short-lived mini budget – and already historically high private rents have jumped by around 20 per cent in many parts of the country, with homelessness also on the rise.

In his absence the latest big idea for delivering new housing and economic growth through investment zones was launched by the Truss administration. These would have unprecedented powers to slice through established planning policies and constraints, with generous tax breaks for investors willing to take a punt. However, it is not clear if any of Messrs Gove, Hunt or Sunak are particular fans of these and only time will tell if they are allowed to thrive, or will wither and die like many wizard ideas beforehand.





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### THE END OF HELP TO BUY

Earlier in the year Mr Gove was winning plaudits for tackling the developers of dangerously clad high-rise blocks and sorting out a raft of regulatory changes in both the private and social rented sectors, but he also let it be known that he also wanted to review the mortgage market and whether it helped or hindered homebuyers. Before he was able to develop his ideas on this, he was sacked for suggesting to Boris Johnson that his time was up. Perhaps the time to reveal his ideas has now come.

Since 2013 one of the biggest influences on the housing market has been the subsidy package known as Help to Buy. First introduced by George Osborne in the wake of the property crash, in its various forms and iterations it has helped over a third of a million people to buy their first home. But since the end of October it is no more and at least for the moment, we have no idea what, if anything is going to replace it. Is this where Mr Gove could make his mark?

The impact of Help to Buy cannot be under-estimated although it had many critics for driving up prices and boosting the profits of volume builders. A House of Lords report determined that Help to Buy had not been 'good value money' for the taxpayer, with a forecast bill of over £29 billion by the time it finishes. The report concluded that the money spent on Help to Buy would have been more effectively spent on building more new homes, which would be more likely to result in more affordable house prices.

Another drawback was that the scheme only applied to new homes, which do not grow in value as fast as older properties. New builds usually sell for up to 15 per cent more, but they lose this premium after a few years. A report by the consumer magazine Which in June 2020 reported that as the Help to Buy scheme's popularity increased, so too did its price tag. Between April 2013 and

the end of 2019, the average price paid by first-time buyers in England for any type of home increased by 39 per cent. The average amount paid by all buyers of new-build properties also increased by 39 per cent. But the amount paid by first-time buyers using Help to Buy jumped by a much heftier 51 per cent, showing it was very good business for volume builders' shareholders.

### WHAT'S NEXT

Gove's options for supporting housebuilding have been made more difficult by the parlous state of the public finances, but also by the lacklustre performance of the agency charged with delivering the Government's vision for new housing and regeneration. Homes England has been underdelivering on most of its targets (particularly for low cost housing) and recently we learnt that more than half of the development sites transferred to the agency under the Government's flagship land disposal scheme have still not been disposed of to would-be developers.

The figures were revealed in a report reviewing the Government's Public Land for Housing Programme, which ran from 2015 until March 2020. According to the latest update, which analysed the success of the five-year programme, Homes England only disposed of 34 out of 73 sites – unlocking land for just 1,663 homes. Its original target had been to release sufficient land from government departments to facilitate the building of 160,000 new homes. Under the guise of delivering on Levelling Up policies I expect to see Gove's department to support a focus on new developments at brownfield sites in urban areas, bowing to backbench pressures to protect as much of the green belt as possible. This would also be consistent with comments made by Rishi Sunak during the party leadership hustings after Johnson resigned.

Personally I think Gove is also likely to

give more support to the self and custom-built sector, helping to boost SME builders and creating new jobs in the construction sector. Earlier this year he helped to secure additional investment in the Help to Build scheme with £150m (for equity loans in support of five per cent deposits) and a target of contributing 30,000 – 40,000 new homes a year. It is seen as an imaginative way of contributing to the Levelling Up agenda, of which Michael Gove is known to be a big fan. Homes England has already been tasked with finding more sites for providing self and custom build plots within regeneration projects across the country and more use made of modular factory-built units to boost custom homebuilding further.

### LEVELLING UP

A boost might also be given to the development of more shared ownership housing and this could be somewhere that mortgage reform could really play a significant part by helping to simplify the legal and financial design of products. This is a form of affordable housing that is already receiving a growing proportion of the Government's financial support in comparison to rented housing and this is likely to continue. Recent tweaks such as allowing shared owners to purchase additional equity shares as small as one per cent have yet to make a significant difference to the product's attractiveness to buyers and it is thought Gove is looking for new ideas to re-market the shared ownership brand.

Local community led housing schemes may also benefit from more investment, with a growing emphasis on land trusts and housing co-operatives to deliver local solutions to local problems, while staying under local control. Community led housing is believed to have a key role to play in improving the design and construction quality of homes using modern methods of construction, while giving more opportunity for smaller house builders to work on projects, growing local economies and regenerating derelict areas by delivering homes that are affordable for local people.

A key for new housing schemes will be in showing the impact they will be able to make to struggling areas. This is almost certainly where Michael Gove will show his support for new housing development. Whether his preferences can make the same impact on the market as Help to Buy, or can endure for a decade, is something that only time will tell but I suspect we are in for an interesting time which will keep those involved in housing on their toes and constantly wondering if they've got the measure of the Secretary of State.



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## COMMENT

# TACKLING GREENWASH

James Tucker, CEO at Twenty7Tec, explores how the housebuilding sector will be affected by new regulations from the FCA designed to tackle 'greenwash.'

## THE FCA PROPOSES INTRODUCING RESTRICTIONS ON HOW CERTAIN SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED TERMS ARE USED IN PRODUCT NAMES AND MARKETING



As green initiatives for consumers increase sector-wide, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) recently announced its plans to clamp down on greenwashing with new regulations. The new rules will limit how terms like 'ESG', 'Green' or 'sustainable' can be used, meaning that products need to sport sustainable investment product labels.

### WHAT IS GREENWASHING?

Greenwashing is when a company misleads consumers into believing they are doing more to protect the environment than it really is. It's a deceitful marketing tactic to target customers who prefer to buy products from environmentally conscious brands.

### WHAT ARE THE NEW FCA REGULATIONS?

The FCA has proposed various regulations to clamp down on greenwashing and discourage it from happening.

As part of this, it proposes introducing restrictions on how certain sustainability-

related terms are used in product names and marketing, helping eradicate misleading marketing messages.

The FCA wants to introduce sustainable investment product labels to give consumers more confidence when shopping. There will be three categories for the labels, each underpinned by objective criteria.

It will also introduce consumer-facing disclosures to help buyers understand exactly what the critical sustainability-related feature of an investment product is, as well as more detailed disclosures for institutional investors or retail investors that want to know more.

For those in the housing and development sector, these new proposals mean that any green initiative must meet the new regulations and that great care is taken when developing marketing materials to ensure they are accessible and transparent.

Sacha Sadan, the FCA's director of environment, social and governance,

comments on the importance of the initiative: "Greenwashing misleads consumers and erodes trust in all ESG products. Consumers must be confident when products claim to be more sustainable than they actually are. Our proposed rules will help consumers and firms build trust in this sector. This supports investment in solutions to some of the world's biggest ESG challenges. This places the UK at the forefront of sustainable investment internationally. We are raising the bar by setting robust regulatory standards to protect consumers, in line with our wider FCA strategy."

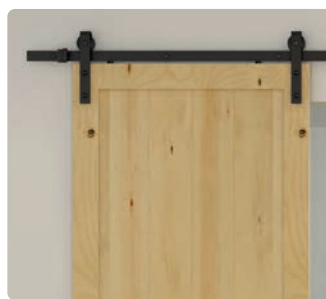
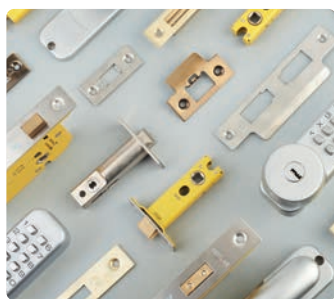
### WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE HOUSING SECTOR ON NET ZERO?

Although the finger is pointed heavily at cows or cars when discussing a greener future, the housing market holds around a quarter of the responsibility. Findings from the Energy Savings Trust reveal that the housing sector is responsible for 21%



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of carbon emissions in the UK.

Net zero can't be something we ignore. The housing sector has to look at how we can evolve to go greener and act fast to meet the goals of COP26. For it to work, we must make green finance accessible, appealing and realistic to customers.

Many major providers are already

taking great green strides, as Esther Dijkstra, managing director of Intermediaries at Lloyds, told us last year: "Our main goal is to go green. This may be helped in the coming years with a rise in initiatives for customers to make greener choices, such as the government's Renewable Heat Incentive for homeowners to help reduce our

carbon emissions."

With sustainability at the forefront of many consumers' minds, it's up to the sector to meet the demand and ensure we have the right opportunities for them that meet the FCA's regulations.

#### WHAT DOES THE FCA'S PROPOSAL MEAN FOR THE HOUSING INDUSTRY?

The FCA's latest proposal comes at a time when greenwashing needs to be addressed. More clear-cut guidelines can be used to develop more robust and authentically sustainable consumer offerings.

However, the sector was already making bold movements towards a greener future organically before this proposal whilst overcoming significant national and international challenges. So the FCA's new guidelines mustn't come between green innovation and instead complement the housing market's ambition to give sustainable solutions to customers without revolving around profits.

The customer must always come first, and whilst the market will rise to meet the FCA regulations, the products must remain effective for the customer. They can't be disengaged by the importance of what we're doing.

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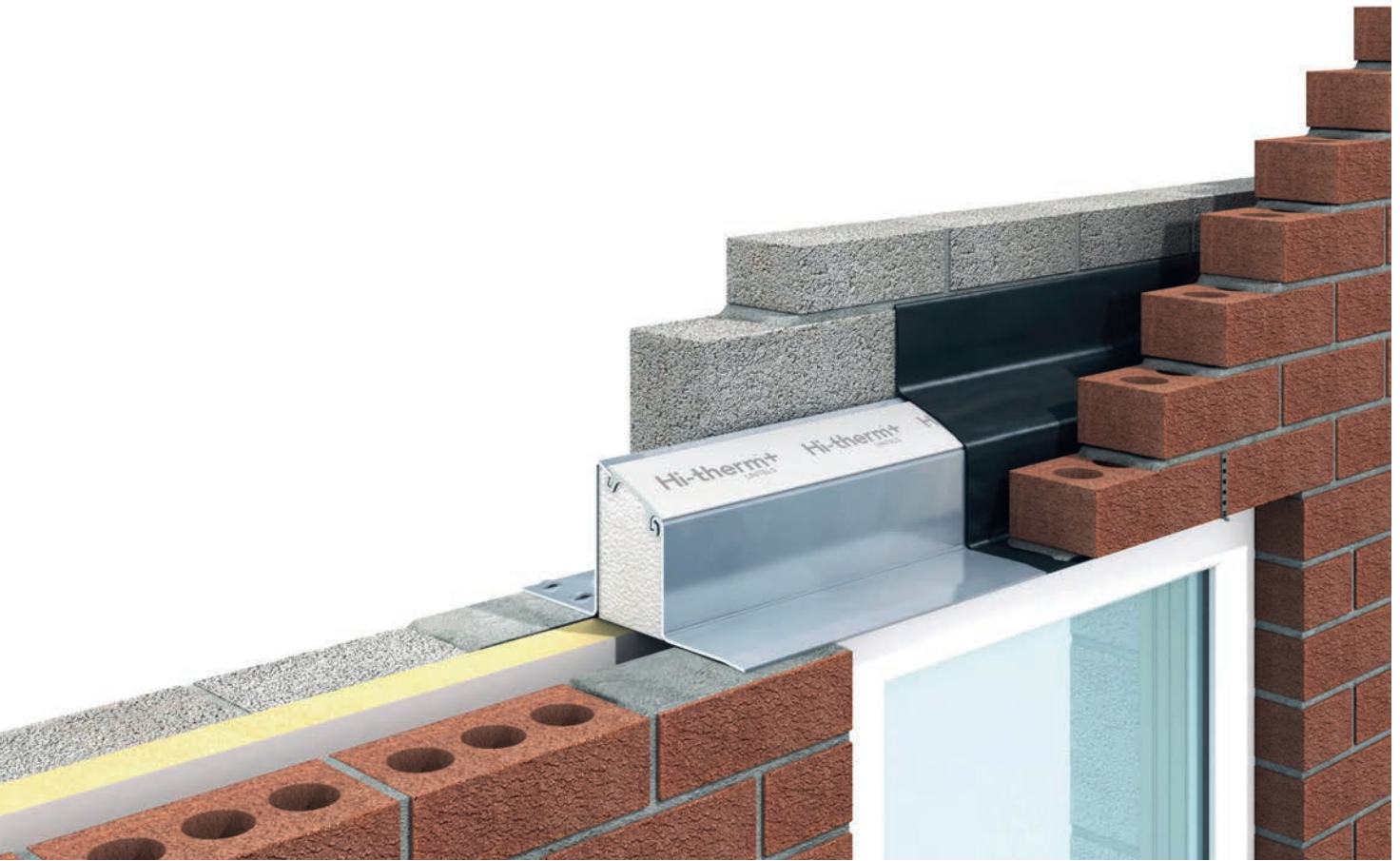
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## THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

# The real-world ramifications of putting building fabric first



## HOUSEBUILDERS ARE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE TO CONSIDER THE LONG TERM ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF ALL BUILDINGS FROM THE EARLIEST STAGE OF THE DESIGN PROCESS – CIARAN MCALISKEY, KEYSTONE LINTELS

Ciaran McAliskey of Keystone Lintels argues the case for taking a fabric first approach to meeting the Future Homes Standard, in order to set housebuilders on the best path to hitting net zero carbon.

**F**aced with the UK's ambitious commitment to bring carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 and the resulting stricter Building Regulations, housebuilders are under increasing pressure to consider the long term energy efficiency of all buildings from the earliest stage of the design process. From 2025, all new housing will be expected to produce much lower carbon emissions compared to current standards under the Future Homes Standard, and will therefore require low carbon heating technologies.

To meet these targets, taking a fabric first approach within SAP will be essential to comply with the new Part L regulations, and is a critical first step to reaching the

performance levels required to future-proof UK homes.

The Government is committed to bringing in the Future Homes Standard (FHS) in 2025, which will see a new build house have 75% lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than one built to today's standards. This will be achieved by having very high standards of energy efficiency and low carbon heating (i.e. heat pumps). The Part L updates that came into force on 15 June 2022 are an important stepping stone to the FHS and will mean carbon emissions from new homes will need to be 31% lower than at present. To put things into context, the previous Part L uplift in 2013 was 6%. Therefore, this interim 31% uplift will require some fairly significant



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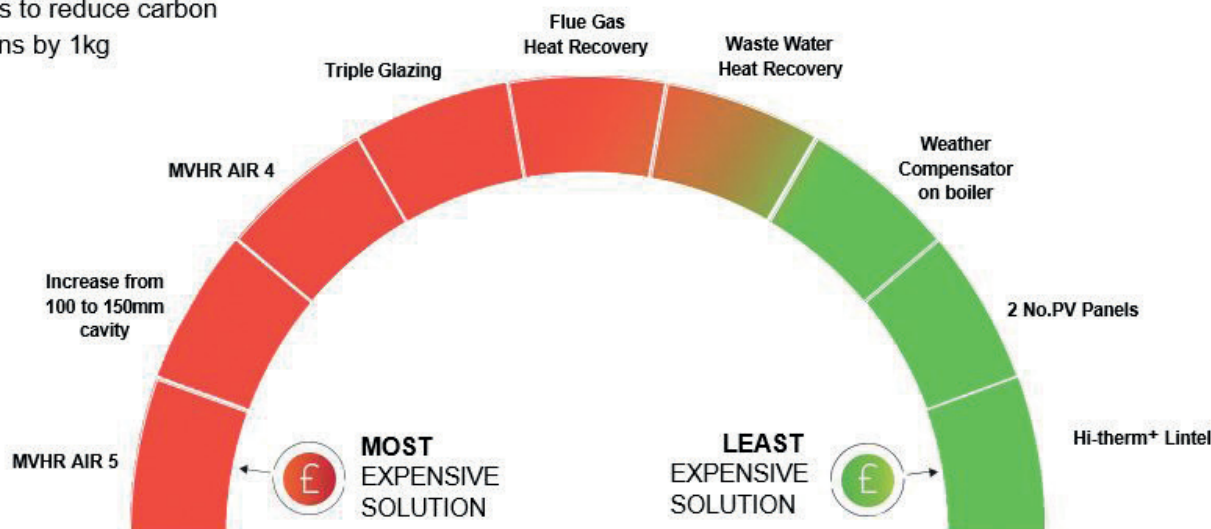
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## Cost Benefit Analysis

Comparison of popular solutions to reduce carbon emissions by 1kg



changes for housebuilders, as ultimately we need our homes to be zero carbon ready to meet future legislation.

### TAKING A FABRIC FIRST APPROACH

What will this mean for new homes and how will architects meet these rigorous standards? One key area will be addressing the thermal performance of a building envelope through a fabric first approach to building design. If we get the fabric right and we build as designed, we will go a long way to meeting our targets. It's an approach that will enable us to meet and even exceed regulatory performance criteria, whether it is for large scale private or social housing or a much smaller residential property.

While a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is one consideration when designing thermally-efficient housing, an improvement in thermal comfort can also have a positive impact on occupants – adding to their wellbeing, but also aspects like productivity for work.

### STOP THERMAL BRIDGING

A critical element of the fabric first approach will be addressing the issue of thermal bridging, which can be responsible for up to 30% of a home's heat loss. Eliminating thermal bridging through good design and correct product specification will be essential if we are to ensure we meet these ambitious new regulations.

While there are some design, measurement and calculation issues, the other concern in terms of thermal bridging is that we are neither building consistently

## THE OTHER CONCERN IN TERMS OF THERMAL BRIDGING IS THAT WE ARE NEITHER BUILDING CONSISTENTLY WHAT WE DESIGN, NOR DETAILING THE RIGHT PRODUCTS IN THE RIGHT PLACES

what we design, nor detailing the right products in the right places. There are also issues with site skills and workmanship; when you fail to build correctly it undermines the good work carried out in the first instance. This can lead to a 'performance gap' between as-designed and as-built building performance. It's why these weak spots can significantly impact a building's heat loss and have a detrimental effect on the overall fabric efficiency of the external wall.

### AN OFT-OVERLOOKED BRIDGE

Often overlooked when it comes to thermal efficiency due to a focus on insulation, window and doors, is that traditional steel lintels can create a significant thermal bridge in homes. This is due to the high thermal conductivity of steel, and because they span over

long lengths in a typical build. However, solutions have developed to address this.

For instance, a steel lintel that incorporates a thermal break can be up to five times more thermally efficient than standard alternatives, and such a solution has been specified on many housebuilder projects around the UK. When you consider the BRE has found that thermal bridging can account for up to 30% of heat loss from buildings, then paying close attention to the details and structural elements such as lintels can have a huge impact on the overall thermal performance of a building.

At a time of spiralling energy costs and the current energy crisis showing no signs of abating, making homes more energy efficient through a fabric first approach will go some way to locking in savings for the lifetime of a building and achieving our climate change targets.

### NET ZERO HOUSING

We have produced a webinar that's useful for anyone seeking to learn about the delivery of net zero housing, titled 'How are we going to deliver Net Zero Housing?' It is one of four in a series of free webinars featuring expert industry speakers discussing the challenging topics and issues the industry is currently facing.

With changes on the horizon for the design of our new build houses, it will be incredibly important for housebuilders to specify materials and components which deliver the difference between a sustainable and an inefficient home.

Ciaran McAliskey is national specification manager (Ireland) at Keystone Lintels

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## THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

# Pump down the volume

**THE GOVERNMENT'S  
EXPRESSED AIM IS  
TO INSTALL 600,000  
HEAT PUMPS A YEAR  
BY 2028**



With heat pumps becoming adopted as the realistic low carbon solution by more housebuilders as the Future Homes Standard looms, lower noise and sleeker aesthetics are coming to the fore as the goals to aim for. James Parker reports

**T**he Future Homes Standard (FHS) 2025 may have been somewhat confusingly subsumed into the Government's conjoined Future Homes and Buildings Standard, but one thing is absolutely clear, it's full steam ahead for heat pumps to meet the provisions of the FHS.

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has stopped short of explicitly pushing the whole housebuilding sector to adopt heat pumps, given the unlikelihood of being able to identify appropriately green sources of hydrogen by 2025 to put in adapted gas boilers or new hybrid options. However, the centre has certainly made very warm noises about heat

pumps, given their ability to cheaply, greenly, and relatively easily produce space heating for homes using electricity alone; Government's expressed aim is to install 600,000 heat pumps a year by 2028.

The Heat Pump Ready scheme is the embodiment of this, a £60m package of funding for manufacturers and the industry to boost innovation in developing heat pumps for UK properties. However by September, only 24 'innovation projects' had received funding (of £15m in total), for projects such as making heat pumps cheaper and easier to install.

Alongside this, the £5K Boiler Upgrade Scheme grant for homeowners towards their heat pump installation is providing strong leverage for retrofits, but the picture for new build is somewhat murky when it comes to incentives for housebuilders; it seems to be more 'stick' than 'carrot.'

The Government fudged a complete ban of gas boilers in its Heat and Buildings Strategy, which was expected to ban the traditional standard home heating solution from 2035. Instead it just expressed an ambition to phase out all fossil fuel heating by that point, which

has led to head-scratching in the market. Housebuilders legally obliged to create homes which emit 31% fewer carbon emissions by 2025 are however turning to air source heat pumps as an obvious cost-effective solution for most homes, aware of the constraints they can still pose.

Heat pumps in themselves may not be the eco heating panacea – they tend to produce a lower COP (Coefficient of Performance) at colder external temperatures, and having a large fan, they do emit a hum. Also although their size is being brought down all the time for domestic properties, it's hard to see where many urban terraced homes will be able to place them, apart from somewhere on the roof, if they don't want to compromise their limited back garden spaces. But they do appear to be the most realistic solution on offer currently, given the challenges of hydrogen.

## MAKING LESS NOISE IN THE MARKET

Samsung recently launched a high temperature, low noise heat pump to try and make a major move to counter industry assumptions that the technology wouldn't be able to supply the normal 65°C-and-over water which radiators



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**“I THINK THE WHOLE CONVERSATION AROUND INSTALLATION COSTS IS GOING TO BE A VERY DIFFERENT ONE IN TWO YEARS’ TIME. I THINK PEOPLE WILL BE MORE OPEN” – CHARLIE LUXTON**

require in older UK homes. Heat pumps normally output between 40°C-60°C, says the firm, but its new EHS Mono HT Quiet (pictured on page 24) has been designed to “consistently provide up to 70°C for domestic heating purposes,” thereby providing a way forward for the retrofit challenge in particular.

As well as higher temperature, the quieter (as low as 35 dB), and sleeker new arrival is being championed by the manufacturer’s ambassador, architect Charlie Luxton. Its slimline dark grey chassis should turn architects’ – and enlightened housebuilders’ – heads, as a low carbon option with its own aesthetic selling points.

Another compelling claim for the unit is that in the company’s own lab tests (despite one of their caveats being that “results may vary depending on the actual usage conditions”), it “reliably provided 100% heating performance even in weather as low as -25°C.” Less controversial is that it’s technologically as well as physically smart – the unit can be remotely controlled from a phone, allowing people to monitor energy usage daily, weekly and monthly at a glance.

#### **PUMPING UP THE EFFICIENCY**

*Housebuilder and Developer* spoke to Charlie Luxton at Samsung Eco Heating Systems’ London launch of its new quieter, high temperature heat pump HT Quiet. He told us that he believed that the move to heat pumps was driven by a wider set of forces than just the Future Homes Standard, and was simply a no brainer: “It’s the reality of global warming; it will make gas a thing of the past, until we get a viable, green hydrogen, and even hydrogen is a gas.”

The architect commented that in the short to medium term, heat pumps are “likely to do the vast majority of the heavy lifting,” because we won’t be able to insulate all of the UK’s 27 million existing homes, particularly with the UK having one of the “oldest, leakiest housing stocks in Europe.”

Luxton says that a decade ago, options like biomass were considered for mainstream housing upgrades and new builds, however they have proved “complicated.” He adds that at that point, heat pumps hadn’t seen the refinement which the market is now producing, and there were “quite a lot of installation issues, certainly with some ground source installations.” He says that the COP which air source heat pumps can now achieve year-round is now approaching that of their more expensive and complex ground source counterparts.

He believes that there is “an enormous amount to do” to encourage and drive developers, but that “strict legislation

enforcement is definitely coming” to that end. He added that, with the Building Regulations bringing a “step change” on insulation and overheating, we “are definitely moving in the right direction.”

When it comes to the cost of heat pumps (albeit they are cheaper than solutions like ground source), Luxton says that “we need to look more holistically at cost of upgrades – because if homeowners are actually investing a little bit more on the insulation, the heat demand will be significantly lower.” This will make the overall cost/benefit ratio more appealing, and he adds that energy prices are “not going back down to 14 pence per kilowatt hour; that age has gone.”

“I think the whole conversation around installation costs is going to be a very different one in two years’ time. I think people will be more open [to the investment].” Luxton says that the way consumers have begun to really interrogate their cars’ MPG performance will, thanks to the energy crisis, cross over to their homes. “By the end of this winter, people will know what their bills are.”

#### **FEELING THE HEAT**

Achieving the numbers needed (and the Government’s hoped-for target of 600,000 heat pump installations by 2028 seems incredibly daunting), means not just manufacturers having the right product, but installers able and willing to cover the ground. Luxton says that heat pump technology is not the problem – achieving the efficiencies needed comes down to correct specification, installation, and consumer use. “It’s about educating people; you can’t just whack on a heat pump and turn it off; you will lose efficiency – the best thing is slightly lower flow temperatures; it’s like flying a plane gently rather than erratically.” He adds: “There has to be an education process of the consumers.”

Luxton believes that “there are good installers, but we need to roll that out.” And by that he means installations on a “national, industrialised scale.” This is not something we have seen in retrofit, never mind new build, on this scale, and it will require a much more concerted effort from government, working alongside housebuilders, installers, and manufacturers.

The mythical national retrofit strategy needs to happen now. Charlie Luxton suggests that direct intervention is needed to up the industry’s game now to tackle the scope of the energy efficiency improvements needed – in a timeframe of unprecedented shortness. He concludes; “Everyone is moving in the right direction, we just need to stick a rocket up everyone’s behind. Because this problem is vast, and needs a lot of work.”

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## CASE STUDY

# Wichelstowe fields forever



Labelled “South West England’s boldest new housing development,” Wichelstowe has recently grown to more than 4,000 homes. The council developer and Barratt tell Jack Wooler about this latest modular expansion to what is already a mammoth scheme

A new development – Wichel Fields, the product of a joint venture between Swindon Borough Council and Barratt Developments – is in the works. It expands the JV’s wider urban development to the south of Swindon – Wichelstowe – to over 4,000 homes.

Utilising offsite modular construction methods, the new homes’ timber frames represent the JV’s commitment to continue to invest in such technology and produce more efficient homes, faster.

The homes will bring a range of environmental benefits, not just in their construction, but in their running costs, as well as in the biodiversity around the



project. The project team is introducing bat and swift boxes, and undertaking a range of mitigating measures for the local wildlife around the nearby canal.

Once complete, Wichel Fields will include around 400 homes, ranging from one bed apartments to the four bed townhouses which line the main street running through the site, with the first residents set to move in this winter.

All the homes are EPC grade A and B, and come with electric vehicle charging points. A total of 15% of the properties have been designated as affordable housing, split between shared ownership and affordable rent.

The site already benefits from a school campus, Waitrose supermarket, and a Hall and Woodhouse pub alongside the canal. This central area was delivered early in the development, recognising the importance of key amenities to new residents.

#### JOINT STRENGTH

Established in January 2018, the joint venture claims to combine the strengths of the public and private sectors. Daniel Pavely, project director at Wichelstowe LLP, describes its aims as to “create a

high-quality and attractive development.”

The JV operates on a “50/50 decision making basis,” with both parties contributing funding, and sharing risks and rewards.

Wichelstowe first received outline planning consent in 2005 for a 250 hectare site located on former farmland between Swindon’s urban area, and the M4 to the south.

“The location offers excellent connections both into Swindon and to the wider transport network, says Pavely. “It is also well connected to the extensive areas of countryside surrounding Swindon.”

#### ECOLOGICAL CLEARANCE

In September 2021, the first phase of Wichel Fields was transferred from the Council to Wichelstowe LLP in accordance with the joint venture agreements.

As a greenfield site, the land had already been subject to both a programme of ecological clearance to ensure Great Crested Newts were protected during development, as well as an archaeological ‘strip, map and record’ due to its close proximity to a scheduled monument.

A site-wide approach was taken, with new habitats created for the newts, as





well as those for the local water voles. The importance of the canal as a home for both protected species and the population of ducks, swans and herons that inhabit its waters has been bolstered by attenuation ponds and new waterbodies developed by the JV.

Within the homes themselves, boxes for swifts and bats, as well as 'hedgehog highways' have been specified to ensure wildlife remains welcome with the built areas too.

"As Wichel Fields is built out," Pavely says, "the site will also include a new section of the Wilts and Berks Canal, which, in combination with swales and ponds, will provide both an attractive feature and a large-scale sustainable drainage solution."

#### PRIORITIES

In terms of enabling infrastructure, the priority works included the construction of a new roundabout on the existing highway, allowing the primary street to be constructed.

In order to mitigate noise from the M4, a six metre noise bund is also being built, providing a soft landscaped boundary to the south of the site.

Where areas did need to be cleared, the

timber has been reused in other parts of the site to create a 'hibernacula' where local wildlife can take shelter. The site included an existing area of hedgerow which held a number of distinctive trees; the 'short-lived' poplar trees present have been felled, but this has "opened up the hedgerow to allow the feature oaks space to grow and include a path through this space now known as Wichel Wood," says Pavely.

"Where tree stumps can remain they have been cut to create opportunities for bat roosts. Thousands of trees have also been planted to mitigate those lost both in the landscaped areas surrounding the site and in the form of street trees."

#### CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

When it came to the homes themselves, according to Pavely the strategic planning framework for the site was laid down at the outline planning and design coding stage, where a few "key challenges" were reported. These related to the site's relationship with the existing primary infrastructure, and led to a restriction on the number and location of access points into the site.

"This did however provide an opportunity," says Pavely, with homes able

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to designed to be accessed from private drives set back from tree-lined highways.

He describes the architectural approach: “It needed to relate to the contemporary buff brick approach taken in the first phase, while also creating some distinction.” This has been achieved by subtle changes in brick detailing with the properties adjacent to the previous phase transitioning to red brick homes fronting the main street, and those alongside the canal.

“The selection of bricks as well as recognising the importance of using quality materials was a key focus for the design team,” says Pavely.

#### MODERN METHODS

Though brick has been a focus when it comes to the scheme’s exterior materiality, the homes are built with panelised timber frames – engineered in a controlled, offsite factory environment. They are then assembled onsite over two to four days by a specialist team.

The timber frames include flooring, roofing and walls, and are designed as a whole unit – engineered to be rigid and lightweight, as well as easy to assemble in any adverse weather conditions.

According to a spokesperson from Barratt Developments, the process allows the team to build more efficiently, and to mitigate the current skills challenges facing the industry. They however note that the process does not affect the design and feel of its homes, with timber frames being “extremely versatile and stable, making it easy to accommodate our style of housing.”

The internal designs of the properties therefore do not differ compared to its traditional masonry constructed homes, says Barratt, with the interiors allowing for spacious, family-friendly living.

“Another advantage of timber frames,” said the spokesperson, “is that they are precisely manufactured using 3D Modelling and computer software; this leaves fewer margins for error and makes it easier to install for the on-site team.”

“The modular building process of timber frames allows us to operate efficiently within a controlled manufacturing environment to reduce our waste, energy and material consumptions as it can be more easily monitored and controlled,” said Barratt Developments.

“We continue to work with our suppliers to ensure that all of our timber is 100% certified for net zero deforestation, and we are achieving this by strengthening our procurement processes and validation checks.” In addition, the spokesperson says that Barratt is aiming to support its suppliers of small quantities of non-certified timber to find alternative supply routes.

#### WHAT LIES AHEAD

Looking to the future, Barratt expects its use of modern methods of construction will continue to rise – aiming for 30% of all its output by 2025 – citing not just speed of delivery, but also its help in addressing the current skills and labour shortages facing the industry.

The spokesperson from Barratt Developments says the developer is “committed” to increasing the number of homes it builds offsite as part of its overall volume growth aspirations. This goal also aligns with its aim to be the “leading national sustainable housebuilder,” and “the only UK housebuilder to set science-based targets for reducing carbon emissions.” They aim to reduce direct carbon emissions from business operations by 29% by 2025, and indirect carbon emissions, including from its supply chain and homes once occupied, by 11% before 2030. The developer is also “committed to reducing the intensity of our construction waste by 20%.” The developer is also “committed to reducing the intensity of our construction waste by 20%.”

According to Pavely, WichelStowe LLP will also seek carbon neutrality, in particular ensuring new home design is net zero carbon from 2030, something which MMC forms a key element of. “New technologies are being included as each new phase of development proceeds – one example of this is that electric car chargers are now provided as standard for every home.”

#### OVERWHELMING INTEREST

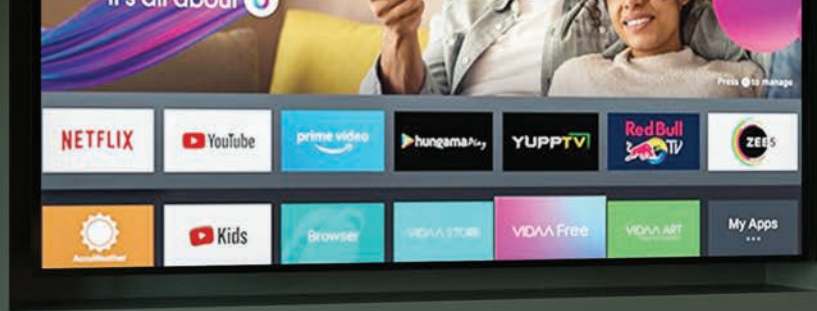
Back in the present, already the JV is seeing the results of its success, claiming to be “overwhelmed by the level of interest” in Wichel Fields, and “the thriving new community that’s already evident.”

According to local reports, since sites began work in 2019, the area has received significant investment in its local economy, with the project already having supported around 25 local businesses with employment to the value of £60m, creating 564 jobs, two apprentices, as well as investment in the local community schools, restaurants and facilities.

The spokesperson told Housebuilder and Developer that the show homes’ launch was a success, and there was a “high turnout at our opening weekend.”

“We have had a real mix of interest from first time buyers, locals, family starters and second steppers.”

Barratt concludes: “Sales are really positive, and we are looking forward to welcoming our first residents into their new homes towards the end of this year.” ■



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## CASE STUDY

# Retiring together



Working in a JV on a scheme to bring 137 affordable and private homes to a brownfield site in Sutton Coldfield, McCarthy Stone and Anchor explore their ethos

**S**utton Coldfield, eight miles north east of Birmingham City Centre, has – along with most places in the UK – seen an ageing of its population in recent years.

Many in the wider industry have long argued that the country's housing options are inadequate at present to support the needs and expectations of this rise, arguing for more specialist retirement

accommodation to provide a greater choice for those in later life, while freeing up the wider housing market for families and first-time buyers down the chain.

Intending to fulfil this demand in the region, a new partnership between McCarthy Stone and Anchor is launching a range of such schemes, with the JV's latest, in Sutton Coldfield itself, just being given the go-ahead.

The new 137 home development promises not just a mix of private and affordable apartments for older residents, but indoor communal facilities, high quality landscaped gardens, and a range of other amenities shared between two buildings.

These two buildings, one each to be run by McCarthy Stone and Anchor,

have recently been granted planning permission, covering a redevelopment of the brownfield site, continuing its ever-strengthening relationship.

Together, the partnership already has a pipeline of over 1,000 multi-tenure retirement properties across eight large scale 'villages,' with more expected to be added, offering a range of tenures to meet different affordability levels, including ownership, shared ownership and social rent.

## WORKING TOGETHER

With the joint venture's combined strengths, the partnership sees itself as among the leading retirement providers. McCarthy Stone is reportedly the UK's largest developer and manager of

## EVEN WITH BACKING FROM LOCAL PLANS, SINCE SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION THE JV'S JOURNEY TO CONSENT HAS NOT BEEN PLAIN SAILING

retirement homes, and Anchor Hanover claims to be England's largest not-for-profit provider of specialist housing and care for people in later life.

The proposed site for the partnership's fifth retirement community so far is located on the former Royal Works site – a brownfield plot on Coleshill Street. Last year the JV undertook research with WPI Economics in order to consider the economic viability of redeveloping the site, and constructing 137 units – as well as considering its impact on the area, being near the local town centre and high street.

The conclusions of this research indicated that the development would be financially worthwhile for the partnership and the local area. It was predicted to generate around £1.6m of resource investment per year, over £1m of which would be in local businesses.

Jane Ashcroft CBE, chief executive of Anchor, expressed her excitement about the plan: "The changing needs of our ageing society mean demand for specialist housing, and care is strong and growing across all price points.

"We have ambitious plans to provide more homes where people love living in later life and to do so more quickly. We're keen to work with a range of partners to meet that demand and support the Government's objective of more accessible housing for older people. Our partnership with McCarthy Stone will help us to achieve these aims."

### ACHIEVING CONSENT

Due to the nature of the 1.45 hectare site acquired, some works would be necessary before its development – including the demolition of a house to improve access to the site.

The land, bordered by homes and a railway line, formerly held a mix of industrial factory and office buildings, but these had since been demolished. The plot was predominantly scrub land with mature trees forming the boundary to the site, and the site displayed a considerable level change from west to east, another aspect that needed to be considered in the plans.

Located in a predominantly residential area, the site is close to Sutton Coldfield town centre, and – being located near to the local high street, is well placed to access the town's amenities, including a newsagents, butchers, bakery, pub, and local cafe.

Despite the often contentious planning

restrictions in locations like this, the site had previously been included within the council's most recent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which noted that the former industrial land was suitable for residential development.

### TACKLING THE OPPOSITION

Even with backing from local plans, since submitting the application in February 2022, the JV's journey to getting consent has not been plain sailing.

Working closely with Birmingham City Council and statutory consultees to produce a design that was appropriate for the site and which would work for all in the local community, the partnership brought in a range of local stakeholders and residents to consult them on their input and include their feedback where possible.

As part of this, a virtual exhibition was held to increase awareness and communication among locals, the exhibition showcasing the plans and giving the public the chance to comment on the project in person.

Despite the proposed site being disused land, the JV faced some concerns from the locals as to the potential impact on the area, both visually and economically. These included concerns that the homes should be allocated to younger families (perceived by some to spend more money and contribute more to the local economy), as well as arguments made that more local housing is needed for young people in the area.

Others were concerned about the impact of the skyline of the area, with the original plan's higher stories likely to be visible from across the area being seen as an undesirable outcome.

Hoping to address as many of these concerns as possible, the consultation process has resulted in reducing both buildings by one storey from the original plans – which was hoped to sufficiently reduce any perceived visual impact. And, following its research with WPI Economics which demonstrated the money the project will bring to the local economy, the JV hoped the demographic concerns of its residents would be further addressed.

### THE PROPOSED PROJECT

With the plan now finalised and given planning consent, the new site entrance – partly covering the area occupied by the demolished house – is set to begin





construction in the form of a block-paved road. There will be a central strip of trees and a pedestrian path separated from the road by a grass verge.

At the end of this road, part of the walking route in and out of the development, will be an entrance garden, enclosed by an evergreen hedge, providing a focus for views from Coleshill Street.

Together, the two buildings at the end of this road will comprise a U-shape, varying in height from three to five storeys to address the difference in levels across the site. The building is intended to give the perception of no more than four storeys when viewed from street level.

The designs for these buildings, says the project team, will utilise “architectural links to form a more cohesive community,” indicating its shared facilities through the landscaped gardens and secure connecting footpaths.

As to the latter, the plans cover wide-ranging improvements of the site boundaries around both the buildings, including 4,771 m<sup>2</sup> of communal gardens, seating areas, and new shrub and tree planting – as well as the retention of existing trees on site where possible.

#### DIVERSE NEEDS

The proposals for both projects are centred around offering residents a sense of community, security, independence and peace of mind, informed by the JV’s significant experience in the sector.

With Sutton Coldfield’s ageing population in mind, the two developments are intended to cover a range of differing needs – including not just different levels of affordability, but tailored levels of care required, suiting their personal circumstances and needs, and providing nearby support if and when those needs are present.

Anchor’s assisted living building will comprise 32 one bedroom apartments and 53 two bed apartments. Amenities on offer will include a dining room, lounge, kitchen, reception, hair and beauty salon, activity room, wellbeing room, and a quiet room, plus staff facilities, office, meeting room, internal buggy store and guest suite – accessible through three staircases and two lifts.

Inside McCarthy Stone’s retirement apartment block, the accommodation will comprise 32 one bedroom apartments and 20 two bedroom apartments. There will be a similar range of amenities – the ground floor will contain a resident’s lounge, reception lobby, guest suite, bin store, cycle store, and buggy/scooter store, with the building accessible via two staircases and a lift. An 89-space ‘courtyard’ car park will be shared by the two buildings, for use by residents, visitors and staff.

#### DESIGNED-IN QUALITY

The joint venture have described the proposals for these buildings as being of a contemporary design, “with an elegant appearance, fitting of this key location.” This was reportedly supported by planning, the department being consulted as part of this process, and advising that the “coherent, contemporary” approach of the project will help to create a “well-defined character.” They noted its well proportioned facades, generous glazing, and additional architectural interest arising from decorative brick detailing – including glazed green saw-tooth detailing around windows and ribbed brick roof parapets.

Brick is, in fact, one of the key visual links between the blocks, being the main material across both. The design for McCarthy’s block, for instance, will utilise a construction of light multi-brickwork, with vertical detailing and grey window treatments, where Anchor’s will feature two bricks – a darker one at low level, and lighter on the top floor.

Across the development, a number of the apartments on the upper floors of both buildings will also benefit from balconies breaking up these brick facades, with some of the ground floor or both benefiting from patios.

#### UNMATCHED IN THE MARKETPLACE

According to its own research, the partnership says there are 2 million older people with housing equity of £150-250k who are not being catered for in the market at present. Some are at the ‘upper’ end who can afford to buy outright, and some in the lower end who will require a part ownership or social rented option.

The JV aims to position itself at the forefront of addressing the undersupply of retirement communities, doing its part to fulfil the reported 30,000 retirement units needed every year in this country.

With this in mind, looking ahead, the JV hopes to continue working on its retirement portfolio – which already spans a gross development value of £250m – to cater for this rising demand.

Katie Fisher, divisional managing director at McCarthy Stone, commented on the importance of the project in the current demographic climate: “Our proposals will help address the local demand for specialist retirement accommodation, providing greater choice for those in later life whilst freeing up the wider housing market for families and first-time buyers further down the chain.”

She concluded: “We would like to thank local stakeholders and residents for their input and feedback throughout the planning process and we look forward to becoming a part of this community.” ■

## Improving air quality in retirement apartments



**VORTICE** has worked with Peterborough-based VentfiltersRus, to successfully install the VORTICE Invisible Mini heat recovery system in retirement living apartments. The Vort Invisible Mini is a void mounted heat recovery unit, which is a lightweight product and is easily fitted in smaller void spaces. It offers easy set up and wiring and

has an option for a humidity sensor to boost the unit when needed. The unit has an easy-to-use hard wired controller which gives the user filter status, operation status and set up function. The unit also includes two filters to maintain good indoor air quality and these are easily accessed behind tool free magnetic covers.

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

## Open space management for BNG



With Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) coming into legislation in 2023, **Meadfleet** are on hand to provide a long-term open space management solution to developers ensuring the new requirements are fulfilled and surpassed.

Meadfleet offer a perpetuity, adoption model

exceeding the 30-year BNG requirement. This can be funded either by annual customer contributions or a commuted sum option. Their team includes in-house ecologists trained in Biodiversity Net Gain calculations and delivery. Meadfleet are experienced in enhancing, monitoring, and managing open spaces to increase, protect and promote wildlife habitats as demonstrated by their award-winning pollinator campaign.

01438 890780 [www.meadfleet.co.uk](http://www.meadfleet.co.uk)



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## Approved Document B-compliant glass balustrade brings views at retirement home



Retirement living has never looked so appealing! Quantock House is an iconic building in the heart of Taunton, Somerset offering its homeowners aged 55 and over a safe, contemporary environment in which they can live life to the full. The complex features 1 and 2 bedroom apartments with balconies that maximise the stunning views of the Quantock Hills. Set in secluded gardens, residents can enjoy the luxury of an owners lounge, bistro and treatment room, all within

close proximity to the centre of Taunton.

The balconies on the development feature the A2-s1,d0 fire-rated Easy Glass Prime balustrade system by Q-railing, providing the highest safety standards. For the project, Q-railing UK teamed up with Architectural Metalwork Installations (AMI) and the architects at the Affordable Housing & Healthcare Group.

With offices all around the world, including here in the UK, Q-railing are known as the benchmark and market leaders in their sector. This innovation and forward thinking was extremely beneficial when the changes were made to Approved Document B in December 2018. Architects and developers were facing a major issue and the industry had to find alternatives to glass balustrades on residential buildings above 18M. This problem was solved when Q-railing introduced a fully tested and compliant laminated glass balustrade system.

According to Darryl Holloway, Architectural Sales Manager at Q-railing UK, "Not being able to work with glass barriers for residential high-rise caused much heartache." Darryl went on to say, "Following the changes to Approved Document B in December 2018 that saw all materials on residential buildings of 18M and above require a classification of A2-s1,d0, in accordance with BS EN13501 – Q-railing needed to pioneer systems that would be compliant with this new regulation. Following very quickly after our A2-s1,d0 laminated glass solution, came our revolutionary aluminium vertical bar system. This can achieve both 0.74kN/m residential loads and the more onerous 1.5kN/m load for areas where people may congregate. It can be top or fascia mounted and has the ability

to be powder coated in any colour the client wishes. This, along with the glass option, now makes for a full suite of products that architects/designers and specifiers as always can rely on Q-railing to deliver"

The beauty of the aluminium vertical bar system is that it is fully customisable- colours and finishes can be chosen to compliment any design. The vertical bar system, along with the laminated glass option, is currently being installed on main contractor projects all around the UK. So now there are multiple fire-rated options for you to choose from, without compromising on the safety of your project.

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## Reginox UK announces new Area Sales Manager



Sinks, taps and accessories manufacturer, **Reginox UK**, is celebrating a recent promotion of one of its longest serving members of staff – Vicky Allman. Vicky has been promoted from Purchasing and Stock Control Manager to Area Sales Manager across the Midlands region. The new role will see Vicky grow and develop Reginox UK's client base across the region both through existing and new customers, as well as maintaining the highest level of customer service and client liaison. Vicky

said: "I'm really excited to use the skills and expertise that I have gained over the years to benefit the business in my new sales role."

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

## Vent-Axia celebrates lucky number three



Vent-Axia's Richard Paine and Joe Tse

Market-leading ventilation manufacturer **Vent-Axia** is celebrating winning the 'Domestic Ventilation Product of the Year' award at the prestigious H&V News Awards for the third year in a row. The company scooped the award for its pioneering Vent-Axia Lo-Carbon Multivent MEV range, which has set the mark for domestic ventilation by winning this category for two

consecutive years. This year the Lo-Carbon Multivent MEV range literally broke the mould for domestic ventilation as the first MEV manufactured from recycled plastic, offering more sustainable choices for customers and keeping plastic in the circular economy rather than landfill.

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

## Safety Platforms has moved!



**Safety Platforms** is pleased to announce it has moved to larger premises, with room for more stock and new product development! The move has been promoted by a substantial increase in demand, over the past year for products such as Easy Stair Temporary Staircase and Stairwell Edge Protection. The majority of products are stock items therefore available for next day delivery.

Safety Platforms' delivery charges represent great value for money with all mainland orders subject to just a £25.00 delivery charge. Safety Platforms trust its solutions are of interest and would welcome the opportunity to discuss your requirements. Please note the change of address: 67-69 Alverthorpe Road, Wakefield, WF2 9NU

01924 420820 [www.safetyplatforms.co.uk](http://www.safetyplatforms.co.uk)

## Ten years of advanced passive fire protection



**Siderise Insulation** is celebrating ten years since first having its curtain wall passive fire protection systems tested to the rigorous BS EN 1364-4 fire resistance standard. A decade on and an additional 16 successful tests later, its unique offering is still providing a straightforward yet advanced perimeter fire

containment solution for protecting against vertical fire spread in the most popular curtain wall types – ensuring compliance and supporting specifiers in delivering the safest standards possible for their projects.

01656 730833 [www.siderise.com](http://www.siderise.com)

## Titon's FireSafe® Air brick is the perfect fit for hayes village



**T**iton's FireSafe® Air Brick has recently been installed at the new Hayes Village development in West London.

Hayes Village, situated at Nestles Avenue, Hayes in Middlesex, is a brand new development from Barratt London offering 1,473 new homes. Built on the former Nestle Factory, the area is undergoing signification regeneration.

SIG Distribution, priding itself on delivering expert knowledge and service across the construction industry, supported the development with key products including the Titon FireSafe® Air Brick.

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.

Commenting on the partnership with Titon and SIG Distribution, Laura French, Area Sales Manager stated "It was a pleasure working with SIG Distribution, they have a vast range of product knowledge and knew early on that the Titon FireSafe® Air Brick was perfect for the Hayes Village scheme. By supporting SIG Distribution with their product specification,

Titon were able to meet and exceed all their requirements.

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.

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## Endless options with Tradelink's new range



Offering incredible choice and flexibility, the new Soteria range of composite doors from **Tradelink** allows the specification of high-quality doors with the same style and colour options available whether a foam or solid core is selected. A new 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> (16,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) production facility in Mildenhall, Suffolk, provides increased capacity to support the vastly expanded selection of

doors offered in the Soteria range. Performance, security and versatility are integral to all doors which have been developed specifically for the UK market, with the diversity of designs appealing to both the commercial and retail sectors. The products come with the relevant accreditations, giving customers peace of mind about the manufacturing process and quality.

[tradelinkdirect.com](https://tradelinkdirect.com)

## Guttering helps achieve a striking look



**Marley Alutec's** Evolve Deepflow and Aligator Giant were recently specified for an eco-friendly property in Suffolk. The guttering created a striking aesthetic, which helped to meet the homeowner's criteria for a modern finish but using materials and products with low environmental impact. The guttering also provided a long-term solution that would require minimal maintenance. Marley Alutec's Evolve Deepflow and Aligator Giant guttering is manufactured from marine grade aluminium – a premium material that is incredibly resistant to corrosion, due to a naturally occurring protective oxide that forms on the surface. If the layer becomes damaged, it will reform itself. As a result, it has a 50+ year functional life expectancy.

01234 359438 [www.marleyalutec.co.uk](https://www.marleyalutec.co.uk)



## Wraptite® selected for affordable homes

The Wraptite® external air barrier system from **A. Proctor Group** has been selected as part of a new zero carbon affordable homes project at New Ferry on the Wirral. The project at Windsor Close in New Ferry is a new development of three bedroomed terraced houses to be constructed by Property Development Group Starship at its off-site manufacturing facility in Deeside. The superior airtightness performance of the Wraptite membrane from the A. Proctor Group is the perfect solution, delivering significant benefits to the combination of in-factory manufacture and on-site housing construction. Karl Ventre, Director at Starship, explains why Wraptite was chosen to achieve the airtightness solution and how it benefits off-site construction: "We have specified this product within our system offering for the last three years, and it has always performed well and helped contribute to good airtightness test results. The self-adhesive membrane is easily applied in the factory, bonded externally to the substrate, and ensures that the membrane is held firmly in place, even during transportation, maintaining the quality of the system from installation to build and completion. Wraptite is an excellent quality product, and the self-adhesive backing gives a very neat finish."

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



# BENEFITS OF BRICK SLIPS

Jemma Ison of Keystone Group who also supports the technical specification for IG Masonry Support explains how brick slip products can bring sustainability and style to building projects both large and small



**I**nnovative construction techniques are an enabler to a more sustainable built environment. Products that simplify and speed up the build process, while ensuring the highest standards are upheld, reduce time on site and lessen environmental impact.

Masonry is a classic and timeless building material that achieves superior, maintenance free results. Utilising masonry in prominent areas can be essential to delivering an architect's overall vision, or fulfilling a client's brief to ensure a project remains in keeping with the local surroundings. Brick slip systems are adaptable to suit any application.

Ideal for small openings over window heads but also deliver effortless results spanning an entrance of a commercial building. Whatever the desired finish, prefabricated units can provide high quality results at low environmental impact.

## TIME AND ENERGY SAVER

The average time it takes to create intricate masonry details with prefabricated brick-slip solutions is estimated to reduce time by 90% in comparison to traditional on-site methods. As well as the time saving factor there are many other benefits associated with off-site production, from improved construction efficiencies and reduced on-site waste to minimal site impacts due to the fit-and-forget design. Furthermore, a pre-fabricated unit is produced in line with manual handling guidelines. Therefore, designed to be easily managed and handled on-site. This eliminates the consumption of any fuel or electricity needed to aid the installation process.

## SKILLS SHORTAGE

While highlighting the direct and indirect sustainable benefits of these prefabricated methods, it is also a recognised challenge that traditional techniques require the

services of a highly-skilled bricklayer. In the current climate, this might not be an appointment that is easy to secure. The bricklaying sector, as with the construction industry as a whole, is in the midst of a well-publicised skills shortage. Indeed, the Construction Skills Network (CSN) has forecast a need for 1,450 more bricklayers per year over the next five years to help fulfil UK building projects. Therefore, it could mean an appropriately-qualified bricklayer travelling many miles to work on a particular project, a journey that would incur additional fuel consumption and environmental impacts.

## NATURAL HINDRANCES TO EFFICIENT BRICK DETAILING

When it comes to achieving intricate brick details, a building site is far from the ideal environment. Poor weather can hamper high-quality workmanship and build consistency. This can lead to reworks and





additional project time, cost and material waste. Whereas off-site manufacture takes place in a controlled environment, enabling products such as brick slip systems to be produced with greater skill and accuracy.

#### SAFE AND ADAPTABLE SOLUTION

Due to their A1 fire-rated finish, there are prefabricated brick slip products on the market that can provide peace of mind to specifiers due to their reliability and

compliance with building regulations. In terms of their installation, they are the only UK manufacturer to offer a solution that has dual security using an A1 fire-rated adhesive as well as a secondary stainless steel mechanical fix, providing safety and added aesthetic consistency.

In short, prefabricated brick slip masonry systems are ideal for wherever an intricate brick detail is required. Their specification and installation are made all the easier and more

## QUALITY, CONSISTENCY AND GREATER SUSTAINABILITY ARE THE ULTIMATE OUTCOMES OF THE CORRECT SPECIFICATION OF PREFABRICATED BRICK SLIP SOLUTIONS

effective through engagement with a prefabricated brick slip specialist. This single point of contact controls the design, pricing and manufacturing process, providing tentative support and expert communication throughout a project.

Quality, consistency and greater sustainability are the ultimate outcomes of the correct specification of prefabricated brick slip solutions, which are gaining in popularity as developers and architects look to utilise one of the world's oldest, reliable building materials in evermore imaginative style.

Jemma Ison is sustainability manager at Keystone Group

## Senior's tall order in Bristol



Senior Architectural Systems, the UK's largest privately owned aluminium fenestration solutions manufacturer, has supplied the fenestration package for use on the tallest residential building in Bristol.

At 26 storeys high, the residential tower block forms part of the wider Castle Park View scheme, which is the largest Urban Green Space in the city. The development also features a main block and a 10-storey tower, creating in total 375 new one and two bedroom apartments. Senior has supplied its slimline SF52 aluminium curtain wall system and patented low U-value PURE® aluminium windows and doors for use across the scheme, working alongside specialist installers Denval, architects Chapman Taylor, contractors Bouygues UK.

Created following the extensive regeneration of a brownfield area and built on the former site of an ambulance station, sustainability is a key part of the design of the Castle Park View and the residential scheme has achieved a level



four standard in the Code for Sustainable Homes certification.

Both Senior's thermally-efficient SF52 aluminium curtain wall system and Part L compliant PURE® aluminium windows and doors are highly durable and fully recyclable, making them the ideal choice for a modern development that is also striving to help reduce the energy bills of its residents. The

thermal performance of the aluminium fenestration system complements the other sustainable features including the use of the UK's largest water source heat pump, the nearby Castle Park Energy Centre, as the development's main heat source.

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# MITIGATE ONSITE RISKS WITH OFFSITE SOLUTIONS

Following a recent survey conducted by Housebuilder & Developer (which found that 58% of readers cited health and safety as their organisation's most important concern), Philip Pointon of Saint-Gobain Off-Site Solutions looks at how offsite manufacturing can mitigate onsite risks.



## MANUFACTURING ENGINEERED TRUSSED RAFTERS AND FLOOR SOLUTIONS FOR PROJECTS IN A CONTROLLED OFFSITE ENVIRONMENT OFFERS THE ABILITY TO SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE NEED FOR WORKING AT HEIGHT

**T**he construction industry has one of the worst records for health and safety – we are all too familiar with the stark statistic that the fatal injury rate is four times higher than the all-industry average.

According to the latest figures on the construction sector from the Health and Safety Executive, there were 39 fatal injuries to workers in 2020/21, a slight increase on the 36 fatalities for 2016/17-2020/21. There were also a hugely significant 61,000 non-fatal injuries, averaged over the three-year period 2018/19-2020/21.

Falls from height comprise half of all these injuries and, when compared with data from all other industrial sectors, are more than double the rate.

Across the supply chain, it is not uncommon for suppliers to reject bidding opportunities because they deem the project to carry too much risk – while contractors are becoming increasingly selective in their choice of provider, based on their safety track record.

So, it came as no surprise that health and safety is cited as a key concern for housebuilders, but what the survey did highlight was some fresh insights into

how respondents are seeking new ways to resolve common issues.

### SAFE DELIVERIES

One such example is in the safe delivery of materials, particularly during unloading to ensure the driver, and nearby workers' safety. Concerns raised included the method for unloading and the requirement for onsite manual handling, both of which are seen as potential risks.

Fabricating offsite in a quality, process-driven manufacturing environment can help to alleviate many of these concerns.





Health and safety issues are significantly reduced by constructing away from the hazards of a building site.

For example, roof truss and floor joist systems can be manufactured and supplied to carefully coordinate with planned delivery sequences to complement the build programme. This can result in fewer deliveries, minimising the requirement for onsite manual handling and unloading.

As factory manufacturing can be scheduled to start as the site is being prepared, processes can run in parallel, helping to reduce waste and the movement of vehicles. This can also create less disruption to residents or businesses close to the construction site.

#### WORKING AT HEIGHT

As we have learnt, falls account for 50% of all construction injuries, so reducing the frequency and duration of working at height is accepted as one of the best ways to limit accidents. In addition, the ongoing skills shortage in the industry may compound the problem, where there may be a reliance on temporary labour.

Manufacturing engineered trussed rafters and floor solutions in a controlled environment – and prioritising offsite work – can help significantly reduce the need for working at height. These efficiencies carry through to the construction site – with many component parts pre-installed, so there is no need to work off scaffolding or ladders.

Alongside the clear productivity improvements, the quality-controlled environment relies on a skilled, permanent workforce. Numerous measures will be in place to ensure that the production process is efficient and systematic, most likely including a target

of zero lost-time incidents.

Checking a supplier's credentials for externally recognised certification, including the ISO45001:2018 Occupational Health & Safety Standard, is a good starting point.

#### MATERIAL SPECIFICATION

Respondents to the Housebuilder and Developer survey also commented on the importance of the correct material specification, and the requirement to ensure site deliveries meet the latest safety regulations. 25% of respondents agreed that keeping up to date with fire regulations was the most important to their organisation – the second most common requirement below health and safety.

This is another area where using offsite manufacturing techniques can pay dividends. Contractors have the assurance that materials have been stored correctly, processed and then finished to strict quality standards and a defined audit trail. These standards will dictate everything from the material's regulatory compliance to its sustainable credentials and/or FSC certification to its suitability within the finished building.

Philip Pointon is quality & risk director at Saint-Gobain Off-Site Solutions

## Glidevale Protect provides complete roofing ventilation solution for new build housing development

Leading building materials manufacturer, Glidevale Protect, has supplied its Protect Viking Air pitched roofing underlay across a new build development for housebuilder Pennyfarthing Homes in Verwood, Dorset.

Glidevale Protect's high-performance air and vapour permeable roofing underlay has been installed by appointed roofing contractor Ford Roofing of Hampshire at Pennyfarthing Homes' Potters Wood housing scheme, a bespoke development featuring a mix of new build two, three and four bedroom semi-detached and detached homes.

The Protect Viking Air roofing membrane was fitted across all the pitched roofs, including on apartments at the development. The class-leading underlay helps avoid the risk of harmful condensation and achieves superior air permeability, tested at 50 Pascals to BS EN 12114, meaning it can be used in cold roof construction without additional roof space ventilation as accepted by the NHBC.

Glidevale Protect's premium underlay boasts the best air and vapour permeability on the market. It is independently certified by BM TRADA as well as having the strongest wind uplift resistance of its product type, making it able to be used in wind zones 1-4 at 345mm batten gauge, in accordance with BS 5534, without the need for additional counter battens or integral tape. This ensures Viking Air



can be used across a large area of the UK and throughout Ireland.

Used in both cold and warm roof construction without the need for additional ventilation, thereby saving labour costs by avoiding the need for additional accessory products, Viking Air can also be wrapped over the ridge rather than needing to cut it short on

each side, not only ensuring good ventilation and water tightness but also saving installation time. Its unique grid design also makes it easy to cut onsite.

For more information, please email [info@glidevaleprotect.com](mailto:info@glidevaleprotect.com).

0161 905 5700 [glidevaleprotect.com](http://glidevaleprotect.com)



## Crittall's West End success

Recently completed is the refurbishment of a substantial mixed-use building in the plush Fitzrovia/Marylebone area of central London. Crittall Windows made a significant contribution to both the aesthetic and sustainability of the seven-storey Devonshire House that commands the corner of Devonshire and Great Portland Streets.

The refurbishment, designed by architects Robson Warren, upgraded the building's green credentials by the installation of T60 thermally broken steel windows. The high-performance steel fenestration comfortably surpasses the requirements of current legislation while satisfying the designer's desire to maintain heritage characteristics.

The area around Great Portland Street was developed in the 18th century with fine Georgian houses and, although these were replaced in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the newer office blocks that took their place often sought to retain the period features.

The black powder-coated T60 windows in Devonshire House, provided in both inward and outward opening configurations, have been fitted with glazing bars to mimic the Georgian-style panes that were a prominent feature in the period facade of the building.

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## SHOW PREVIEW

# BACK TO THE FUTUREBUILD FOR NET ZERO

Futurebuild (ExCel London March 7 – 9) is doubling down on its sustainability goals with a promise to bring inspiring ideas on how the industry can reach net zero, with “innovative solutions and knowledge sharing”



**“DAY ONE FOCUSES ON ‘LOOKING FORWARD’ AND WHY THE INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DEVELOP THE FORESIGHT NECESSARY TO BREAK OUT OF ITS CURRENT MINDSET”**

**N**ow in its 17th year, Futurebuild (previously known as Ecobuild) has kept sustainability at its core and this year’s theme sees the event taking a stand for a better built environment. Futurebuild aims to build a better future and show its commitment to playing its part in our net zero outcomes. Having launched the ‘Take a Stand’ campaign this summer, Futurebuild is also urging companies and professionals throughout the construction supply chain to act now and take a similar step; all pledges will be displayed at the event in March.

The organisers say Futurebuild will bring together specifiers, decision-makers and “disruptive thinkers” in one place to “exchange know-how, discover game-changing new products and technologies, and forge new business connections as we accelerate our journey to net zero.”

More than 15,000 professionals from across the entire supply chain including architects, housebuilders, developers, consultants, contractors and manufacturers will come together to discover these solutions and “find new ways of delivering quality buildings more sustainably, while meeting and exceeding regulatory and compliance requirements.”

## LEADING THE WAY

Futurebuild is looking to “continue to be the industry platform for innovation, but go further,” with opportunities to showcase the most innovative technology, products and services. With over 400 brands, start-ups and industry leaders in attendance, this year’s show “will cover every aspect of the built environment,” say the event’s organisers.

At the core of achieving this is the FutureX Innovation section of Futurebuild (in partnership with BEIS) which will focus on start-ups and SMEs who will share their experience of taking “innovations” from an initial idea, through development to realisation. The spotlight will also include an Innovation Stage that will host the new Big Ideas Pitch giving companies another way to get involved and share, what could be “the next revolutionary idea.”

Visitors can find further inspiration through the return of the Innovation Trail, providing a showcase for 20 leading specifiers and decision-makers the opportunity to explore “revolutionary products, solutions and materials and meet the leading thinkers behind these innovations.” The event’s Big Innovation Pitch will again offer exhibiting companies the



chance of being crowned winner in 2023. Last year's competition received over 90 submissions, with finalists pitching live in the conference arena.

#### SHOW FEATURES & CONFERENCE

Futurebuild will be curated into eight show sections including Buildings, Digital, Energy, Interiors, Materials, Offsite, and Sustainable Infrastructure. The newly expanded Retrofit section, in partnership with The Retrofit Academy CIC and Osmosis, will be showcasing solutions, technologies and services that "can unite and strengthen the delivery of whole house retrofit at scale," say the organisers. The event will also feature three new 'spotlights' – these are 'Lighting' in partnership with KNX UK, 'District Energy' in partnership with UKDEA, and 'FutureX Innovation' in partnership with BEIS.

The conference, sponsored by SNRG and Hub Brussels, will explore the roles the whole of the UK needs to play to meet net zero targets, and will feature "world-class" speakers sharing their experiences and debating the most critical issues. Day one focuses on 'Looking Forward' and why the industry needs to develop the foresight necessary to break out of its current mindset. Day 2 will explore 'Changing,' and in particular, 'Behaviour Change.' Day

3 will move on to 'Taking Action', hearing from practitioners across the sector, and exploring approaches that can take society and the construction industry forward.

The seminar programme has been expanded for 2023, with content across eight stages, delivering "practical learning and guidance." The sessions in this year's programme are being curated by over 90 partners and associations including CIAT, The Good Homes Alliance, BRE, Passivhaus Trust, Built by Nature, IOM World, RIBA and UKDEA (District Energy Association).

"Sustainability has been at the heart of Futurebuild for 16 years and we are more committed than ever to ensure our built environment remains on track to achieving our net-zero goals" explains Martin Hurn, event director at Futurebuild.

Everyone in the supply chain has a solution that can make a positive change. Futurebuild says the 2023 edition will provide "the ultimate stage to showcase that commitment to the creation of a better building industry and achieving net zero." The organisers conclude: "By looking at the bigger picture, we can learn from each other's journey to sustainability and what we need to do to achieve net zero."

For more details and exhibitor enquiries, visit

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

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## Vent-Axia's dMEV shortlisted at awards



**Vent-Axia** is delighted to announce it has been shortlisted in the inaugural Energy Saving Awards 2022. The Vent-Axia Lo-Carbon NBR dMEV C has been named as a finalist in the Domestic Ventilation Product of Year Award category. The Lo-Carbon NBR dMEV C is a highly efficient dMEV unit designed for kitchen, utility and bathroom applications. It achieves market-leading efficiency

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OMNIE has published a Developers' Guide aimed at helping housebuilders and property companies differentiate their projects in a crowded market place: ensuring their buyers enjoy the most comfortable and healthy indoor environments. The manufacturer has over 30 years of accumulated experience in the marketplace, evolving an integrated 'Whole house system' which has facilitated the creation of its 'One Environment' concept based around five key technologies. These five are ventilation & heat recovery, underfloor heating, hot & cold water distribution, heat pumps and – fundamental to all these technologies working effectively and efficiently – sophisticated yet user-friendly controls. OMNIE's offering means developers can be sure they can access the appropriate solutions to help them achieve the perfect levels of comfort: from the early design stage. Its technical experts will provide a free design service along with the support of a dedicated project manager. Expert guidance throughout the contract stages will avoid costly clashes or delays, before user manuals are provided to ensure the end-user understands how to operate the whole system. With all OMNIE's products designed and manufactured in the UK, supply chain issues can be avoided – plus, of course, by buying British, the developer can be assured they won't be subjected to the vagaries of fluctuating international currencies.

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# FIRST FOOTING

The Tile Association says that consumer interest in floor tiles as a stylish as well as hygienic, durable and even sustainable finish for domestic properties has never been stronger, and explains some of the options

**T**he market is driven by consumer fashion and product innovation. Many consumers wish to replicate the tiled look that they have seen overseas or when leafing through home décor magazines. They also recognise the many benefits of tiling in the home – providing a long lasting finish, which is hygienic, durable and easy to maintain.

## TRENDING

Currently the concrete or industrial look is very much in vogue, providing a great base for colour contrast and coordination. The natural wood look is also a popular one. The latest innovations in tile development mean that the aesthetic of natural wood can be combined with the hygiene and ease of maintenance, and durability offered by tiles. It all means more choice and inspiration is available to the consumer and the housebuilder than ever before.

There is also a trend towards larger formats, including panels of up to 1600 mm x 3200 mm. These sizes reduce grout lines and maximise the impact of the tile design, although their handling and installation requires particular care and techniques.

There has also been an increase in popularity of 20 mm porcelain tiles used on patios and terraces as an alternative to timber decking or concrete pavers. This allows for the continuation of a floor tiling aesthetic from inside a house to the outside and fits with a current consumer trend to expand living space into external areas. Special adhesive kits are now available for external porcelain floor tiles, which are designed for use by general builders and landscapers, who might not be tiling specialists.

## WARM UNDERFOOT

Underfloor heating is another topic which is frequently raised in connection with the installation of floor tiles, as this market is still expanding rapidly, since UFH provides a cost-effective, comfortable and unobtrusive heating solution – often linked to renewable energy sources. There are however a number of considerations to bear in mind, in order to ensure a



successful installation. Adherence to British Standards, use of appropriate tiles and adhesives and the inclusion of movement gaps and expansion joints are all important factors.

Whether an electric or wet system is being installed, UFH can provide a warm welcoming environment in the home, add value to a property and lead to significant reductions in energy consumption, when compared to traditional space heating systems.

While the design opportunities in tiling are greater than ever, it is important that the technical issues associated with installing a tiled surface are fully understood and that all work is carried out to British Standards. The current British Standard, BS5835-1: 2018 Wall & Floor Tiling, includes a clause relating to workmanship (Clause 7.1.3). For the first time, the standard now recognises

that the installation of ceramic or natural stone tiling should be carried out with “efficient supervision and the employment of properly trained operatives, skilled to an appropriate level of competence, certified by a recognised authoritative body.”

We are involved in the development of both UK and international Standards, through our participation in the BSI for British Standards and also ISO for international Standards. A member of TTA's Technical Committee serves as Chairman of the British Standards Committee B/539 for ‘Ceramic Tiles and Other Rigid Tiling.’

## SUSTAINABILITY

An important topic is the sustainability of tiles. Due to their durability and longevity, as well as their inert composition, ceramic and porcelain tiles are very much a





sustainable choice, compared to other options for flooring. However, as in all industries, tiling companies have a big job ahead of them to enable the sector to play its part in meeting the Government's 2050 net zero carbon target.

Another technical service offered is slip resistance testing of tiles. This is a very important area with obvious health

and safety implications where tiles are used in bathrooms and wetrooms. The TTA service, which is provided for manufacturers and distributors, uses the pendulum test method, as favoured by the HSE.

For anyone who has concerns about tiling work, we offer a technical inspection service. Under the terms of

## THE LATEST INNOVATIONS IN TILE DEVELOPMENT MEAN THAT THE AESTHETIC OF NATURAL WOOD CAN BE COMBINED WITH THE HYGIENE, EASE OF MAINTENANCE AND DURABILITY OFFERED BY TILES

the service, an experienced technical inspector can visit a site to inspect the workmanship of any tiling installation. The inspector will assess the workmanship against relevant British and European Standards and provide a detailed written report of the inspection with their findings and a conclusion. This report can be used in court as evidence, should any dispute go to that level.

Article provided by The Tile Association (TTA)

## The Root of Easy Bathroom Design from Vitra

**V**itroA's Root collection offers a wide range of product sizes and styles in mix-and-match colour and wood unit combinations with complementing handle styles, Root brassware and the choice of three washbasins to suit.

Root brassware and furniture combine to create one of the market's most flexible and customisable bathroom collections. The range comprises three key furniture designs: flat, groove and classic. Flat – a simple style for those with a minimalist taste; Groove – a contemporary option with a panelled style; and



Classic – a modern take on shaker design. The furniture joins the recently launched brassware collections Root Round and Root Square, available in five colours (chrome, brushed nickel, copper, matt black and gold) across the array of basin, bath, and shower mixers.

The Root furniture units are available in seventeen assorted colours with three types of finish – gloss, matt, or wood. Colours include white, anthracite, Sahara beige, pearl grey, dark blue, fjord green, etc. Handle options include matt black, chrome and matt white, with two distinct styles to suit the different furniture designs. The wood options include walnut and natural oak finishes.

Straight-forward design, soft lines and smooth surfaces keep cabinet surfaces dirt-free and easy to clean. To help designers, Vitra has developed the Root Configurator. This online tool allows users to experiment with various styles, colour finishes and sizes to find the perfect bathroom design. In addition to the washbasin units, the tool includes the taps and additional storage units available to enable users to design their whole bathroom space. The Root Configurator can be accessed here [Vitra Root Configurator](https://rootconfigurator.vitra.co.uk/uk).

01235 750990  
[rootconfigurator.vitra.co.uk/uk](https://rootconfigurator.vitra.co.uk/uk)



# AN ELECTRIFIED FUTURE

David Abernethie from Sevadis discusses the electric vehicle charging outlook for the housebuilder and developer sector and delves into how a collaborative approach is best practice in an ever-evolving industry

As the nation steers towards a net zero future, the UK's driver population is starting to make the all-important switch to driving an electric vehicle. It was only recently that the EV industry reached its 1 million electric vehicles on the road milestone; though this is an impressive figure, there is still a long way to go. While vehicle driving ranges, models and technologies are evolving to suit the average driver, people remain reluctant to make the transition. 'Range anxiety' is a concept of the past as vehicle manufacturers have listened, and delivered practical EV models to accommodate the average person's commute, however, 'EV chargepoint anxiety' is a real phenomenon.

In fact, a study conducted by Ofgem presented that over 38% of participants in the study were unlikely to purchase an electric vehicle in the next five years, with 36% of those participants stating the reason for this is the lack of EV charging infrastructure near their homes.

## MANDATORY REGULATIONS & LEGISLATION

Earlier this year, in order to ramp up the roll-out of EV charging points to support the adoption of electric vehicles, the Government announced the mandatory requirement for EV charging point installations across new housing and commercial developments.

In short, any new home with associated parking must be fitted with an EV charging point, this also applies to residential buildings undergoing major renovations which possess more than ten parking spaces (must have at least one EV charging point per dwelling with associated parking, alongside cable routes in all spaces without EV charging points). For non-residential buildings with more than 10 parking spaces, a similar principle applies, in which a minimum of one EV charging point and cable routes for 20% of the total number of spaces must be installed.

Non-residential buildings undergoing major redevelopments which have more than 10 parking spaces must be installed



with a minimum of one EV charging point, alongside five cable routes of 20% of the total number of spaces. However, the introduction of Part S Regulations does mean that developers are not currently urged to install active EV charging points into covered car parks; they only have to fit cable routes.

The implementation of the new regulations is of no surprise to the industries involved, despite the reluctance from key stakeholders. Ultimately, in order to reach net zero, the roll-out of a greater number of EV charging points is required to provide prospective EV drivers with the confidence in the ability to recharge their vehicles. From a domestic perspective, the introduction of the mandatory requirement was inevitable; approximately 80% of EV charging takes place at home, during off-peak hours, resulting in less pressure on the grid – strategically and economically, the mandatory EV charging requirements for the home simply just 'makes sense.'

## A CONSULTATIVE APPROACH (WITH EDUCATIONAL BACKING)

For the roll-out of a national EV charging infrastructure to truly work,

a collaborative approach is required in which experts within various fields work together to deliver the brief. Developers are already coordinating several elements within a development; adding electric vehicle charging points into the mix without a doubt causes an additional task – which is an all-encompassing task, requiring product and technical know-how, as well as best installation practices. To make matters simpler, an approach that provides training, professional development and a consultative approach is one that will prove efficient and which will garner the best results.

Product, technical, and installation training all play a pivotal role in ensuring that developments are equipped with fit-for-purpose and future-proofed EV charging solutions. Without educational backing, there exists room for error which can in turn present detrimental implications for residents; whether that be a homeowner, or an employee at a workplace. While we are living in an era of modern technologies and post-pandemic, virtual training sessions can be favoured by many for their convenience, however, a hands-on





## BRINGING RESPECTIVE SPECIALISTS TOGETHER PROVIDES THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A ROBUST EV CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

approach to training provides a true representation of how an EV charging point should be installed.

### SOLUTIONS FOR DEVELOPERS

Whether it's a domestic or commercial development, the current EV charging market offers a diverse range of solutions to suit a multitude of user cases. From single phase to three phase; EV chargers with dynamic load balancing capabilities;

AC fast charging to DC rapid charging; socketed and tethered; the EV charging market has matured to offer a wide range of solutions to meet the growing demand for straightforward and complex cases.

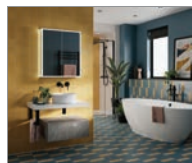
For most cases, especially the home and other private locations, smart EV charging solutions are paramount, not only because legislation states that smart EV charging is a must for private installations moving forward, but smart EV charging solutions

provide significant opportunities for the future, for example; the ability to generate additional revenue; relieving the pressure off the grid; smart reporting for informed decision making and more.

While there are numerous solutions available in the evolving market, in order to solidify the ideal solution per user case, developers will benefit greatly from collaborating with EV charging point and software providers. With the future accelerating towards electrification, working together and bringing respective specialists together provides the foundations for a robust EV charging infrastructure across new domestic and commercial developments.

David Abernethie is senior project manager at EV charging provider Sevadis

## New 'Sound bathroom cabinet' from HiB



HiB has unveiled the new 'Sound cabinet', which brings the latest music technology to the bathroom. Using integrated speakers and Bluetooth connectivity, users can enjoy their best-loved music, podcasts and audiobooks with ease. Boasting fantastic sound quality and simple operation, the 'Sound cabinet' enhances bathroom entertainment

effortlessly. Charging devices is also easy, thanks to integrated USB and 2 pin charging sockets, located inside Sound's soft-close mirrored doors, which offer stunning LED illumination and include heated pads to reduce condensation on the mirrored surface. To maximise storage, Sound features adjustable glass shelving, to accommodate most everyday essentials.

020 8441 0352 [www.hib.co.uk/product/hib-sound-cabinet](http://www.hib.co.uk/product/hib-sound-cabinet)

## Safe and sustainable working platform



CaberShieldPlus, from West Fraser (Trading as Norbord Europe Ltd), is a durable, P5 flooring which features a permanent, waterproof coating on both sides. Almost exclusively preferred now to P4 boards – for both new-build and refurbishment applications, the P5 particleboard panels are able to withstand the unpredictable British climate without deterioration. In fact, if installed using CaberFix D4 adhesive, the boards have BBA

approval for 60 days exposure to the weather while, for safety, the upper face is non-slip and colour-coded to distinguish this.

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



## Luxury house developer relies on Multiboard to build its bathrooms

The latest development by one of the country's leading luxury housebuilders is making full use of Marmox Multiboard's benefits in converting a series of former agricultural buildings into half a dozen high specification homes. Maybanks Manor, Cox Green, close to Horsham in Surrey, is being built by Surrey based Rockwood Homes; a past winner of both Silver and Bronze awards in the annual Daily Telegraph 'What House' competition. With one property already being marketed and another close to completion, the site is expected to be finished by the end of this year, with the Multiboards featuring in the bathrooms and en-suites throughout. In total, 400 of the 12.5 mm thick 1250 x 600 mm Multiboards are being supplied by Marmox stockist, Travis Perkins; along with the special fixing plugs, waterproof tape and Marmox 360 adhesive. Chris Bell, the Commercial Manager for Rockwood Homes, commented: "Basically, Rockwood chooses to employ Multiboard to line all the wetrooms because the product offers the stable surface which can take the weight of the high-quality marble tiles, which contribute to the luxury, contemporary look of our developments and we use the special Marmox plugs whether we are fixing into blockwork or studwork. Work is progressing well and we expect to be completed in approximately 14 weeks."

01634 835290 [www.marmox.co.uk](http://www.marmox.co.uk)



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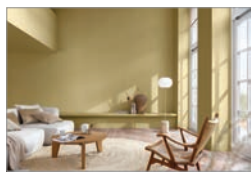
## F. Ball chosen for Dutch residential build



Products from **F. Ball and Co. Ltd's** System LVT range have been used to install floorcoverings as part of the stylish Overkamp Park residential development in Dordrecht, the Netherlands. F. Ball's Stopgap 300 HD heavy-duty levelling compound was used to create a perfectly smooth base for floorcoverings. The product's high compressive strength will ensure a long-lasting, professional flooring finish even when subjected to heavy daily usage. Once the levelling compound had cured, a combination of Luxury Vinyl Tiles (LVTs) and linoleum sheet floorcoverings were installed. F. Ball's Styccobond F58 PLUS fast-drying, fibre-reinforced, pressure sensitive adhesive was used to install wood-effect LVTs in both straight planks and herringbone formations.

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

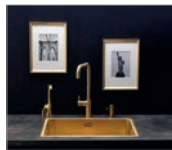
## Nature gives life to Dulux's Colour of the Year



Dulux is celebrating two decades of Colour of the Year and has just launched its colour for 2023: Wild Wonder™ – and four complementary, versatile colour palettes that can be used to create stunning spaces across all sectors. Wild Wonder™ – a soft gold with hints of green inspired by fresh seed pods and harvest grain – is Dulux's Colour of the Year 2023. Its upbeat glow connects us with nature, creating a sense of energy and positivity. The launch of Wild Wonder™ is supported by the Dulux Trade Colour of the Year 2023 Specifier brochure, designed to inspire commercial design professionals working in all sectors, from hospitality to healthcare.

0333 222 7070 [www.duluxtrade.co.uk/COTY23](http://www.duluxtrade.co.uk/COTY23)

## Reginox extends successful New York range



**Reginox UK** has extended its stainless-steel sink range – the New York. The New York is crafted from premium quality stainless steel with a matt inox finish. It's available in a wide range of different bowl sizes, all of which include an integral strainer and comfort waste as standard. Featuring an easy to clean design with tight corners with 10 mm radius, the New York is easier and quicker than standard sinks to fit and is visually minimalist in style. Now available in Copper, Gold and Gunmetal, the New York can be fitted in three different ways – undermounted, flush with the work top or simply inset (surface mounted) installation – making it an incredibly versatile product and suitable for any modern kitchen.

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

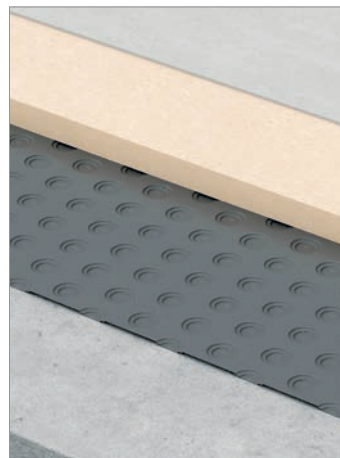
## Fenix®; the high-tech material from Keller



**Keller** has added the hi-tech material, Fenix®, to the range for 2022. Available initially in black and white, Fenix® is used for door fronts and panels, thanks to the special technology built into this material, the super-

matt finish is soft to the touch, is anti-fingerprint proof and micro-scratches on the surface can be repaired by a simple thermal method. Perfect Sense (pictured) is a bold design which highlights black and white contrasts and features Fenix®. Keller is well known for offering the widest range of colours (1950 NCS) and finishes in the kitchen furniture market. The Dutch kitchen manufacturer is proud to have been a carbon neutral kitchen manufacturer since 2017 and is now on the journey to becoming carbon negative.

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



## Platon Comfort combats damp and sound for wooden flooring

The Platon Comfort membrane, from **Triton Systems**, offers a range of benefits in new-build or retrofit situations when installing timber or laminate flooring over concrete as well as screeded surfaces, giving lasting protection. Recently re-launched by the Kent based company to emphasise the cushioning effect of the dynamic studs on the underside of the ultra-slim cavity membrane, Platon Comfort is simply loose laid direct onto the substrate to prevent moisture transmission when the relative humidity remains as high as 95%. In fact it can be installed as soon as fresh concrete is dry enough to walk on and avoids the need to include a foam undelay. As well as delivering three times the water vapour resistance of conventional film products, Platon Comfort achieves an impact sound reduction of 17-19 dB as the specially profiled studs absorb load. The underlayer is also compatible with electric as well as conventional underfloor heating systems. Significantly, the studs create an air gap beneath the 0.5 mm continuous polypropylene membrane which facilitates the natural drying process for concrete, while weighing just 450 g/m<sup>2</sup> and increasing the total build height by only 2.5 mm. Supplied in rolls of 1.0 x 20 metres, Platon Comfort is easy to lay, needing just scissors or a knife to cut, along with a roll of Triton's Platon Comfort Tape to complete the joints before installing insulation, timber flooring or a low-voltage UFH system.

01322 318830 [www.tritonsystems.co.uk](http://www.tritonsystems.co.uk)



## F.H. Brundle's new, high quality, sleek modular fencing system from Kingspan

This innovative modular fencing solution from Kingspan offers a high-quality, long-lasting, stylish fence. The system is built using the recognised Kingspan sandwich panels. Lightweight and easy to handle, the panel only requires posts every 2.5 m, meaning far less groundwork is required than alternative composite solutions. These sturdy double-sided panels, available in Anthracite Deep Matt RAL 7016, are smooth on one side and ribbed on the other. The panels come in 488 mm or 610 mm heights and are easy to cut, making assembling your fence a very quick process.

They are highly weather resistant, with a robust and durable coating that allows them to be used up to 1 km from the coast, they have also been wind pressure tested to 120 km/h, UV tested and come with a 10-year anti-corrosion warranty. Gravel boards provide a level base for the fence panels to rest on and aluminium concrete-in or bolt-down posts have been specially designed to make installation of the system even easier. Please contact **F.H. Brundle** to find out more.

01708 398048 [www.fhbrundle.co.uk](http://www.fhbrundle.co.uk)

# Vicaima IDS changing trends and possibilities

As the construction industry gets ready to welcome a new year with a fresh set of challenges and opportunities, 2023 heralds the dawn of changing trends and possibilities in the world of interior timber doors and door sets. Ever one to embrace innovation and seen as a true manufacturing trailblazer, Vicaima bring design, performance and quality solutions to the interiors arena. With this in mind, the launch their latest incarnation of the perennially popular Interior Door Selector (IDS) has been much anticipated.

In recognition of changing specifier preferences, Vicaima is largely moving away from conventional paper-based brochures, towards digital catalogues. This is not only environmentally friendly, but also enables a more dynamic user experience. New products and useful information can be updated instantly and at the same time enabling links to other resources such as technical data, so that specifiers can be fully equipped to make an informed decision about their next project.

Bigger than ever! This latest brochure contains over 150 pages to inspire professionals who are looking to transform modern living space. From economy options which are ideal for affordable homes in the current cost of living crises, to ground-breaking quality designs that create an instant wow factor and set the standard for twenty twenties living!

Although best known for fresh ideas in veneer, foil, laminates and paint lacquered finishes, Vicaima are also opening a window to the future with their new Infinity Range, where digital and precision imagery can re-imagine stone, metal and other surface features, in a way that hitherto was the stuff of dreams!

Of course, innovative doors from Vicaima are not confined to aesthetics alone. With fire safety, security, acoustics, and thermal efficiency very much in the minds of specifiers and regulators. Vicaima Door kit and set solutions build on a framework of rigorous testing and superior constructional cores. Among recent additions to what is already a comprehensive performance range, comes VCP 60 from Vicaima. This in-house developed core, which

Vicaima New Dekordor 3D Pale Oak



is third-party accredited under the BM TRADA Q-Mark scheme; provides a one-hour FD60S rated door, but with a considerable cost saving over conventional products, thereby improving safety while keeping budgets on track.

## WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR IN THE LATEST VICAIMA IDS

There are a great many new products to be found in this latest issue, among which look out for:

- **Naturdor Vision** – A new range where real wood veneers are taken to new heights, with tones such as Rich Mocha and Fresh Bamboo
- **New Economy Veneer Range** – Cost effective options such as Red Oak and Walnut Crown EV give that luxury look for less
- **Dekordor 3D** - Two new colour tones

are added to this highly tactile and durable finish range, with Cloud White and Pale Oak

- **Visual Sensations** - A touch of Scotland comes to this popular foil collection, with the introduction of Highland.
- **Vicaima Wardrobes** – Flexible configurations to match Vicaima's many door finish options.
- **Infinity** – Endless Possibilities to be explored. Pushing the boundaries of interior design

To download a copy of the Vicaima Interior Door Selector or for further inspiration, visit the Vicaima website.

[www.vicaima.com/files/files/catalog/vicaima-interior-door-selector-2022-2023.pdf](http://www.vicaima.com/files/files/catalog/vicaima-interior-door-selector-2022-2023.pdf)  
[www.vicaima.com](http://www.vicaima.com)

Interior Door Selector (IDS)



Dekordor SD Highland





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Our Fire Doors are third party dual certified for both fire and security rating.



We manufacture everything in-house so we can offer competitive prices and fast lead times.



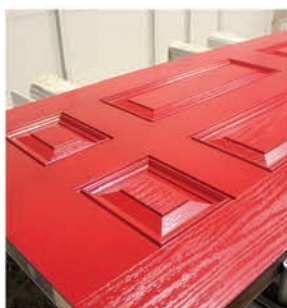
Our Fire Doors come in several glazed designs as well as different solid designs.



Available with glazed top lights and glazed side panels.



A variety of colour finishes are available.



## Leading the way for higher Fire Door safety standards...

Astraseal is the first UK Manufacturer to be awarded third party certification under the new BM Trada Scheme STD 170. We have also been awarded certification for Installation (STD052) and Maintenance (STD058). Our Fire Doors have been fire tested from both inside and outside to BSEN1634-1.

Now available with glazed side panels... Fully third party certified and bi-directionally tested to BS EN1634-1.

Scan here to discover more about Fire Doors from Astraseal...



# WHY FIRE DOORS NEED PROTECTION

Mike Sutcliffe from Vanquish Hardware protection discusses why fire rated hardware needs protection; what that protection looks like, and what housebuilders and developers need to look out for

**F**ire doors and fire rated hardware such as locks, latches, hinges, door closing devices, flush bolts, handles, cylinders, eye viewers and letter plates must be manufactured and tested to stringent standards to ensure they operate as intended in the event of a fire.

Essential hardware plays a vital role in the performance of the fire door, for example, fire doors must be held closed by a spring or electrically powered door closer to prevent the spread of flames and heat to adjacent rooms.

Only fully certified doors with a CE Mark, supported with a Field of Application and third-party certification can be classified as fire doors.

Certificated hardware provides proof that the products resist fire during a full-scale fire test, and it is vital that all essential hardware fitted to the fire door is CE/UKCA marked and has been tested to a relevant British or European standard such as BS 476:22 or EN 1634-1, otherwise it will invalidate the fire door certification.

When hardware is rebated into a fire door assembly, however, the integrity and performance of the system is compromised.

Metal locks, latches and hinges function as heat conductors and transfer heat through the timber fire door, which reduces the time it takes for the doorset to reach integrity failure. This should not be the case with a carefully engineered fire safety device that is critical to the fire safety of a building.

## PERFECT PROTECTION

All hardware installed on fire doors must be fitted without compromising the integrity of the assembly and this is critical where hardware is rebated into the doorset.

Adding intumescent protection to



rebated hardware greatly reduces the rate at which heat transfers through the fire door.

Intumescent protection provides additional insulation around metallic components and helps to resist the transfer of heat from one side of the door to the other. 'Intumescent' refers to a material that reacts to high temperatures experienced during a fire and expands to many times its original volume, filling any voids created when rebating for the hardware with an insulating foam.

## WHAT KINDS OF INTUMESCENT MATERIAL ARE THERE?

Monoammonium Phosphate is suitable for a wide variety of hardware and expands up to ninety-five times its original volume at temperatures above 350°C with no pressure.

Silicate-based Intumescent has

similar expansion and is suitable for up to 120-minute applications. Based on alkali silicates – which begin to swell at temperatures above 100°C – it emits water vapour as it expands which creates a cooling effect and is used in fire door perimeter seals, glazing and penetration sealing of pipes and ventilation elements.

Graphite-based Intumescent features layers of graphite with ionic compounds trapped in between which, upon heating, quickly vaporise forcing the graphite apart. It has an activation temperature of 180°C and expands up to thirty times its original volume to fill any voids from rebating.

For example, highly-flexible and insulating graphite-based intumescent can be extruded and cut into almost any shape and has a working life of more than 100 years. Suitable for up to 120-minute timber fire door applications,

**ONLY FULLY CERTIFIED DOORS WITH A CE MARK, SUPPORTED WITH A FIELD OF APPLICATION AND THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION CAN BE CLASSIFIED AS FIRE DOORS**





such intumescent products can be used to protect a wide variety of hardware; it is not affected by atmospheric moisture and has a strong resultant char that stays in place after activation.

#### WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Fitting too much intumescence can mean an excessive amount of timber is removed, affecting the door integrity. This means that if a piece of fire rated hardware is not fitted with the specified intumescent, it is not compliant and

therefore invalidates its certification.

Currently, there is no market requirement for intumescent hardware protection products to be assessed by an independent third party, which is something that needs to change.

Hardware protection products are not CE or UKCA marked, and it is possible, unless explicitly stated by the hardware manufacturer, for intumescent materials to be swapped out to other brands if they are the same thickness and material type.

For example, 'graphite intumescent' is often mentioned in test reports and fire resistance certificates, but it must not be assumed that each brand of graphite-based intumescent is interchangeable. This is because graphite-based intumescent can contain varying quantities and grades of intercalated graphite and expansion ratios and activation temperatures vary between compounds.

It is also unlikely that manufacturers will disclose how much graphite is in their products which makes comparing materials very difficult without a side-by-side test. It is imperative that installers check any test evidence or certification to understand what type and quantity of intumescent is necessary to be compliant.

It is also recommended to only use intumescent that has been independently



assessed by a third party which ensures the products have been tested to the relevant standards, and the material will behave consistently and as stated by the manufacturer every time.

Third party certified products also ensure traceability throughout production, so if something goes wrong or there is a problem, it can be traced back to the original source.

Mike Sutcliffe is business development manager at Vanquish Hardware protection

## SALTO launches Homelok, an all-in-one smart access solution

**S**ALTO Systems, a global leader in smart electronic access control solutions in the hospitality and commercial industries, is launching a groundbreaking new platform aimed at the residential market.

SALTO Homelok is set to revolutionize residential living with its all-in-one solution that integrates smart access control technology, hardware, cloud software, digital keys, a smart living ecosystem, and global service support.

SALTO Homelok will provide smart access control solutions across the residential market, from multi-family to single-family housing, vacation rentals, and home care/assisted living establishments. SALTO Systems' electronic locking solution is modern and easy to install and maintain, without the cost and complexity of traditional access control solutions.

SALTO Systems brings a wealth of smart building expertise, groundbreaking innovation, a unique combination of flexibility and control, and a market-leading portfolio to its residential solution, with a specific focus on the following five value propositions:

#### • OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Homelok uses digital access technology, rather than mechanical keys, and can be accessed from anywhere – allowing property management activities to be streamlined and carried out more efficiently.

#### • AN ELEVATED EXPERIENCE

Homelok delivers the smart living experience by providing a convenient and digital experience for residents, enabling seamless keyless access and management capabilities for day-to-day living.

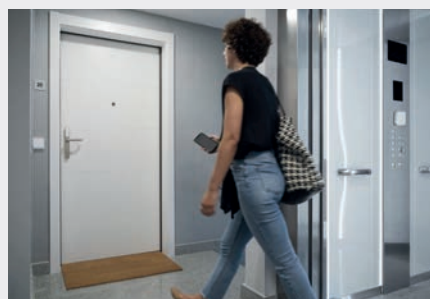
#### • FUTURE-PROOF SVN ACCESS-DRIVEN TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLOUD

Homelok utilizes cutting-edge, innovative, and reliable SALTO SVN data-on-card technology from a high-value, versatile, and globally-compatible product range that will continue to evolve into the future to support any developing access control requirements.

#### • ENABLING THE SMART LIVING ECOSYSTEM

Homelok delivers a core smart access solution within the Smart Building Ecosystem, by working with world-class Technology Partners and Property Management Systems (PMS) providers. It is an open platform that can be fully integrated to meet the growing demands for connected home living as well as enable greater control and visibility across property management systems.

Homelok gives the reassurance of robust 24/7 security and unmatched data protection and privacy using a unique combination of cloud-based and smart stand-alone access



technology to create a market-defining level of safeguarding.

SALTO has developed advanced and aesthetically-designed residential-specific electronic access control solutions that set a new standard in the industry – from building and perimeter access, common area organization, to unit door management – with one easy-to-use system for residential properties of all types and sizes.

From the numerous smart access electronic locking solutions (hardware products) to user-centered cloudbased software to an industry-leading digital keyless experience, SALTO provides the ultimate all-in-one smart access experience for residents and property managers.

Through SALTO's Homelok platform, users are now able to add their resident keys to Apple Wallet, allowing residents to unlock SALTO smart locks with a simple tap of an iPhone or Apple Watch.

01926 811979 [saltosystems.com/en](https://saltosystems.com/en)

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Futurebuild is taking a stand for a better built environment and is urging companies and professionals throughout the construction supply chain to make a similar commitment by 'taking a stand' on an issue they passionately believe will help propel the industry towards a more sustainable future. Join us in taking a stand.

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