



Be First and Holybrook turn ex-Unite HQ into 149 homes with heat pumps in Dagenham



Sustainable council apartments and homes handed over by Cambridge Investment Partnerships



Defra concludes review recommending SuDS to be legally required on all new schemes in 2024

HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

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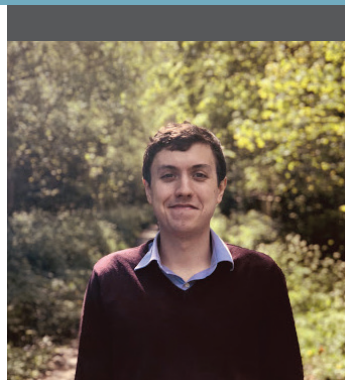
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Jack Wooler, deputy editor

FROM THE EDITOR

Sadly, after nearly a decade on the magazine, I am saying goodbye to *Housebuilder & Developer*.

Working on my final issue, and in the process looking back at my time with the magazine and the sector it chronicles, I have been considering what has changed – for better or for worse.

While there have been low moments – terrible tragedies, turbulent UK politics, a global pandemic – the sector has, sometimes in direct response to these events, undergone real change for good.

Through the blur of the revolving door of 12 housing Ministers that have passed by during my time here, the sector has seen the Building Safety Act overhaul the regulatory system, it has taken tangible steps towards net zero in the Future Homes Standard, and experienced a fundamental growth in the appreciation of the role this industry plays in the health, safety and future of our nation and its environment.

In this issue of *Housebuilder & Developer* alone, we discuss how the Department for the Environment (Defra) has mandated the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in all new developments, and how green energy is growing exponentially – in our article, Russell Dean of Mitsubishi Electric explains how heat pumps are at the centre of this. Also we look at how housebuilders are taking charge of their carbon footprint – with Luke Simmons of Cora Homes discussing his firm's innovative approach – and how the shortage of suitable housing for our ageing population is being tackled – as *Housebuilder & Developer's* Roseanne Field explains in this issue's case study.

Truly, there is a huge amount of momentum to celebrate in the sector.

This is not to say the job is done, however. There is much more room for improvement for the industry yet, with wrongs to right, skills to hone, and targets to be pursued. While the UK ages, and the needs of residents only grows, too often lives continue to be hampered and even endangered by their homes' quality and upkeep. Warm, efficient, safe, effective housing should not be luxuries only given to those who can afford it; homes of all typologies should provide protection, not threat.

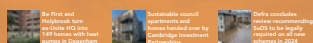
Yet, in spite of this doom and gloom, and crisis after crisis, the sector has pushed on, with the momentum always upwards.

If its reaction to all the challenges it has faced in the last decade are an indication of things to come, I have confidence that – despite the lows we will continue to see along the way – the construction industry will march onwards to a brighter, more considerate future.

Wishing you all the best,

Jack Wooler

ON THE COVER



HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

McCarthy Stone discusses a new high-profile retirement home scheme in the West Midlands which shows why offering residents the extras is now a key benefit

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SuDS to be required by law from 2024 on all new developments

Defra concludes a multi-agency review on sustainable urban drainage (SuDS) in UK residential schemes, recommending that SuDS be made a legal requirement on new developments.



The 'review for implementation of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010' will compel housebuilders to introduce SuDS schemes on their builds, including nature-based approaches. In 2015 the Government decided to use the National Planning Policy Framework to provide qualified SuDS guidance which only required it to be used on schemes over 10 units.

However it has now U-turned away from this approach in favour of a legal mechanism. Defra said: "The recommendation to make sustainable drainage systems mandatory to new developments will reduce the risk of surface water flooding, pollution and help alleviate pressure on drainage and sewerage systems."

In August 2020, a Government review looked at the arrangements for determining responsibility for surface water and drainage assets. In the introduction to its report, Defra added: "The Jenkins review suggested the planning-led approach alone is not working, recommending that non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems should be made statutory as ambiguity makes the role of the planning authority very difficult." The review also found that "in general there were no specific checking regimes in place to ensure that SuDS had been constructed as agreed, leaving concerns about unsatisfactory standards of design and construction."

Defra suggested that the priority would be to pursue nature-based approaches: "The new approach to drainage will ensure sustainable drainage systems

are designed to reduce the impact of rainfall on new developments by using features such as soakaways, grassed areas, permeable surfaces and wetlands."

"Regulations and processes for the creation of sustainable drainage systems on new developments will now be devised," said Defra, through the implementation of Schedule 3; this is expected during 2024. The review recommends that the legislation will be implemented "as written," with approving bodies being either the unitary authority in each case, or if not present, the county council.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said: "Schedule 3 provides a framework for the approval and adoption of drainage systems, a sustainable drainage system approving body within unitary and county councils, and national standards on the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems for the lifetime of the development." She added that it makes the right to connect surface water runoff to public sewers "conditional upon the drainage system being approved before any construction work can start," placing a further onus on housebuilders and developers.

SuDS expert and landscape architect Sue Illman of Illman Young welcomed the news: "The announcement by Defra sets the starting point for the full implementation of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. The sustainable and more effective management of surface water is now essential, as the ongoing problem of flooding affects ever more communities."

Illman continued: "Applying this sustainable approach to (virtually) all new development is welcomed and long overdue; and can enable both greater biodiversity and improved water quality as part of an attractively designed landscape. England will also be able to learn from the experience of Wales, who have already implemented the Act."

The Government will now consider how Schedule 3 will be implemented, subject to "final decisions on scope, threshold and process," while also "being mindful of the cumulative impact of new regulatory burdens on the development sector." This will include a public consultation later this year, which will collect views on the impact assessment, national standards and statutory instruments.

Secretary of State for Environment Thérèse Coffey, endorsed natural SuDS approaches to managing the challenges. "The increasing demand for housing water and sewerage must be met in a sustainable way and support our natural environment. I think we need to go further and fully embrace nature-based solutions."

CABE members say knowledge on Regs has deteriorated

According to a recent survey of CABE (Chartered Association of Building Engineers) members, 42% believed that "the construction industry's understanding of how to comply with the Building Regulations has deteriorated." Also, over 82% believed that "resourcing for Building Control functions has declined."

From October 2023, professionals who are working in Building Control will need to prove their competence before applying for registration with the newly introduced Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

The BSR sits within the HSE, which in November 2022 released the Building Control Inspector Competency Framework consultation. CABE (17% of whose members work in Building Control), said that this will affect "all Building Control professionals working in Local Authorities, Approved Inspectors and Building Control Approvers."

CABE, as part of its response to the consultation, recently surveyed its members, also canvassing them on their "views of the whole of the Building Control sector." 66% of respondents intended to register as a Building Inspector. The results of the survey have been shared with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the BSR at HSE.

The survey report can be viewed here:



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Gove issues ultimatum on cladding repair



Housing Secretary Michael Gove has given a six-week ultimatum to developers to sign a contract to remedy residential towers with 'unsafe' cladding, or be "banned from working in the sector."

Developers have received legally binding contracts from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) that will commit them to pay to repair buildings – which they are required to sign in six weeks.

Gove has warned that companies who fail to sign and comply with the terms of the contract will face "significant consequences." Legislation will be brought forward in the spring giving the Secretary of State "powers to prevent developers from operating freely in the housing market if they fail to sign and comply with the remediation contract." Developers will be required to "make safe" £2bn worth of buildings that they developed or refurbished over the past 30 years.

The contract also requires developers to "reimburse taxpayers where public money has been used to fix unsafe buildings."

Following Gove's earlier demands for developers to be held to account, "public pledges" were made by 49 leading developers that they would "take responsibility to fix their buildings," and these "will now be turned into legally binding commitments," said DLUHC.

Gove commented: "Too many developers, along with product manufacturers and freeholders, have profited from these unsafe buildings, and have a moral duty to do the right thing and pay for their repair. There will be nowhere to hide for those who fail to step up to their responsibilities – I will not hesitate to act, and they will face significant consequences."

Dean Finch, group chief executive at Persimmon, the first developer to sign up to the contract, said: "The terms of the

contract are entirely consistent with our existing commitment to protect leaseholders in multi-storey buildings we constructed from the costs of remediating cladding and life-critical fire-related safety issues. We are pleased that we were able to work constructively with the Government to secure the agreement."

DLUHC said that once the contract is signed by developers, "leaseholders will benefit from a common framework of rights and responsibilities that will get their buildings fixed without them having to pay, and will require developers to inform residents in affected buildings how they will be meeting these commitments."

Gove said that while a "significant process" had been made to make safe "the most dangerous buildings" over 18 metres, "far too many" unsafe buildings still need remedial work.

The move follows Gove's admission to the *Sunday Times* that the Building Regulations were "faulty and ambiguous" in the run-up to the Grenfell Tower fire. He blamed collective government failures "over many years," but also accused developers of been an "active willingness to endanger lives for profit."

The Government in 2021 acknowledged "past failures" in overseeing construction safety, but said that if regulations had been followed the fire could not have happened. The Secretary of State told the *Sunday Times* that the flaws in regulation "allowed unscrupulous people to exploit a broken system." Architects and housing officials remain under investigation following the 2017 fire, and the findings of the inquiry will be published later this year.

Gove also drew a distinction between "sins of omission and sins of commission," in a recent BBC interview, suggesting that, while the Government was guilty of the former, some developers were guilty of the latter. "There is an active willingness to put people in danger in order to make a profit, which to my mind is a significantly greater sin," he said.

'World-first' Energy House tests impact of climate change

Barratt Developments has partnered with Saint-Gobain and the University of Salford to build a concept home that will test the effects of climate change and "look at ways new houses can cope with more extreme weather conditions, whilst cutting



energy and water usage."

The Energy House 2.0 is a specially-built "climate chamber" thought to be the largest of its kind yet built, that will recreate temperatures from -20°C to +40°C as well as simulating wind, rain, snow and solar radiation.

Barratt and Saint-Gobain have built a three-bedroom family home inside – known as eHome2 – to test "innovative" building products designed to meet the Future Homes Standard. The house will also test zero carbon performance in different temperatures and weather conditions to replicate extreme changes in the climate. Saint Gobain commented: "The data will help to inform how the sector can design homes that are future-proof, while cutting bills for consumers."

The company added: "Achieving the Government's carbon reduction targets will require a step-change in the design of new homes. Barratt, Saint-Gobain and The University of Salford are working together to create a blueprint for future homes, including working in partnership to develop new low carbon products, such as the use of timber and render, instead of brick and block."

eHome2 is being built with an advanced timber frame solution, pre-insulated walls installed at the factory, and lightweight render-based bricks. The house will be built in 12-14 weeks – half the time it takes to build a standard home.

Oliver Novakovic, technical and innovation director at Barratt, said: "As the leading national sustainable housebuilder, we're building high-quality sustainable homes today, as well as innovating and adapting our designs for the future. Building eHome2 within the Energy House is one of the most significant projects that Barratt has ever undertaken." He added: "Along with Saint-Gobain and the University of Salford, we're leading the way to test the impact that extreme temperatures caused by climate change could have. The 12-month project will inform us to build net zero housing at scale, using offsite methods of construction and lower carbon products."

The £16m Energy House is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund and "harnesses the University of Salford's expertise in climate and the built environment."



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Morris & Spottiswood targets 2045 net zero goal

Construction firm Morris & Spottiswood has announced its goal to achieve net zero by 2045 as the business continues to take steps to make significant sustainable improvements. A key part of this strategy is to “deliver a more sustainable service offering via its housing division,” it says.

Morris & Spottiswood’s goal “takes into account the commercial needs of its clients and incorporates objectives that are achievable, affordable and practical.” The business is implementing training and developing new processes to “ensure it is agile and adaptable in the evolving landscape.” The housing team has recently completed training in Passivhaus certification and air source heat pump installation, and is currently developing partnerships and projects with modular build specialist Corehaus.

The firm commented: “Key to our net zero goals is supporting its clients through a sustainable offering that makes their projects as environmentally friendly as possible throughout a building’s lifecycle. The housing team has recently been involved in two projects with Midlothian Council that support these aims.”

The Buccleuch Street development in Dalkeith is the council’s first Passivhaus housing project. It is expected to lead to energy savings of up to 90% compared to typical building stock, and of 75% compared to average new builds. In Bonnyrigg, the affordable housing development is aligned with the council’s net zero carbon agenda due to the specification of solar panels, triple glazing, air source heat pumps, and a communal EV charge point. As the primary contractor on both developments, Morris & Spottiswood is responsible for delivering all sustainable requirements while ensuring good environmental practices are maintained onsite.

Brian Pettigrew, housing director at Morris & Spottiswood, said: “We are at the beginning of the next phase of our net zero journey, which is a core strategic and operational priority for the Group. It is vital that in order to meet national and global climate targets, the UK construction industry takes steps to implement more environmentally conscious practices. We cannot meet both new building targets and environmental targets without change.”

Honey reveals management team and establishes Sheffield headquarters



Housebuilder Honey, which was established last October by former Avant Homes CEO Mark Mitchell, has revealed its management team and announced new headquarters in Sheffield city centre.

The new management team consists of chief finance officer, Jeremy Gledhill; head of procurement, Richard Hall; head of technical, Martin White; and engineering manager, Graham Dawson, who all joined from Avant Homes. Also, commercial manager, Sarah Clingo joins from Vistry Group, and finally Howard Mee has been appointed as land and planning consultant.

Honey has signed a five-year lease on its new 5,000 ft² Grade A office headquarters on Ecclesall Road in Sheffield. The housebuilder says the offices can accommodate up to 50 people to enable the delivery of its growth plans. The housebuilder submitted plans last December to deliver its first development, a £14m, 50 home site in South Normanton, Derbyshire, which will comprise two-, three- and four-bedroom properties.

Honey chief executive, Mark Mitchell, said: “We have assembled a highly experienced team with the capability and ambition to ensure Honey quickly becomes a recognised and respected housebuilding brand in Yorkshire and the Midlands. Our investment in new high specification headquarters provides everyone at Honey, and those who will join us in future, with an excellent flexible environment in which to both work and relax. We will soon submit plans for our second development and are also in advanced negotiations on a further four sites. This will be a big year for the Honey team and we are focused on accelerating our growth trajectory throughout 2023.”

Higgins appoints ESG director Ross



Higgins Partnerships has promoted Amy Ross to director of ESG. Amy joined Higgins in September 2019 as head of social value and during this time has driven and developed the social value strategy for the Group, working closely with the board of directors, clients and the local communities in which the company develops. Declan Higgins, group director commented: “Amy has made a significant impact since she joined us three years ago and we are pleased to promote her to director of ESG. Amy will continue to work across the business to drive our ESG strategy and commitments, working closely with clients and stakeholders, to ensure that we create new developments that are sustainable and provide a positive change for the local community.”

Amy Ross commented: “ESG plays a vital role in the construction industry, and I am delighted to be promoted to director responsible for this area. I look forward to continuing our work in delivering our strategy, ensuring that every development we deliver strives to achieve a positive impact on the people and environments in which we work.” For over 60 years, Higgins has built a reputation for creating high quality residential mixed-use developments, which promote “community, connectivity and sustainability while working collaboratively with local partners to generate a lasting legacy.”

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Crest Nicholson is first housebuilder to have net zero goal SBTi-approved

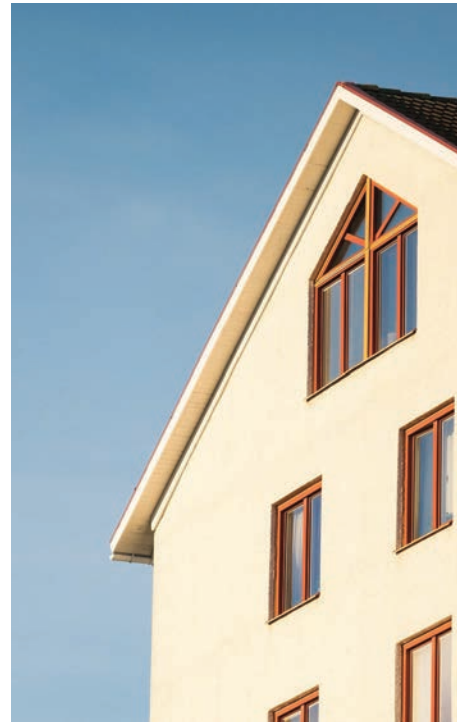
Crest Nicholson have announced that the science-based net-zero targets set in 2022 have now been validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), the first UK housebuilder to have its target approved by the organisation. SBTi is a global body that enables businesses to set ambitious emissions reductions targets in line with the latest climate science. It is “focused on accelerating companies across the world to halve emissions before 2030 and achieve net zero emissions before 2050,” said Crest Nicholson.

The SBTi validation “confirms that the targets set by Crest Nicholson are based on the latest climate science,” said the housebuilder, supporting the ambition to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C in line with the Paris Agreement. Crest Nicholson’s target to reach net zero GHG emissions across the value chain by 2045 is supported by a series of commitments

across its scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

“Achieving net zero emissions across the value chain will be a significant challenge, requiring effective collaboration and coordinated action across the supply chain and wider industry,” said the firm.

Crest Nicholson is already making progress in reducing GHG emissions. Steps taken to reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions include driving the efficient use of plant and equipment on site, trialling lower carbon technologies including hybrid generators and an electric telehandler, using alternative low carbon fuels and increasing the procurement of renewable electricity. To reduce emissions relating to scope 3, Crest Nicholson will continuously review the design, technologies and materials used within its homes. Crest Nicholson is also a member of the Future Homes Hub’s Embodied and Whole Life Carbon



Workgroup, which is developing guidance, tools and an “implementation plan to support an industry-wide reduction in whole life carbon.”

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS



67 sustainable council homes for Cambridge

67 new sustainable council apartments and homes have been handed over to local residents at Cambridge Investment Partnerships' latest development, Colville Road phase two, in Cherry Hinton, Cambridge.

The development forms part of a two-phase masterplan to bring council homes to the area and help tackle the housing crisis in the city. Originally two housing blocks containing 24 post-war ageing council homes, the development has been designed to "revitalise and integrate with the community, and improve on existing local connections."

The Colville Road team has also worked closely with the local community, in particular the local school which has taken part in health and safety presentations, tree planting, time capsule projects, and the creation of "buddy shelters" and mud kitchens.

As part of the development, green sedum roofs and extensive soft landscaping has been included as well as enhanced biodiversity with new trees being planted to encourage insects and other wildlife, and many existing trees retained. Bird and bat boxes are also being introduced along the perimeter of the building. Public art by artist Janetka Platon, in collaboration with residents, will also be installed.

To promote clean travel and reduce air pollution, electrical vehicle charging points have been installed, with a total of 10 connections available. Bicycle storage is also provided to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of transport.

Tom Hill, managing director for The Hill Group comments, "Throughout our work at Colville Road phase two we have been challenging the way we deliver council homes that are sustainable and align with Passivhaus standards. Initially, the aim was to provide heating through a gas-fired combined heat and power system, but we raised concerns that reliance on a non-renewable energy source could result in fuel poverty for residents.

"This led us to revise our energy strategy and introduce a communal air source heat pump system along with PV panels, increased insulation, and triple glazed windows. What we have created at Colville Road phase two is something we are really proud of and has set a standard for the council homes we are delivering across all our future developments."

Work is also underway at Colville Road Phase three which will create 48 council rented homes and provide four new commercial units. Designed by BPTW Architects following consultation with the local community, it will feature a variety of one and two bedroom council rent apartments and three bedroom council rented homes.

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Trade union HQ in Dagenham to be turned into homes

A total of 149 new, “sustainably heated homes” are being developed by Be First, the regeneration arm of Barking and Dagenham Council, and developer Hollybrook Limited. The JV has now started work on the £36.5m development, constructed on a former office block site located south of New Road in Dagenham.

The council-owned Transport House site, formerly home to Unite trade union, as well as the adjacent car park, will be transformed into brand new homes for residents, with undercroft parking also provided for the Premier Inn next door.

These new flats will all be heated by air source heat pumps, meaning they will be more efficient and cheaper to heat and reduce the development’s carbon footprint when the homes are in use. Air source heat pumps in a residential setting use up to 20% less CO₂e than gas boilers and up to 70% less than electric systems.

To celebrate the start of building work on the ‘turnkey’ development, the leader of Barking and Dagenham Council, Darren Rodwell, joined Daniel Brooks, development manager, from Be First and Kevin Parsons, director of Hollybrook, on site.

The new development uses both public and private land to maximise housing delivery across the site. The turnkey agreement means that once Hollybrook completes construction, the council will take ownership of 149 homes, consisting of one, two, three and four bed homes, with 31 at London affordable rent, 47 at affordable rent and 71 at private rent.

Daniel Brooks, development manager at Be First, said:



“We are pleased to be starting work on this project with our partners at Hollybrook. This project supports our mission to deliver 50,000 new homes across the borough. Hollybrook will deliver the overall development scheme with Be First (on behalf of the council) managing the development process to completion.

“At Be First, we are creating places which everyone can be proud of and delivering homes that are sustainable, so we preserve our environment for future generations in Barking and Dagenham.”

Cllr Darren Rodwell, leader of Barking and Dagenham Council, also commented: “I’d like to thank our partners at Hollybrook for working with us to secure this site. This is an excellent example of how we are making the most of mixed use land to deliver on our promises to provide much-needed high-quality, safe, well ventilated, and sustainably heated and affordable homes.”

£49m phase two in Waverley granted to Avant Homes

A further 173 homes in Waverley, South Yorkshire, are set to be delivered by Avant Homes, with a £49m second phase development after being granted planning permission as part of the area’s regeneration scheme.

Located just off Sheffield Parkway next to Avant Homes’ first phase of homes at its Sorby Park development, the 12.5-acre site was acquired in December last year.

The site was purchased from Harworth Estates, and will be the fourth development at Waverley by Avant Homes, following Sorby Row and Sorby Village, which both launched in 2017.

The wider Waverley scheme is Yorkshire’s largest ever brownfield mixed-use development. Once complete, the 740-acre site will comprise 3,890 homes, shops, restaurants, a primary school, and leisure and community facilities including parks and 310-acres of green open space.

Called Sorby Park at Waverley, the new phase will comprise a mix of two, three and four-bedroom homes and feature 20 of Avant Homes’ design-led housetypes.

Of the 173 homes, more than 17% have been designated as affordable housing.

Work is set to start on site this winter, with the overall build programme estimate to take approximately four years. The first homes should be ready for occupation in September.

Avant Homes Yorkshire managing director, Alastair Hart,



said: “We’ve had sustained success at the Waverley regeneration scheme over the past five years by delivering more than 400 homes across three developments.

“Demand for new build housing in the area remains high and we look forward to continuing to contribute to the regeneration of this brownfield site with our new phase of Sorby Park.”

Avant Homes Yorkshire currently has nine live developments ranging from Micklefield to Waverley with many more due to start as the business continues to implement its growth plans.

The Wakefield-based business is part of the Avant Homes Group, one of the leading private developers of residential property in the UK.

In addition to Yorkshire, the company has five other regional businesses operating within Scotland, north east England, East Midlands, West Midlands and a Central office covering the South Yorkshire, North Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire area.



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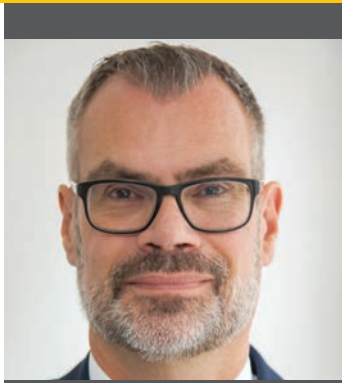
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Brian Berry

COMMENT

THE NEED FOR NEW SUPPORT IN 2023

Brian Berry, CEO of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), discusses what the Government needs to do to deliver new homes plus extra support for SMEs this year.



I'M GLAD TO SAY THAT FMB MEMBERS HAVE HAD THE CHANCE TO SIT FACE TO FACE WITH THE HOUSING MINISTER

We closed out 2022 with a very shaky end to proceedings, with the aftershock from the short-lived Truss administration still rumbling on. However, the signs of normality have started to creep back in and engagement with the government on housing issues is ramping up as they look to deliver much needed new homes.

The Government needs to keep this momentum up, as small, local house builders are facing increased costs and complexity from every angle. I just hope that the political will is there to get housing back on track and to reform the beleaguered planning system.

WE NEED ACTION

We need to improve planning, this will come as no surprise to anyone, from large scale commercial developers right through to my members, small local house builders, it's just not working. I'm glad to say that FMB members had a chance to sit face to face with the previous Housing Minister, Lucy Frazer, and put forward their concerns, so I hope that

this turns into action.

Ultimately, the UK needs more homes and I'm with the Government when they say homes need to be quality, diverse, and built with the community in mind. This is bread and butter for SME housebuilders as they are part of their community and consistently build quality homes for their local areas, so let's back them.

PLANNING NEEDS REFORM AND FUNDING

You can't go to any forum in the building industry and be far from a conversation on planning. It is a problem that is not going to go away without political will power and bluntly, money. However, with a Budget coming in March, we find the purse strings of the Treasury very tight at a time when planning departments are underfunded, understaffed, and struggling to hire new staff – who are often poached by the private sector. However, needing more funding, can't be an excuse for carte blanche spending, planning departments would need to show they are unblocking the planning system. I would

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WE NEED TO IMPROVE PLANNING, THIS WILL COME AS NO SURPRISE TO ANYONE, FROM LARGE SCALE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPERS RIGHT THROUGH TO MY MEMBERS

propose that planning teams receive increased funding based on performance, which would incentivise better and faster planning decisions.

But I also feel SMEs need that little bit more support; they are by no means technically less capable than their larger counterparts, but the administrative burden placed on small teams is substantial. A dedicated SME planning team per local authority would not only help grease the wheels of planning, but also support new entrants into the market, in what is currently a very hostile environment to find yourself in for the first time.

We do need to look beyond resourcing. Planning teams need to communicate more effectively, bringing transparency and clarity to the process. Digitisation would help, which I'm glad to see is an element of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, albeit seemingly aimed at the public not the builder. This would

create a simpler, more transparent system for all involved, but it shouldn't be used to give the loudest voices another platform to block new homes.

HOW ARE THINGS LOOKING FOR SME HOUSE BUILDERS?

House builders are being directly and indirectly affected by the economic circumstances we find ourselves in. Issues with costs linked to changes in regulations and materials are causing a headache for local house builders, but other less obvious problems have sprung up, notably the lack of availability of mortgages. This was one of the top issues affecting house builders in the FMB's House Builders Survey 2022 with 38% saying it's holding back house building and 48% indicating this will get worse over the next three years.

Skills is another issue builders are having to contend with, and again was one of the top issues holding back

house building in our annual survey. In the March Budget, the Government should use it as an opportunity to demonstrate its intention to tackle the skills crisis. Construction is not alone in struggling to hire new staff. There needs to be a comprehensive UK skills strategy, which helps roadmap how industry can work with the Government to plug the skills gap.

LOOKING AHEAD

It is not an easy time to be a small, local house builder. There is an ever-growing list of issues adding to the cost of building a home, everything from biodiversity net gain to energy efficiency measures. None of this is unwanted by the industry, it welcomes moves to green our environment, but it's all adding up, not only monetarily, but administratively. SMEs need to be better supported to deliver these changes and I implore the Government to do so.

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Industries Publishing
Company size 11-50 employees
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Meadfleet Wins Landscape Institute Award



Meadfleet Ltd were awarded the Landscape Institute's Landscape Legacy Award in late 2022 for Sustainable Open Space Management. The award celebrates Meadfleet's achievements in creating a sustainable legacy throughout the business and across its portfolio both in their work

to provide biodiverse open spaces and through community engagement and educational projects. David King, Managing Director of Meadfleet commented: "We are honoured to have received this prestigious award and thrilled the judges recognised our commitment to going beyond the usual scope of an open space management company."

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Patrick Mooney

COMMENT

IS THERE A READY-MADE SOLUTION TO THE HOUSING CRISIS?

Patrick Mooney, housing consultant and news editor of Housing, Management & Maintenance magazine explains how the problem of how and where to build more affordable housing might have a ready-made solution.

How on earth are housing associations and councils going to find the money required to build the tens of thousands of affordable new homes desperately needed in local communities up and down the country at the moment. After all it's not the sort of bill that can be sorted by making a lucky discovery of some long lost loose change down the back of the sofa, nor what might be found on the mythical money tree!

Indeed the demand for houses and flats which can be let at social rents is growing exponentially at the moment, with more than 1.3 million households on council waiting lists across the country and 270,000 households spending the festive period in temporary accommodation, including bed & breakfast hotels.

At the same time the list of priorities for spending money on the existing stock of rental housing is getting longer and longer. Decarbonisation works, the retrofitting of energy efficiency features, tackling the huge problem of mould and damp, improving the safety of buildings, as well as bringing all properties up to the decent homes standard all adds up to a multi-billion pounds shopping list. The annual bill will dwarf the record £6.5bn spent by housing associations on planned maintenance and capitalised repairs in 2021/22 alone.

The capping of the annual rent increase in April at a maximum of 7% creates a huge additional problem for would-be developers across the social housing sector. The rent rise will stretch the finances of many tenants (probably resulting in a sizeable increase in rent arrears), but it is well below the current rate of inflation and will in all likelihood result in the increased use of reserves (where these exist) and extra borrowing (where this can

be arranged).

The credit rating agency S&P is already issuing warnings that the rent cap will be harmful for the sector's financial standing and make new loans both more difficult to obtain and more expensive, in terms of the interest being charged.

And as if that was not bad enough the Housing Secretary has increased the pressure on social landlords by warning them that financial support (such as development loans and grants) will be withdrawn where they have breached the Regulator of Housing's consumer standards until they can prove they are a responsible landlord. Rochdale Boroughwide Housing was the first social housing landlord to be sanctioned, losing £1m of funding for new homes.

NATIONAL TARGET AXED

The next big issue to be factored in (and it is a genuinely big problem) is the Government's decision to drop its mandatory target of building 300,000 new homes a year, which is seeing scores of local authorities revisit and revise their local housebuilding targets, invariably downwards. Finding suitable and affordable sites for new housing development will get more difficult.

At the same Michael Gove also announced that councils would no longer have to plan for 20% more houses than their locality needs (to compensate for delays with designated sites) and those authorities with up-to-date plans would no longer have to maintain enough land supply for the next five years of housing need.

Planning experts are forecasting that these changes are likely to result in at least 100,000 new homes not being built over the next three to five years. The economic and social cost of this scale of reduction could be immense, with

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all sorts of knock-on effects. But those in the most desperate need of housing are likely to suffer the most, with even longer delays for them to be housed. At current building rates, some experts estimate the backlog of low-income families needing accommodation would take over 120 years to clear.

The Government gave in to a well-orchestrated campaign among its backbenchers, mainly in the south of England, who claimed they were protecting the unique feel of their constituencies, as well as the Green Belt.

But one potential and ready-made solution may have been highlighted by the countryside charity, the CPRE. They have discovered that a record number of brownfield sites in England have been identified for redevelopment, are currently lying dormant and could provide 1.2 million homes. They analysed 344 brownfield land registers, which identify urban sites that have previously been built on and which are available for housing.

The amount of land available covered 27,342 hectares (67,563 acres) across 23,000 sites in 2022, 6% more than in 2021. Planning permission has already been granted for 45% of the land, while 550,000 homes with planning permission are awaiting development. Housing developments on brownfield sites are often completed more than six months more quickly than those on greenfield land.

Tom Fyans, the interim chief executive of CPRE, said: "You know the system is broken when hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people and families are on social housing waiting lists, many in rural areas. Meanwhile, across the country, tens of thousands of hectares of prime brownfield sites are sitting there waiting to be redeveloped."

A TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTION

Fyans said investing in brownfield regeneration would have a transformative effect. "There's no way to fix an overheated, undersupplied housing market without a new generation of social or truly affordable housing. The only solution is a commitment to building hundreds of thousands of new homes available at social rents or sold at affordable prices linked to local wages."

"Done with consideration, such developments breathe new life into



communities while also building the homes local people actually need alongside existing infrastructure such as public transport, schools and shops."

Many of the brownfield sites are also in areas with the highest identified need for new housing. London boroughs have two of the top three totals of highest brownfield land with housing capacity, Birmingham is in second place and Manchester in fourth. Using this land would take the pressure off the Green Belt around those cities, as well as rural areas and farmland where the opposition to new housing is often at its strongest and most vocal.

The National Planning Policy Framework is due for review in 2023 and on the back of its research the CPRE is calling for it to include a clear prioritisation of brownfield development

over greenfield sites. Among its recommendations are:

- Only allowing greenfield developments when they are primarily affordable housing for local needs, or when as much use as possible is already being made of brownfield land;
- The New Homes Bonus should be reformed so it is only paid out to support either development of brownfield land and/or additional affordable homes;
- The Infrastructure Levy should be set at a much higher rate on greenfield land to reflect the high costs of greenfield development to local communities; and
- Provide local communities with stronger mechanisms to bring brownfield land forward as a source of land supply, such as increased compulsory purchase powers.

If social landlords can be funded and helped to partner with private sector developers and planning authorities to build on these brownfield sites, then there is a good chance the list of obstacles outlined earlier, could be overcome. But it will require a strong resolve and commitment from the Government to ensure that such a massive programme can be put together and implemented.

We will probably get an indication of Ministers' willingness to adopt this sort of solution when the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is pushed through its final stages of Parliamentary scrutiny, but increased use of brownfield sites for new affordable housing seems like an easy win. The concept has been around for decades but is still under-utilised and capable of delivering so much more. As planning permission already exists for over half a million homes on such sites, let's hope that common sense prevails.



THE DEMAND FOR HOUSES AND FLATS WHICH CAN BE LET AT SOCIAL RENTS IS GROWING EXPONENTIALLY AT THE MOMENT, WITH MORE THAN 1.3 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS ON COUNCIL WAITING LISTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

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THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

Cora: taking hits in the fight against climate change – “because it’s the right thing to do”

All images © Cora Homes



Luke Simmons, managing director of housebuilder Cora, explains why the firm is putting climate before profit. He says it is now up to businesses, industries and individuals – waiting for Government to bring in legislation could mean leaving it too late.

The housebuilding industry must take a leading role in the fight against climate change – because if we wait for the Government to take action, it could be too late. That may sound drastic, but unfortunately the clock is ticking.

There has been a lot said about the climate emergency already, so I won't go over the science here. But I think by now we know it is a crisis we must all face.

World leaders got together in November 2022 at COP27, making some strong statements about how important an issue it is, but real change will have to come from outside of politics. Businesses, industries and individuals need to push for a massive cultural and social change, new ways of working that take the environment into account.

In my experience, it makes very little difference who is in Government, and would need a dramatic change to combat both the lack of sustainable housing across the UK and climate change. If we wait for outside bodies, like the Government, to tell us what to do and bring in legislation – it will be too late. Essentially, it is up to us.

That's why Cora is transforming the way we work – to put sustainability at the heart of the company's mindset. It's not

just a fresh new logo, but a new purpose and drive. We have developed new operating principles – our Sustainable Housing Framework – to embed sustainability, biodiversity and community engagement into all areas of our work. It is a completely new way of working, and one we are determined to deliver.

We can't change the industry overnight, but we hope we can set an example to other companies in our sector.

As part of our new operating principles, we will be building homes with far less waste and carbon produced in manufacture. The homes we build and communities we create will be far more energy efficient too – far above and beyond current and future regulations. It is about planning for the future, creating homes, communities and environments that can flourish long into the future.

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(L-R) Luke Simmons, sales and marketing director Mandy Soames, and construction director Steve Keenan

One of the biggest changes we have made is partnering with companies that help us deliver homes using offsite construction methods. Not only does this dramatically cut down on the energy we use to build our homes and reduce transport and logistics costs, the homes themselves are more airtight and energy efficient, keeping the heat in and reducing energy costs for those living there.

We also aim for new homes in the future to be fitted with photovoltaic panels on the roofs, tailored to each property to provide the maximum energy possible. We don't just fix two panels on every roof, they are positioned carefully so to get the most sunlight. We have also started installing wastewater recovery systems onto new properties, recovering heat from hot showers so it can be reused to heat water rather than using additional energy.

Developers and housebuilders need to think about sustainability and climate change in everything they do – it must be at the forefront of every decision made.

Biodiversity is another priority, so Cora has partnered with consultants, experts specialising in biodiversity, to develop the planting around our sites. Planting is designed to provide as much biodiversity as possible to enhance the wildlife in the area – our planting is not just for aesthetics, but provides positive impact, encouraging more species of wildlife to make a home there too.

To boost this, every new Cora customer will get a choice of a wildlife box as a

gift when they move in – a beehive box, a bird box or a butterfly box. This will encourage the communities we create to continue our quest for sustainability and biodiversity, each home adding to the rich array of wildlife we look to promote. We want to see a rich, vibrant diversity of wildlife thrive on the communities we create long after we leave.

This new strategy is not just a top-down, everybody who works with the company will be asked to participate. And these new operating principles don't stop with us – we will expect our contractors and suppliers to join us in our mission.

We have our targets and are talking to our contractors to ensure they work in a sustainable way too. It will be a team effort, working together to achieve our ambitions. Because it's new, it's likely there will be times where it goes wrong. But whenever you are making, building (or cooking!) something, the first time you do it always takes a little longer.

For example, your first go at a particular dish always takes a long time as you slowly go step by step through the recipe – but the next time, and the time after that, you will whip it up in minutes. It's a learning curve.

This may also mean sacrificing some profit to reinvest in green efficiencies, but that is something we are prepared to do. We understand our new way of working will cost more money, so the temptation will be for us to revert back because it is cheaper. But that isn't as important as taking these steps forward.

Housebuilding, like a lot of other businesses, can become all about maximising profits. That becomes a measure of that company's success – how much profit they make. It is often the first question people ask about a company, but it is not the be all and end all. Profits are important, we need to make a profit to survive, but I don't think it should be the measure of a company and it is not our main driver.

Our driver is the excellent quality of the product we produce and our service, but also our operating principles. The more you delve into the subject of climate change, the more you realise it's a massive ocean and that what most companies are doing is just a drop in that ocean.

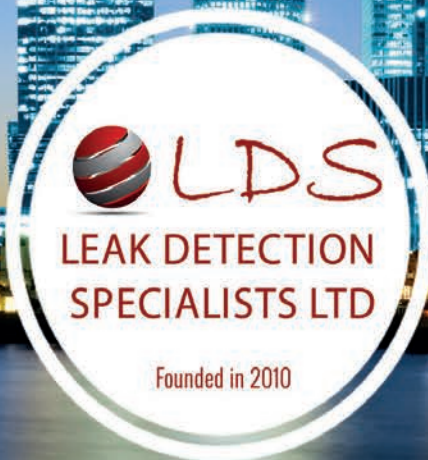
But it has to start somewhere, and I believe the construction and housebuilding sectors are where we can see the most benefit in the least amount of time.

The industry is a polluter, and does contribute to the climate emergency. We must be clear about that – but it doesn't need to be this way.

Through collaboration and new ways of working, the sector can be on the front line in the battle, making real positive change and showing other industries how to operate in a sustainable way. It is a gauntlet I hope other companies take on, and one we are excited to embark on. Ultimately, it's the right thing to do.

Luke Simmons is managing director of Cora Homes

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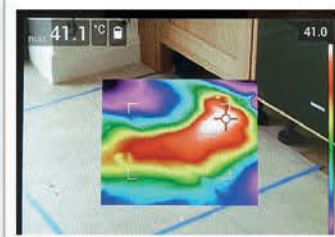
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THE FUTURE OF HEATING



Russell Dean, residential product group director at Mitsubishi Electric, speaks to *Housebuilder & Developer's* Jack Wooler on the Government's net zero target – exploring the challenges in reaching it, and arguing why heat pumps are the future.

Most housebuilders now recognise the challenges of reaching net zero, already aiming to design and build their homes to reduce carbon emissions and future-proof their properties.

Proactively making their own commitment to building net zero homes and designing ambitious projects that reach beyond the Government's Future Homes Standard, leading builders are increasingly specifying solar panels, electric car chargers and now – as Russell Dean of Mitsubishi Electric argues – installing heat pumps as standard.

He believes that builders, both large and small, already have a “strong appetite” for heat pumps, but that moving forwards – if all goes as hoped – they will become standard practice, with the biggest challenge left being effective collaboration between all parties.

“There is no one silver bullet that will make a home ultra-efficient,” says Dean. “It's the effective collaboration between the build fabric, low carbon technologies, controls, smart use of energy and the consumer interface that will ensure that high level of efficiency.”

“Although this is a challenge, it's well within our gift to solve,” he continues. “We certainly see strong signs that manufacturers are working together so that their technologies are working in synergy.”

HEAT PUMPS EXPLAINED

There are likely few builders who are unaware of air source heat pumps at this stage, but some may still question what makes them a ‘green’ technology.

As Russell Dean explains it, air source heat pumps are classified as a renewable energy source because they capture free energy from the air, “making them a great solution for gas and old boiler replacements.”

He uses the analogy of a fridge to explain the workings: “The technology inside an air source heat pump is very similar to that of a domestic fridge –

transferring heat from one place to another. The back of your fridge is warm because it is removing heat from the food inside the fridge and out into your kitchen.”

He continues: “An air source heat pump sits outside your home and extracts warmth from the outdoor air. It upgrades this renewable heat energy and transfers it inside the home to provide hot water and heating for radiators and/or underfloor heating.”

Like your fridge, it will do this “quietly and reliably,” as Russell puts it, all year round, with leading products working even in sub-zero temperatures, down to -25°C.

Still, some builders may question why this green technology in particular should be adopted, especially if it involves a change in their supply chain.

According to Russell, heat pumps – along with technologies such as solar panels – are simply “the way forward to reach net zero.”

“The UK Government has led the way in making a legally binding commitment to reaching net zero,” says Russell. “That means moving unequivocally away from the use of fossil fuels such as oil and gas to heat our homes.”

Because of this, he argues that sustainability must become a “cornerstone” of all business right now, with a number of challenges likely to be shared by the whole sector as the Government and the country itself pushes towards a sustainable future.

Three such main ‘recognised challenges’ Russell lists that he believes will affect all builders are: carbon neutrality – achieving a decarbonised society to curb climate change by reducing CO₂ emissions from the company and society, a circular economy – achieving a society in which resources are effectively used and sustainably circulated, and security – achieving a resilient society that can cope with various environmental changes as well as risks.

Where heat pumps come into play

here, according to Russell, is in effectively tackling all three of these issues, with heat pumps not only helping the UK reach its net zero target, but able to provide jobs and opportunities to grow the green economy, reduce the UK's reliance on imported gas and oil. By reducing the use of energy in heating homes – they also therefore reduce the cost of heating.

THE TRANSITION

Despite the above benefits, the transition to such technologies is a concern to many in the industry, particularly those working on older properties – not just concerned about retrofitting older homes to offer the insulation necessary for the technologies to function optimally, but of creating the spaces and infrastructure for the technology itself, and training people to install heat pumps.

As to the latter, Russell tells us that Mitsubishi Electric is ahead of the game. He reports that the company has already invested heavily in training to address this concern, currently training 400 installers a month, with the capacity to train up to 4000 a month as the demand for the technology grows.

“From our perspective we do not see a challenge finding the installer base; there are hundreds of installers in every town; they are just currently installing gas boilers.”

As to the ageing stock, while Russell notes that the UK has “some of the oldest and least efficient housing in Europe,” he argues that this doesn't change the facts – the switch to low carbon heating systems for our homes “is critical” in order to ensure the UK achieves its 2050 net zero carbon emissions target. No matter the obstacles, this cannot be ignored.

“From small flats to large detached houses, heat pumps are the renewable, low carbon alternative to traditional high carbon heating systems,” he says, adding that whichever way you look at it, “that means retrofitting old properties.”

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high temperature, high-capacity systems to low carbon, high efficiency systems,” Dean continues. “We need to design our products and technology so that every gas boiler installer in the UK can simply to any suitable home.”

GOVERNMENT HELP

Alongside the collaboration between housebuilders, developers and manufacturers, Russell Dean argues that the Government must take further measures to support the whole industry if the targets are to be met.

He is thankful for the financial support the Government has already offered, such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme, the recently announced improvements to the Home Energy Scotland Scheme, and regional government plans such as the Mayor of London’s Warmer Homes Programme. While welcoming the progress so far, he believes they must be further promoted and expanded upon in order to effect real change.

“These schemes already encourage homeowners to insulate their homes and opt for sustainable heating,” says Mitsubishi Electric’s residential expert. He concludes: “Heat pumps are the future of heating in Britain, and more support could bring this future even closer.”

The four measures the Government needs to take (according to Mitsubishi Electric’s Russell Dean) to support consumers and businesses in the transition to decarbonisation:

- Support, incentivise and encourage households to insulate their homes so to use less energy. The Government is well positioned to run public information campaigns to create greater awareness for the need to reduce energy demand and so lower household bills – insulating homes is a primary method of achieving that.
- Decouple the cost of electricity from gas, and rebalance taxation away from green economy catalysts for the price of energy, as is being considered in the recent review of electricity market arrangements. While the price of electricity is pegged to the cost of gas, and dependent upon its demand and supply, or open to weaponisation as is the case with war in Ukraine, it will remain at risk of continued price hikes that aren’t the making of its suppliers.
- Set a legally binding end-date for the installation of all fossil fuel fired boilers (not a phasing out). Following the Government’s phase out date for the installation fuel fired boilers in all new build properties, it should be definitive and set an end-date for their installation, whether that is for new build properties or retrofit. This will be a similar position to that taken by Government banning the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030. Just like the car industry and market has adjusted, so the heating market and industry will adapt to an end date of installing fossil fuel fired boilers – the CCC’s recommendation dates would be a good starting point for this.
- Support training of more heat pump installers. As the demand for heat pumps increases, so more installers are needed. Government should also support young people to train in this growing green business, and encourage plumbers, electricians and heat engineers to upgrade their skills to install heat pumps.

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CASE STUDY

Going the extra mile for retirement living



Creating suitable new retirement homes offering the 'extras' has never been more essential, says McCarthy Stone, who spoke to *Housebuilder & Developer's* **Roseanne Field** about a high-profile recent example in the West Midlands.

AN ENGAGED AND ROBUST PRE-APP PROCESS WAS UNDERTAKEN, DISCUSSING ALL ELEMENTS OF THE DESIGN AND KEY PROJECT MILESTONES

There's little need to reiterate the fact that the UK has an ever-growing number of elderly people. But when coupled with the country's housing shortage, focusing on good quality housing options for later living is more vital than ever before.

It's a driver McCarthy Stone have made the most of, developing retirement communities. The company has new developments onsite throughout the UK, under both of its two business streams: Retirement Living and Retirement Living Plus. The former is for people over 60 and including a range of amenities, and the latter for those aged 70+ with a similar standard range plus a few extras.

One recent 'Plus' development is Wheatley Place, situated near Solihull, just south of Birmingham. The development comprises a total of



66 one and two bedroom apartments, available to rent or buy, either fully or partly through the Older Persons Shared Ownership (OPSO) scheme. Amenities include communal areas featuring landscaped gardens and roof terrace, an onsite bistro, lounge, bar, private dining area, wellness suite, gym and exercise studio, and games room. A manager is onsite 24/7, and tailored domestic support and personal care are available.

THE DEVELOPMENT

Wheatley Place forms part of the wider regeneration of an area known as The Green – the former headquarters of automotive and aerospace manufacturer Lucas Industries (now part of engineering company ZF Group). With the company relocating to a new purpose-built complex at a nearby business park, the brownfield site was freed up for a range of new development possibilities, as Sam Brownhill, associate development director for McCarthy Stone explains. “The site forms the gateway into a wider mixed use regeneration development comprising residential and commercial uses,” he says. “The development being in close proximity to national infrastructure and a number of local services makes it an excellent location from a retirement community perspective, as well as from a

build and procurement point of view.”

The site covers a total of 47 acres. McCarthy Stone partnered with M7 Real Estate, who were responsible for obtaining planning permission for the wider scheme, as well as undertaking the demolition of the existing office block, and creating the necessary infrastructure to service the site. The site has planning permission for a total of 330 dwellings including affordable housing, as well as McCarthy Stone’s retirement living development, a care home, and 100,000 ft² of car dealerships.

The planning process for the development wasn’t smooth. Being the ‘gateway’ to the wider scheme, the local authority were particularly interested in the materials and overall quality of the design; to a higher level than on other projects. Brownhill says: “Given these challenges, an engaged and robust pre-app process was undertaken, discussing all elements of the design and key milestones during the pre-acquisition of the site which allowed both McCarthy Stone and the local planning authority to build a strong partnership to bring this scheme forward.”

The need for this partnership became evident, he adds, when (following some market research) McCarthy Stone wanted to amend certain details after planning



consent had been granted. Despite the intense nature of the process given the project's prominence, the local authority were willing to accept an amended planning application, with "refreshed apartment types and communal areas being integrated into the scheme," Brownhill says.

The materials chosen were picked to bring a "contemporary complement to Shirley's mix of architectural styles," says McCarthy Stone. A mix of coloured brick was specified, – largely red, with smooth blue bricks also included. Protruding external details will be finished with a white render, and anthracite grey PVCu windows are to be used throughout. Where apartments include balconies, these are constructed using metal and feature glass balustrades. A timber pergola will be installed on the roof terrace.

PROVIDING THE LIFESTYLE

Having worked in the sector for so long, McCarthy Stone didn't struggle to identify design priorities on this scheme. "The inherent approach to designing any retirement living development is ensuring community and companionship are at the heart of the building's footprint," explains Brownhill. "Locating a central communal

hub with direct permeability from the main entrance, through to good quality, spacious external areas help to create a sense of freedom that the residents of the development can enjoy."

Located to the left of the reception area, the communal lounge has generous natural light and includes spaces for both socialising and also solo activities such as reading. Next to this is the bistro restaurant, which offers drinks, snacks, lunch, dinner, and afternoon tea. The garden, which 'wraps around' the whole building can be accessed from these two areas, and has been designed so it can be enjoyed all year round.

Brownhill also acknowledges that while the sense of community and social aspects are key, equally important for many of the residents is retaining a sense of independence; which security and safety are implicit parts of. "Functional aspects of the design such as a 24 hour emergency call system and video door entry ensure residents feel safe and secure from the independence of their own apartment," Brownhill says.

The accommodation comprises one and two bedroom apartments, with varying layouts and room sizes depending on where in the building they're situated. The one-beds include a double bedroom

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with walk-in wardrobe, a shower room, large living room, and storage cupboard. Some apartments have access to outdoor space – patios on the ground floor and balconies on the first, second, and third floors.

The two bedroom apartments have similar features, with the addition of a second double bedroom and a separate toilet room, and some also include additional storage space, as well as integrated appliances, anti-slip flooring in shower rooms, and high quality fittings. In terms of security, apartments can view the door camera entry system via their TV, have intruder alarms, access to the 24 hour emergency call system, and illuminated light switches.

The idea behind the communal facilities (games room, roof terrace, exercise studio and wellness suite), as marketing manager Declan Fishwick explains, is giving residents the ability to “focus on doing what they love.” The wellness suite will offer beauty treatments, hairdressing, and therapeutic massage, and the games room will cater for various clubs, crafts and activities. A management team is onsite 24/7, and the guest suite offers somewhere for friends and family to stay overnight. Domestic support staff are available to

assist residents with tasks from general cleaning and changing the bed, to grocery shopping and posting letters.

SUSTAINABILITY & ECOLOGY

As with any new development, both Sustainability and ecology were high on the list of priorities for McCarthy Stone, and Brownhill gives the example of mature trees which were protected by a TPO around the site's periphery but which were “integral to the scheme's success.” They were used to help establish the developable area, the protection area covering their roots “governing the building footprint's position.” They also provide a “natural buffer to Stratford Road.”

The ability to bring nature-based SuDS approaches was also harnessed to bring amenity, as Brownhill explains: “A planted swale formed an integral part of the drainage strategy to naturally attenuate and cleanse storm water at source, before entering the wider network.”

Brownhill asserts that sustainability is “embedded into the structure” of McCarthy Stone, adding: “With all schemes we adopt a fabric first approach.” At Wheatley Place, a 7 kWh PV array has been provided that ensures that “some of the overall scheme's energy



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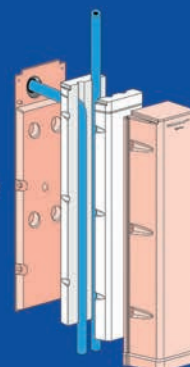


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generation and demand comes from a renewable source.”

The company claims its fabric-first approach has delivered retirement communities that have a lower carbon footprint, and are overall more sustainable, than other new build housing. High quality insulation is coupled with schemes that eschew gas in favour of electricity. However, added to this is the firm’s approach of preferring town centre brownfield locations, which the company says results in an average carbon saving of 0.35 tonnes (based on residents driving less).

A strong emphasis is placed on landscaping, and delivering biodiversity net gain, and the firm’s model of building apartment blocks also means land use

is more efficient. Overall the developer claims its apartments emit one tonne less CO₂ (0.3 tonnes) than a new build house (1.3 tonnes).

RETIREMENT HOUSING – FOR EVERYONE?

The ageing population trend isn’t expected to slow down at any point soon; it’s anticipated to continue increasing “significantly” over the next 30 years. It’s therefore no surprise, says Brownhill, that housing purpose-built for the older generation is the only type that the National Planning Policy Framework has identified as ‘critical.’ “This creates challenges as well as opportunities,” he says, “in terms of how to support the increasing number of older people in the UK while addressing the vast undersupply

of suitable homes.”

Brownhill refers to a recent report by Knight Frank which found that while the number of Over 65s is expected to increase by 22% over the next 30 years, less than 3% of the UK’s housing stock meets their particular set of needs. The report also revealed that a lack of suitable options was preventing many from downsizing, with demand for specialist housing at over 30,000, but only 7,500 units delivered in 2020. Finally, it found that 36% of local authorities don’t have a clear policy in place with regards to retirement housing.

These are major issues confronting us – based on a host of reasons, but Brownhill explains how it’s a great opportunity too: “As the population ages, it is vital that

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the housing needs of older people are met in order to enable them to maintain their independence for longer. This in turn creates health, social and economic benefits for both individuals and society at large.”

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

McCarthy Stone believes that focusing on building suitable retirement housing will also free up existing housing stock for younger people and families. This is a benefit in itself, and also reduces the demand for more traditional new build housing, which the developer holds makes far less efficient use of land than retirement housing, as well

as having a much higher CO₂ output per unit.

McCarthy Stone says it's high time for the arrival of the dedicated Government task force – promised in its Levelling Up White Paper – on older people's housing. However the firm's CEO John Tonkiss lists a variety of challenges preventing growth in the retirement living sector, including planning issues, affordability, stamp duty, and a lack of incentives. The company is working with Homes England to address these issues – Tonkiss explains the goal: “We would like to see 10% of Homes England's housing delivery to be homes for older people.”

Since initial marketing began on the

Wheatley Place development, Declan Fishwick asserts that McCarthy Stone has seen a “very positive” response from customers, with over 1,000 potential buyers registering interest. He believes this level of interest is in part thanks in part to the mixture of tenures available, with the lack of such a mix having been suggested as another barrier for the older population when considering downsizing.

Apartments were released for sale in May 2022, closely followed by the release of rental prices and the Older Persons Shared Ownership element of the scheme. The first apartments are due to be completed in the development later this spring. ■

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Glidevale Protect collaborates with Bellway Homes and The University of Salford at Energy House 2.0



Glidevale Protect is putting its specialist range of energy efficient building solutions to the test by providing a range of products for use at the new Energy House 2.0 development and embarking on a collaborative research partnership with the University of Salford and national housebuilder Bellway Homes.

Energy House 2.0 is a unique £16 million research facility, part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), enabling SMEs to innovate and develop low carbon technologies for the built environment. Energy House 2.0 is a collaborative project between partners including the University of Salford, Bellway Homes, Barratt Developments and Saint-Gobain. Together, partners will drive innovation and solutions to address global and domestic energy efficiency challenges.

Glidevale Protect is working alongside Bellway Homes by supplying its specialist construction membranes for use on The Future Home@The University of Salford, one of the two detached timber frame houses that are currently being constructed within the Energy House 2.0 energy performance test facility, with the structure having been manufactured offsite.

Glidevale Protect's reflective, low emissivity Protect TF200 Thermo breather membrane and Protect BarriAir air and vapour control layer have been used on the innovative eco home. To provide high levels of thermal efficiency, the Protect TF200 Thermo breather membrane has been installed to the external walls, while the Protect BarriAir membrane has been fitted to the internal walls with the company's universal reinforced sealing tape to eliminate air leakage



and energy loss. Also installed is the Protect FCM 750 floor cassette membrane to maintain the integrity of the airtightness system at the floor junction and to provide condensation control at the edges of the floor cassette.

Once complete, The Future Home@The University of Salford will be subjected to various weather conditions within the Energy House 2.0 environmental chambers, which utilise state-of-the-art technology to test how well the specified building products and systems perform even under the harshest of environments. The research from the Energy House 2.0 project will provide a greater understanding of how energy efficient and low carbon building techniques can reduce the environmental impact of housebuilding and the wider construction industry.

Commenting, Jamie Bursnell, group technical and innovation manager at Bellway Homes said: "Collaboration with product manufacturers and suppliers is a key part of The Future Home@The University of Salford and the lessons learnt

from this experience will help shape the future of housebuilding for years to come. There is also real need to improve the efficiency of the building fabric in new homes and the work we have done with Glidevale Protect has highlighted their products which will be under test to help contribute to better performance."

Glidevale Protect's involvement in the unique Energy House 2.0 project continues the manufacturer's positive relationship with The University of Salford, which is an established leading innovator of low carbon technologies thanks to its work as part of its Energy House Laboratories programme.

Having previously provided reflective membrane products for use at Zed House, a collaborative project between The University of Salford and Barratt Developments plc, which was built to exceed the planned Future Homes Standard, Glidevale Protect has recently become an official research partner to facilitate a greater understanding of the benefits and energy performance of specialist construction membranes in housebuilding. The research programme, which is at the development stage, will see Glidevale Protect work closely with the teams at The University of Salford and Bellway Homes. With the Glidevale Protect head office based in Sale, Greater Manchester near to The University of Salford, this will allow the teams to work closely on site at Energy House 2.0 as the research project is commissioned.

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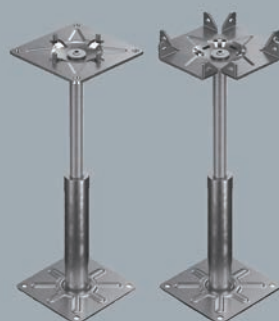
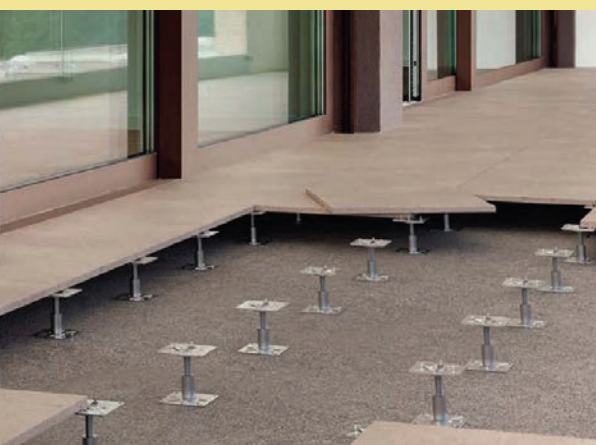
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Martin Benn of Eurocell outlines how recycled waste used to produce new high performing and thermally efficient PVCu window and door product solutions can support housebuilders as they strive to satisfy environmental responsibilities.



Changes to Part L of the Building Regulations came into effect during 2022. A key objective of the new regulatory landscape is to ensure all new homes will produce 31% lower carbon emissions by incorporating renewable energy technology solutions.

This is a critical step on the journey to net zero and comes ahead of the Future Homes Standard which will be introduced in 2025. At that point, the requirement will be that all new homes are specified and constructed to be highly energy efficient, use low carbon heating solutions, and, ultimately, be zero carbon ready.

Alongside emerging energy efficiency policies and new regulations, pressure also remains on housebuilders to use more sustainable building methods and informed product choices.

Consumer sentiment, fuelled by

escalating climate concerns, means they are scrutinising businesses more closely than ever when it comes to how they act and operate. As a result, the environmental impact of product choices continues to be a key priority for housebuilders and associated supply chains.

PVCu is already playing its part in helping the sector meet important environmental and regulatory obligations. Set against other potential product choices such as aluminium or timber composite, PVCu offers long-term durability and high performance, attractive aesthetics to support design visions, cost effective value and, through important initiatives such as recycling processes, is a truly sustainable solution.

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To further substantiate the sustainability credentials of PVCu product solutions, we worked with the Faculty of Science and Engineering at Manchester Metropolitan University to review an array of data sets and modelling emanating from peer-reviewed publications. This would establish a life cycle assessment of the use of



recycled PVCu in the company's manufacturing operations.

We requested the scientists interrogate the set estimates for overall CO₂ savings that can be achieved from the use of waste PVCu and determine an accurate statistic to prove the environmental benefit of using waste PVCu within recycling operations.

Thanks to the validated scrutiny undertaken by the academics, we are

confident that sharing important data and conclusions can better inform and help underpin the sustainability objectives of the housebuilding sector.

TANGIBLE CO₂ SAVINGS

For example, a typical semi-detached house comprising seven windows and a pair of French doors will see an average weight of post-consumer PVCu waste within the eight products plus cavity

PVCU IS ALREADY PLAYING ITS PART IN HELPING THE SECTOR MEET IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY OBLIGATIONS

closure of 122 kg.

Therefore, a housebuilder constructing on average 2,500 units of semi-detached houses will save around 627 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year by specifying recycled windows and cavity closures versus product choices using full virgin PVCu windows.

Housebuilders have access to high performing, thermally efficient, secure, and aesthetically pleasing PVCu products.

But crucially, they now also have the verified knowledge that a choice of PVCu window and door solutions manufactured using recycled material is proven to reduce CO₂ emissions, drive efforts to improve the future sustainability of houses and help to tackle the ongoing climate emergency.

Martin Benn is head of new build at Eurocell



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FERRO door blanks reveal core strengths



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retardance, even airtightness for passive house projects, all with a 10 year anti-warpage guarantee.

Perfect for housing projects, the FERRO range is available in a wide array of surface finishes to add outer beauty to that inner strength.

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ECLISSE UK sliding pocket doors are the perfect option to create more usable space, increase accessibility, improve flow, and add a touch of class. Simple to install and maintenance free with a 15 year guarantee, they offer a great solution for any property. The door panel is top-hung from a sliding track that allows the door to slide from side to side

into a cavity in the wall. They can be installed where space is at a premium such as in apartments. They're an excellent choice for smaller rooms such as utility rooms and bathrooms or en-suites. ECLISSE offers single, double, telescopic, or even curved units, all in standard and bespoke sizes.

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Yeoman Rainguard launches Aluminium Rainwater Systems Brochure



Yeoman Rainguard, renowned throughout the industry for the manufacture, supply, and installation of quality rainwater products, has launched its new Aluminium Product Brochure. Showcasing the highly commended XL and SL range of Aluminium gutters and downpipes the brochure introduces, new to the market, Yeoman Rainguard Aluminium Flush Fit Downpipes and Aluminium Security Downpipes. Another new addition is the Squareline range of Aluminium Fascia, Soffits, Copings, and Cills, already proving popular in the commercial market. With a recently expanded colour range, which can accommodate options from RAL and BS ranges along with contemporary shades from Farrow & Ball and Little Greene for example, Yeoman Rainguard's comprehensive Aluminium range can offer that perfect finishing touch for all styles of buildings. A printed version of the new Yeoman Rainguard Aluminium brochure is available on request or can be downloaded from the website, www.rainguard.co.uk. As always Yeoman Rainguard takes great pride in the expertise gained over 40 years in the market and customer services provided, including free site surveys and samples, help clients make the right choice of rainwater systems for their construction projects.

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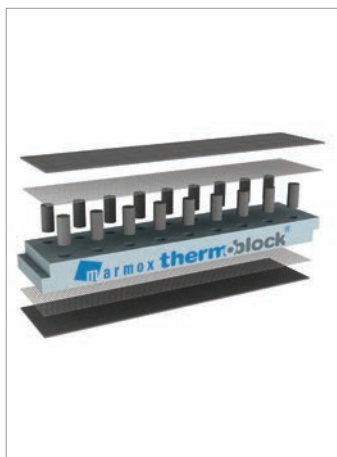


JACKON by BEWI showcases the future of building at stand F08

JACKON by BEWI will be at Futurebuild this year and will be promoting its ICF building systems. These are ready for the rigorous new u-value targets for new-builds, when these come into effect in 2025 as part of the Future Homes Standard. JACKON's THERMOMUR® ICF and JACKODUR® ATLAS ranges already meet or exceed the new targets for thermal insulation. The THERMOMUR® 350 Super range – currently the company's best-selling range in the UK – already achieves 0.15 for walls with no added materials, and the JACKODUR® ATLAS insulated raft system can be designed to achieve 0.11. Visitors to the company's stand at the Show will be able to find out more about the benefits that JACKON by BEWI's 60 years' expertise in XPS and EPS manufacturing can bring to construction projects. JACKON by BEWI building systems make a positive contribution to the construction of highly energy-efficient buildings due to very low energy inputs required for heating or cooling. JACKON by BEWI's ICF system, THERMOMUR® and the insulated concrete raft system JACKODUR® ATLAS allow for fast construction with premium air tightness and acoustic insulation, as well as making the building exceptionally thermally efficient. By planning for energy-efficient homes of the future now, we can help the environment for years to come.

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FUTUREBUILD 2023 STAND NO F08



Marmox Thermoblocks offer warm support at Futurebuild

With both an energy and a housing crisis looming large across the UK, it is appropriate that **Marmox** has opted to dedicate its stand F02 at this year's Futurebuild – taking place at the ExCel from 7-9 March – to showcasing a product offering a ready solution for the issue of thermal bridging. Marmox Thermoblocks are widely recognised by specifiers as providing a means of achieving compliance with Part L, by addressing the challenges of cold-bridging at the floor/wall junction or beneath parapet walls. In fact the growing emphasis on improving energy efficiency as well as the speed and quality of construction is making Thermoblock mainstream for both traditional and modern methods of building. Grant Terry, the Marketing Manager for Marmox, commented: "Thermoblock is unique to the industry in terms of its insulation performance coupled with high load carrying capability and practicality in use. Increasing in popularity over the past decade, it has proved itself in a range of applications and is now widely used in commercial contracts as well as by housebuilders." Thermoblocks are formed from sections of XPS (extruded polystyrene) encapsulating two rows of high strength, epoxy concrete mini-columns. These are attached at either end to the top and bottom layers of glass-fibre reinforced polymer concrete, to ensure a good bond with the rest of the structure.

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FUTUREBUILD 2023 STAND NO F02

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SHOW PREVIEW

7 - 9 MARCH
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FUTUREBUILD FOR A BETTER BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Futurebuild 2023 is set to provide housebuilders and developers with the ideas, inspiration and innovative solutions that will help them create net zero buildings faster, more safely and more efficiently. Taking place at ExCeL London from 7-9 March, the event will focus on our most pressing challenges in order to accelerate the shift to a net zero built environment.

Sustainability remains at the core of this year's show and is why Futurebuild 2023 is also urging housebuilders and developers to act now and 'take a stand' on an issue they passionately believe will help propel the industry towards a more sustainable future. By taking a stand, we can all achieve radical change and build a better future.

CONFERENCE IS 'TAKING A STAND'

The Take a Stand theme is central to the Futurebuild conference programme which will bring together a line-up of expert speakers to deliver an understanding of what collectively we all need to do to meet our climate challenges. We are pleased to have two notable sponsors for this year's conference; SNRG and Hub Brussels.

The first day will focus on Looking Forward and why we need to develop the foresight necessary to break out of our current mindset, with an activism session entitled 'Act now, or face extinction' chaired by Ben Goldsmith, CEO at Menhaden and member of the Conservative Environmental Network Board. On day two, the conference will explore the nature of Changing and especially 'behaviour change'. Dr Viktoria Spaiser – associate professor in sustainability at the University of Leeds – will chair a discussion on the big issue of 'changing how we do things in our professional and personal behaviour to live within planetary boundaries' – which features Dr Niamh Murtagh on the panel. Day three will move on to Taking Action, hearing from those who have been doing just that, and

exploring plans that can take society and the construction industry forward.

SHOW SECTIONS AND NEW SPOTLIGHTS

Futurebuild will be curated into eight show sections including Buildings sponsored by Steico, Digital sponsored by Zutec, Energy sponsored by Kensa Group, District Energy in partnership with UKDEA, and Interiors, Materials, Offsite, Retrofit and Sustainable Infrastructure sponsored by ACO.

The newly expanded Retrofit section, sponsored by Elmhurst Energy and in partnership with The Retrofit Academy CIC and Osmosis, will be showcasing the best solutions, technologies and services that together, can unite and strengthen the delivery of whole house retrofit at scale. It will examine the current housebuilding model and ensure we do not generate a legacy of problems for the future. The event will also feature three new spotlights; Lighting in partnership with KNX UK; District Energy in partnership with UKDEA, and FutureX Innovation in partnership with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

PLATFORM FOR INNOVATION

Futurebuild will continue to be the industry platform for innovation, and to showcase the most innovative technology, products and services. At the heart of this is the return of the renowned Innovation Trail, providing a showcase for 15 Innovation Partners and a range of International Pavilions. The trail will give housebuilders and developers the opportunity to explore revolutionary products, solutions and materials and meet the leading thinkers behind these innovations. The Big Innovation Pitch will also return and offer exhibiting companies the chance of being crowned winner in 2023.

Those attending can also find further inspiration at FutureX Innovation

(in partnership with BEIS) which will shine a spotlight on start-ups and SMEs. The spotlight will also include an Innovation Stage that will host the new Big Ideas Pitch.

SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE

Curated and delivered by over 90 industry leading partners and featuring a line-up of over 300 speakers, the expanded seminar programme is bringing the whole industry together to debate and learn from each other. The programme features practical and actionable CPD accredited sessions so housebuilders and developers can gain many CPD points in one visit and at the same time acquire the knowledge and skills that will help them in their day-to-day role with content delivered across seven stages. Industry

leading partners and associations taking part include CIAT, The Good Homes Alliance, BRE, Passivhaus Trust, Built by Nature, IOM World, RIBA and UKDEA (District Energy Association).

Sessions from across the programme include masterclasses with Bill Dunster, architect and founder of ZedPower; Duncan Baker-Brown, co-founder of BBM Sustainable Design; Zerlina Hughes, founder and creative director of Studio ZNA; Dr Tom Woolley, architect and academic, and David Cheshire, sustainability director at AECOM. They will explore and tackle some of the industry's biggest and most critical topics from 'zero bills' homes to material use, lighting design to bio-based materials and building a circular future.

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.

Everyone in the supply chain has a solution that can make a positive change. Futurebuild 2023 will provide the ultimate stage to showcase that commitment to the creation of a better building industry and achieving net zero. 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.


Article supplied by Futurebuild

Futurebuild 2023 will take place from 7-9 March at London's ExCeL. For more details, visit


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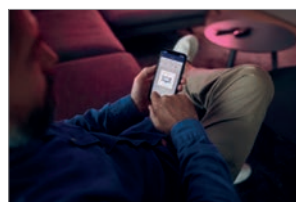
Managing excessive rainfall at development



Brett Martin has provided its StormCrate55 modular crates for an underground attenuation tank designed to control stormwater and address excessive rainwater run-off as part of a prestigious development of homes in central Scotland. Brett Martin's expertise with engineered Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) coupled with the requirement to manage stormwater at this small residential development, led to Kings Group specifying Brett Martin's StormCrate55 attenuation system. Andy Murray, Site Manager at Kings Group said: "Brett Martin offered a supply and install package using the StormCrate55 attenuation system, which proved to be the ideal alternative, as we could create an underground tank beneath the green area on site."

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SPACE FOR SUDS

Howard Gray of GreenBlue Urban highlights the need for early education and planning for green and blue infrastructure from the outset of projects, to help mitigate the effects of flooding



Early in the development process comes the allocation of land for buildings, paving, open space, and drainage requirements – usually this allocation is reflected in the value of the land. The land is a diminishing resource, and to make profits, developers must allocate land in the most effective way. For generations, the percentage of land to open space has been the same – property densities as high as reasonably possible to make developments viable.

However, the SuDS requirement has thrown a new challenge into the pot: allowing enough room to treat and store surface water on site rather than throw it into the pipework and away into the drainage network means that the tried and tested allocation ratio must change.

This is not simple to answer, except to say, by enough. Calculations must be

made to ensure that the total rainfall volume for the design storm event can be retained onsite for the design period. This period would usually be specified by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) as being the time required to allow a storm event to pass through the drainage network so that it does not become inundated by stormwater. But this could be as much as 24 hours, so the volume of storage is not insignificant.

We must also consider the health and safety aspect of the retention feature; both for general use and for maintenance. It is not usually acceptable to create a deep storage pond, unless no other option is available, as this poses a risk for users and maintainers of the space. Most commonly, a shallow basin is preferred, if possible dry through much of the year, and only full in exceptional rain events.

THE USE OF MULTIPURPOSE SUDS FEATURES, SUCH AS TREE PIT SYSTEMS, IS AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO MINIMISE LAND TAKE

BUT, HOW MUCH LAND MUST BE SET ASIDE FOR THIS?

A rule of thumb is that there should be a maximum ratio of 10:1 between impermeable to the base of water storage areas close to buildings and that the maximum depth of stored water should be no more than 300 mm. However, this is a guide only and based on open SuDS features such as attenuation basins or swales.



Similar calculations are available for alternative features.

Most Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) have helpful guidance for reference. For example, one LLFA recommends that 12-15% of the total land area be allocated for open storage. This level of land allocation means that it can be challenging to provide suitable

private garden space as well as roads, footways, and other public spaces.

An alternative way which minimises land take is to use 'multipurpose' SuDS features such as tree pit systems. While these systems may hold relatively less water by volume than an open basin, they can be integrated into a street scene without losing land. Often new

RAIN GARDENS ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE, AS DISCHARGE PERFORMANCE CAN BE ACCURATELY PREDICTED TO ACHIEVE LLFA COMPLIANCE

developments have minimum set canopy cover targets, so by using trees as part of a SuDS train, we can achieve two of the targets within the same footprint.

Rain gardens are a valuable resource, as discharge performance can be accurately predicted to achieve LLFA compliance. We have invested heavily in soil science and are able to recommend the correct soil mix for the catchment area and rainfall event being designed for.

With the latest products available on the market, it is possible to design healthy urban spaces in harmony with nature, and make developments not only sustainable but financially viable.

Howard Gray is PR and specification consultant of GreenBlue Urban

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STAND
FOR A BETTER BUILT
ENVIRONMENT

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YOU TAKE
A STAND FOR?**

WHAT WILL YOU TAKE A STAND FOR?

Build a better future for the built environment

Futurebuild provides the stage for inspiring ideas, innovative solutions & knowledge sharing to drive sustainable construction and help us reach our goal of net zero. The exhibition brings together the entire supply chain to showcase, debate and understand the advancements in sustainable construction and the emerging technologies that will make net zero possible.


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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HEAT PUMPS: OUR LOW CARBON FUTURE

Now is the time to act and start changing the way we heat and cool our homes. Paul Taylor of Panasonic discusses the significant role that heat pumps can play in helping to reduce emissions, energy consumption and costs.



Decarbonisation is high on the agenda as developers look to lower carbon emissions from homes, with the average eco-home design capable of cutting energy bills by 30%.

Today's air source heat pumps are reliable, quiet in operation and highly energy efficient – when compared to oil-fired boilers or electric heaters – and can play a large part in lowering carbon emissions. Further efficiencies can also be achieved when systems are linked to smart controllers to produce significant savings for heating and domestic hot water (DHW) provision.

Manufacturers are currently increasing their range of sustainable energy solutions designed for residential applications. One example is the air-to-water heat pumps, these heat pumps, together with smart remote controls, monitoring, fault diagnosis and rectification technology, can provide a comprehensive and energy efficient solution minimising

carbon emissions while maintaining occupant comfort.

SMART CONTROLS

Smart cloud-based solutions can remotely monitor the suction and discharge pressure of a heat pump unit to help reduce system downtime, thus ensuring that they have a heating, cooling and hot water system that suits their individual daily needs.

Cloud controls have been introduced to the industry to enable direct communication between heat pump units and controllers. This integration allows building owners and portfolio managers to view all their heating and cooling units anytime and from anywhere via a single interface and via mobile devices such as tablet, mobile or laptop, plus delivers actionable real time insights to help reduce energy consumption and drive savings.

Using this smart technology, users

can access a detailed breakdown of the system's energy consumption from 60 minutes to seven days and schedule the settings to ensure a constant and comfortable temperature throughout. This can help end users compare space utilisation and adjust the system so that energy is not wasted. It is crucial for installers to draw attention to this added value that a smart control system can offer these incredible benefits from the IoT revolution.

By optimising a systems operation with remote monitoring in this way, it is possible to extend the life of the heat pump unit, thanks to status updates and preventive maintenance, ensuring a positive return on investment. Operational costs can also be improved with the advanced, pre-programmed settings, the ability to fix yearly scheduling, energy saving modes, see statistics, permit tailored access to different users and more which deliver advanced energy savings.



By using intuitive simple smart cloud controls, homeowners and installers can easily get to grips with this new technology, via an app on their mobile phone or laptop and by using a familiar interface.

SUCCESSFUL TRIALS SHOWCASE LOW CARBON FUTURE

Switching from a familiar technology such as gas boilers to renewable alternatives can be challenging. Developer Gleeson Homes have been testing the

energy efficiency of heat pumps with a three-bedroom detached home 'The Kildare' at their latest development in Poolsbrook, Chesterfield. 'The Kildare' was fitted with a 5 kW Panasonic Aquarea monobloc ASHP and had its performance benchmarked against an identical, but gas boiler heated home, located on another nearby Gleeson development. A trial that is also being carried out at two other Gleeson developments in England.

The final examination of the trial property fitted with the heat pumps, provided great insight for the Gleeson Homes team regarding the ease of installation and energy efficiency benefits of using heat pumps. Gleeson Homes has now planned a controlled roll-out of heat pumps within 1000's of its properties, of which 256 homes in South Lincolnshire have already commenced construction.

In conclusion, by switching to air to water heat pumps to provide heating to our homes, housing emissions can be lowered significantly by incorporating this energy efficient solution. Air to water heat pumps is the future for the housing sector and an essential step in addressing the climate change problem.

Paul Taylor is UK head of air-to-water for Panasonic

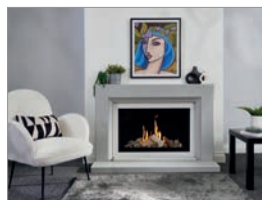


OMNIE launches ASHP guide for installers

OMNIE has launched a new Knowledge Guide for installers, which offers a comprehensive overview of air source heat pumps (ASHPs), and the help that is available in obtaining a BUS – or Boiler Upgrade Scheme – voucher. This downloadable, seven-page publication starts by explaining about the company's 'Experience on tap' before reassuring installers regarding the 'tried, tested and trusted' nature of OMNIE's product ranges. This is followed by a page outlining key points such as stressing that performance is a top priority for the company's technical experts, while dedicated project managers are on hand to offer guidance from the planning stages to installation and handover. OMNIE boasts three decades' experience in the field which has resulted in its industry leading Whole House System philosophy, which seeks to constantly improve indoor air quality as well as delivering optimum efficiency. Other key points include OMNIE's products being award winning, while its free design service not only sizes the heat pump, but covers heat delivery, controls and DHW provision, while commissioning is taken care of by its partner company. The remainder of the guide concentrates on the all-important, Government funded Boiler Upgrade Scheme – and it is here where the installer is assured how the OMNIE team takes care of the application for the £5,000 grant as well as how their customers qualify.

01392 363605 www.omnie.co.uk

Introducing the Infinity 780FL



The Infinity 780FL, from **Charlton & Jenrick**, makes a luxurious addition to any room with its contemporary mixed log set, regardless of whether you choose the Herringbone Brick or Black Glass Liners. Packing a mighty punch, this fire produces 7.8kW of heat and 82% efficiency keeping you warm whatever the weather.

Charlton & Jenrick's new Micro Marble surround is the star of the show and is a must have for anyone looking for the ultimate in modern fireplaces.

From £2,324.00 Inc VAT. Please visit the website for more information: charltonandjenrick.co.uk/products/infinity-780fl-conventional-flue-gas-fire

01952 200 444 www.charltonandjenrick.co.uk

Multivent installed in student accommodation



Vent-Axia has supplied over 60 of its Lo-Carbon Multivent MVDC-MSH units to provide effective ventilation at a new nine-storey student accommodation scheme in Manchester. Vent-Axia's Multivent MVDC-MSH unit features three fully variable speeds; normal, boost and purge, and can extract up to 118l/s. The digital

display allows installers to accurately set airflow, ensuring exactly the right ventilation rate, while accurate speed control helps minimise noise and energy consumption, which made the Multivent MVDC-MSH ideal for the Church Inn project. It also features a built-in humidity sensor so that the unit boosts when humidity reaches a certain threshold, combatting excess moisture and thus helping provide good indoor air quality.

0344 856 0590 www.vent-axia.com

DRU announces new Spartherm Lean series of compact wood fires and stoves



Spartherm Lean Triple 68x28x48 RLA

DRU is the exclusive UK distributor for Spartherm, one of Germany's largest manufacturers of wood burning fires and stoves.

January 2023 sees the UK launch of the Spartherm Lean series of built-in and freestanding wood fires and stoves with compact dimensions suitable for homes with limited space. The first model to be released is the built-in Lean Triple 68x28x48

RLA. It is Ecodesign ready with external air connection, a vertically sliding glass door for easy maintenance, 81% energy efficiency and manual or remote controls. The freestanding Lean Saphir RLU wood fire and the larger Trico S and L RLA wood stoves will follow later in 2023.

Commenting on the launch, DRU UK general manager Niall Deiraniya said: "We are responding to the huge current demand for

wood burning appliances with this new, slimline selection of fires and stoves that are tailor-made for British homes, where superior design, compact dimensions and high energy efficiency are major priorities."

To find out more about the range of DRU Fires visit the company's website.

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Spartherm Lean Saphir RLU



Spartherm Trico S White RLA

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KEEPING UP WITH VENTILATION REQUIREMENTS

Ruth MacEachern of EnviroVent looks at what the ventilation requirement changes for new homes mean for housebuilders in England and Wales, and how they can meet the challenge.

2022 was a year of significant change in the ventilation industry. Major updates to Approved Document L and F were introduced in a move towards the Future Homes and Building Standard, due in 2025. These standards will require all new build homes to be future-proofed with low carbon heating, effective ventilation and world-leading levels of energy efficiency. They also set out the ambitious target of reducing levels of carbon in new homes by 75% by 2025.

A major change to Approved Document F is the renaming of the ventilation methods. In the previous Building Regulations, these were referred to as Systems. System 1 became Natural Ventilation with Intermittent Extract Fans and Background Ventilators; System 2 which was Passive Stack Ventilation (PSV) has now been removed (but can potentially be used in situations where suitable); System 3 is now known as Continuous Mechanical Extract Ventilation (MEV and d-MEV); and System 4 has become Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR).

Alternative ventilation systems, such as Positive Input Ventilation (PIV) could be specified on the requirements of Regulation F1(1) on the basis that “there shall be adequate means of ventilation provided for people in the building” and that compliance can be proven, for example, with a BBA Certificate.

VENTILATION RATES

Another key change in the updated Building Regulations is the increase in the whole dwelling ventilation rates in a property. Between the 2010 and updated versions there has been an increase of 6 l/s per person with a one-bedroom property which was previously at 13 l/s, now 19 l/s. This is a significant increase and will affect decisions in terms of



choosing a suitable product to be able to comply with the regulations. In many cases, intermittent fans are no longer suitable for very airtight dwellings.

The requirements for background ventilation in relation to MEV and d-MEV in England have also been changed. This usually takes the form of trickle vents in windows, but through-wall ventilators can potentially be used, however both options usually require factoring in during the design phase as retrofitting can be costly and time consuming.

In the previous regulations, if a property had an air permeability of 5 or greater this was considered to be fairly leaky and therefore no background ventilation was needed. In properties with an air permeability of less than 5 and therefore more airtight, there was a requirement of 2,500 mm² of background ventilators in each habitable room. The latest Building Regulations updates changed all this, to ensure that properties of all air permeabilities use trickle ventilation in habitable rooms.

The ventilation level has also increased to 4,000 mm² per habitable room, and the guidance states that the total number of background ventilators must not be fewer than the number of bedrooms in the dwelling, plus an additional two ventilators.

A further change is the addition of

Section 2 and Appendix B to Approved Document F which relate to indoor air quality and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). This includes a list of harmful contaminants, exposure limits, time and advice on action to be taken should the property exceed safe levels. Developers are increasingly looking to specify whole house ventilation systems, even for smaller properties, as they can be a more efficient way to meet the regulations, with MVHR the most effective.

The issue of overheating has been addressed for the first time in the updated Building Regulations, with the release of Approved Document O: Overheating Mitigation, which is causing an additional challenge. The document concentrates on two main methodologies, the Simplified Method and Dynamic Thermal Modelling which look at many variables to determine whether further action is required to reduce the risk of overheating. Requirement O1 states that ‘reasonable provision’ needs to be made in residential buildings to be able to reduce the occurrence of high indoor air temperatures. A fabric first approach is often taken, with mechanical cooling seen as a final option once all other options have been explored.

For housebuilders working to Passivhaus standards, a certified Passivhaus MVHR system is the key to ensuring that buildings can breathe effectively.

In addition, updates to Approved Document L mean that new homes are required to be increasingly airtight. Latest Building Regulations have increased energy efficiency requirements from 70% to 73% and, as a result of the current energy crisis affecting homes, this need to recover heat and save energy is particularly important to homebuyers.

Ruth MacEachern is product manager for EnviroVent

DEVELOPERS ARE INCREASINGLY LOOKING TO SPECIFY WHOLE HOUSE VENTILATION SYSTEMS, AS THEY CAN BE A MORE EFFICIENT WAY TO MEET REGULATIONS

ThermaStore HHR – The single feed high heat retention storage heater by Electrorad

Richard Brown, Managing Director at Electrorad says, "Our ThermaStore HHR Storage System really does have all the great advantages of storage heating without any of the negatives, including a single power cable connection for storage and boost element, making for easier installation and control."

With a high quality internal insulation around its core enabling high heat retention, the ThermaStore ensures you get heat whenever you want it throughout the entire day, unlike more traditional storage heaters that can often only provide enough heat for the morning.

The ThermaStore works from single power cable connection for storage and boost elements – but what does that mean?

It means it's designed for use with the Economy 7 but can be used with any other overnight economy tariffs such as Economy 10 and only one meter is required!

Historically Economy 7 tariffs have two separate meters, the ThermaStore HHR needs a more modern dual rate meter that provides 24hr electricity but switches to reduced rate during the E7 hours, therefore the E7 meter must be a dual tariff rate switching meter or smart meter.

With this in place the ThermaStore HHR requires just one fused spur connection. The E7 charge and the daily heating is provided from this one connection. On installation it is programmed with the correct Economy tariff



times for charging and at these times the storage elements will put heat into the storage core at the cheaper rate.

The amount of charge taken will be determined by the built in charge algorithm, and only the charge needed will be taken, thereby minimising the electricity use. On installation the ThermaStore is also programmed to know what room temperatures are needed and at what times. The ThermaStore will then use minimal amounts of electricity, as required, during the day, to run the low noise fan and will extract the heat from the storage core to achieve the desired room temperature. If ever extra heat is required then the built-in



direct acting element can be used to boost the room temperature if necessary.

Its built in digital controls and clever thermostat mean the ThermaStore HHR has the ability to learn what charge is required to heat your rooms day to day, meaning it makes your E7 tariff really work hard for you and it is proven to be up to 27% cheaper to run than standard storage heaters.

The ThermaStore also has optional app control, compatible with Alexa and Google Home giving you voice control of your heating!

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Consort Claudgen launches app



Consort Claudgen have launched Consort Connect app which allows users to have complete control over their heating remotely via their smartphone or tablet. The app is free and downloadable from Google Play or Apple Store. It can control Consort's Wi-Fi enabled heaters and SL heaters connected to an SLPBWIFI wireless controller. Features a 7-day timer with 24 heating periods per day, lock function, open window tracking and response capability, and custom

automations. Also, the SLPBWIFI and Consort 'MWIFI' heater models have a self-learning control ability utilising occupancy and temperature sensors.

01646 692172 www.consortepi.com

New room thermostat launched by ESI



With a reputation for helping homeowners and tenants to control their heating costs, **ESI** has responded to the current economic climate with the introduction of its latest quality heating control – the RTP4 Touch programmable room thermostat. This latest introduction is capable of controlling

heating and hot water systems via combi, system or heat only boilers. When installed with the ESI WIFI hub, homeowners and tenants heating and hot water can be controlled via Alexa or the ESI Centro App. Vitally, the load compensation functionality, available via OpenTherm technology, modulates the flow temperature dependant on the desired room temperature, saving up to 15% on gas usage – a benefit not to be overlooked in the current situation where energy prices have leapt to a huge new high in the UK.

01280 816868 www.esicontrols.co.uk

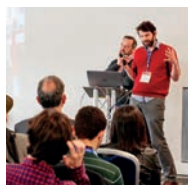
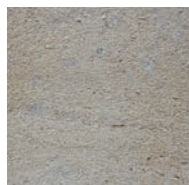
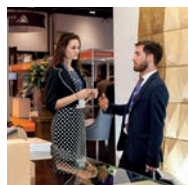
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Domus Ventilation expands HRXE MVHR range with ZEUS

Domus Ventilation, manufacturer of market-leading ventilation systems that save energy and improve indoor air quality, has expanded its HRXE range of Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) units with the launch of HRXE-ZEUS. HRXE-ZEUS has been introduced to meet ventilation requirements for large residential properties, which require a more powerful system to deliver the airflow required to meet Building Regulations Part F.

HRXE-ZEUS high performance MVHR system combines supply and extract ventilation in one system. Using an advanced heat exchanger, up to 95% of the heat typically lost in waste, stale air is efficiently recovered and used to temper the fresh air drawn into the building.

The filtered, pre-warmed air is distributed to areas of the home such as living rooms and bedrooms, effectively meeting part of the heating load in energy efficient dwellings. The system features two independent fans which have full-speed control for background and boost ventilation rates.

HRXE-ZEUS comes with 100% thermal bypass which automatically activates when the air temperature reaches a pre-set level, allowing in cooler, fresh, filtered air without warming it through the heat exchanger – ideal for increasingly air tight properties that are prone to overheating in summer. The smart design of HRXE-ZEUS means there is no reduction in airflow when operating in bypass mode.



There are four HRXE-ZEUS models to choose from, available to meet different specifications and different on-site requirements, including opposite handed units and units with integral humidistat. Optimal ventilation performance is achieved when choosing models with the latter, as the sensors accurately measure air humidity and the HRXE-ZEUS's extract speed automatically changes from background to boost as the level of humidity increases.

HRXE-ZEUS accessories include an Anti-Vibration tray which isolates the unit from the wall to reduce any low levels of vibration induced noise, condensation drain kit and, of course, replacement filters. The filters are easily

replaced via the front access panel, for quick and easy maintenance.

HRXE-ZEUS joins Domus Ventilation's existing range of MVHR systems, including HRXE-HERA which is suited to use in smaller properties of up to two/three bedrooms, and HRXE-AURA designed for homes of up to four/five bedrooms. All units are listed on the SAP Product Characteristics Database (PCDB) and come with a warranty of five years, with the first year covering parts and labour.

The HRXE range has been designed to work most efficiently when used with Domus duct systems, providing a total solution to whole house ventilation solutions for residential properties. Domus duct systems offer improved system performance through the exacting tolerances and engineered fit of the system, whereby pressure drops are minimised and air leakage virtually eliminated. Domus duct systems feature a range of unique products, including the award-winning Greenline Bend which reduces duct bend resistance by up to 60%.

Domus Ventilation has a well-deserved reputation for quality, supported by excellent technical support, from a market leading manufacturer and designer. It is well placed to offer immediate, practical solutions to Building Regulations Parts F & L.

vent.info@domusventilation.co.uk
www.domusventilation.co.uk

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ecodan.me.uk/hb8



0 | STRATEGIC
DEFINITION



1 | PREPARATION
AND BRIEF



2 | CONCEPT
DESIGN



3 | SPATIAL
DESIGN



4 | TECHNICAL
DESIGN



5 | CONSTRUCTION



6 | HANDOVER



7 | USE



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STYLISH, SUSTAINABLE BATHROOMS

Liam Buxton of the Roca Group discusses the importance of choosing sustainable bathrooms, but maintains they shouldn't compromise on functionality and style.

When it comes to selecting bathroom products for a development, choosing a quality brand means that housebuilders are investing in the needs of both the homeowner and the environment. A quality product design will ensure longevity – so it looks good and performs well for longer, and won't need quickly replacing.

There is also an onus on bathroom manufacturers to up our game in terms of evidential reporting of sustainable sourcing and manufacture. The process is becoming ever-more transparent, and homebuilders can be confident that the potential extra financial investment required for a quality product will reap the necessary dividends when it comes to sustainability.

PRODUCTS THAT WILL LAST

It's important to question manufacturers on how long their products are expected to last, and also ask them to back up those claims. Brassware is the part of the bathroom that takes the most punishment over its life – the quality of the internal components is crucial as if they fail, the tap or shower as a whole will fail.

On the outside, chrome is the obvious finish to choose, as it will reliably keep its good looks year after year. But what if you want to offer your customers a more contemporary look? Adding personality to the bathroom is something that many homeowners are increasingly striving for, with brassware being a great way to do so. With this in mind, PVD coating is a game changer. It is anti-corrosive and resistant to limescale, scratching and cleaning products, while also offering on-trend finishes such as glamorous rose gold and striking matt black. These desirable and stylish finishes, when coupled with superb product performance, encourage homeowners to keep their brassware for longer, thereby reducing wastage.

WATER-SAVING PRODUCTS

For a long time, bathroom manufacturers have – quite rightly – been held

A QUALITY PRODUCT DESIGN WILL ENSURE LONGEVITY



accountable for reducing the amount of water needed to flush a toilet. Now, with as little as four and two litres needed for full and half flushes, housebuilders can be confident they're installing a water-saving choice. In addition, the innovation of the rimless toilet not only means it's easier to clean, but it achieves more effective cleaning on each flush. Concepts like this might sound like gimmicks but when the whole bathroom industry adopts them,

you know that there's something in it!

EASY MAINTENANCE

No one likes cleaning the bathroom, so anything that cuts down the amount of time it takes is going to be a winner with house buyers. In addition, Covid-19 has left homeowners acutely aware of the need for higher hygiene standards – demanding products that allow for frequent but easy cleaning. There



is also an important environmental consideration, as any harsh cleaning products used to remove limescale or tough grime can be detrimental to the ecosystems in our waterways.

Ceramic is a natural and environmentally friendly material, and the reason it's so commonly used for sanitaryware is that it is durable, non-porous and generally easy to clean. Modern glazes can also be added that create a super-smooth surface where microscopic residue simply slides off, so dirt and germs cannot build up. The result

is basins and toilets that are altogether easier to maintain. The PVD finishes on brassware mentioned earlier also require minimal cleaning – detergent and water will do the trick.

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

With house buyers expecting ensembles in several bedrooms, plus a cloakroom downstairs, homes today are far more likely to have smaller bathrooms rather than the single large family bathroom found in older properties. As such, storage is crucial in order to keep those bathrooms serene and clutter free.

Storage must be made from materials that are sustainably sourced, and that can be responsibly disposed of at the end of their life. But, as manufacturers, it is once again our job to ensure that those products aren't quickly disposed of; that they should fit the end-users' needs both now and in the longer term. For example, a vanity unit with compartmentalised drawers to store bathroom essentials more efficiently, and a coordinating column unit that can be slotted into otherwise unusable space next to a door or radiator.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT

So, how can you gauge the environmental commitment of a company? Looking at what plans they have in place is

a good starting point. Our corporate sustainability plan has a target of becoming carbon neutral in terms of direct emissions by 2045. It informs every aspect of the business, from product design to delivering those products to our customers, and is structured around six initiatives.

First, implementing the necessary digital equipment to measure energy consumption at our industrial facilities. Second, optimising energy consumption in production processes. Third, maximising the use of clean energy sources via self-production systems, the purchase of green electricity and the use of the most sustainable alternatives in our thermal processes. Fourth, off-setting essential emissions via guarantees of origin or other offsetting instruments. Fifth, using sustainable vehicle fleets and off-setting emissions from business travel. And finally, engaging suppliers to minimise Scope 3 emissions.

It is vital to have confidence in the products you're specifying for a development. A quality product will go a long way to ensuring you are fulfilling your commitment to the environment and to your customers.

Liam Buxton is national residential specification team manager at the Roca Group

JACKOBOARD® promotes cost and time-saving benefits of waterproof XPS construction board



JACKOBOARD® from JACKON by BEWI offers many benefits for installers of wetrooms and bathrooms. JACKOBOARD® is a waterproof, weight-loading and thermally insulating construction board for use in all types of tiling jobs.

Critically, because it is manufactured from 100% waterproof XPS, there is no need to tank wetrooms constructed using JACKOBOARD®, either with a waterproof membrane or a paint-on solution. This saves the installer both time and money, since a separate tanking system is not required and only the joints where the boards meet need to be taped.

The NHBC Standard states that "backing surfaces may require protection from a suitable tanking system".

"This guidance is completely correct," says Martin Harragan from JACKON by BEWI, "but it should not be interpreted to mean that if you are using an XPS backerboard, such as JACKOBOARD®, you have to tank the entire substrate of your wetroom. The closed structure of an XPS board means that it is totally impossible for water to pass through it, in the way that it would through a fibre cement board for instance."

JACKOBOARD® is keen to communicate this message to the many different trades who get involved in the installation of wetroom systems, from the shower tray upwards. Although there



are wetroom specialists, this job is often down to plumbers, M&E contractors, tilers, dryliners and flooring contractors. So, as wetrooms continue to increase in popularity, there are different trades who need to be aware of the benefits of XPS backerboards.

While offering the benefits of XPS, JACKOBOARD® can also offer a price advantage in the marketplace, due to the fact that the company manufactures its own foam, giving it complete control over cost, product quality and sustainability of manufacturing processes. These factors have enabled JACKOBOARD® to become the UK market leader in XPS construction boards.

jackoboard@jackon.co.uk www.jackon.co.uk



Brooklyn. Uncompromisingly stylish.

The Brooklyn cubicle from Kinedo is the simple way to bring industrial chic into any bathroom.

Its striking looks, with black or grey finishes, combine with speed of installation to offer a high quality, self-contained solution that includes the cubicle, internal panels, tray, shower valve, head and handheld shower.

The Kinedo team works with you to make sure a Kinedo cubicle is the perfect choice for your project. From site visits, installation training and technical assistance, our first-class aftercare supports a first-class product.



BAL Micromax3 ECO: performance, control, sustainability

With all the qualities of BAL Micromax2, the new BAL Micromax3 ECO grout delivers enhanced product performance, improved useability and added eco-benefits.

Available from 6th March, BAL Micromax3 ECO grout provides everything an architect or specifier needs for a perfect tiled finish.

Available in 36 colours, with a range of matching silicone sealants it contains longer-lasting and improved Microban® antimicrobial protection providing non-hazardous protection against black mould and mildew, as well as an efflorescence-free formulation and locked-in colour consistency.

SUSTAINABILITY WITHOUT COMPROMISE

The world is changing and that means we must reduce our environmental impact.

Produced in recyclable packaging, Micromax3 ECO is manufactured with over 25% recycled materials with no loss of performance.

With an EC1 Plus EMICODE designation, Micromax3 ECO achieves the best classification under the EMICODE system. BAL Micromax 3 is also non-hazardous, whilst also providing excellent anti-microbial protection.

OPC-free for a reduced carbon footprint, BAL Micromax3 ECO also has a 2-year shelf life in 2.5kg and 5kg sizes (with all packaging 100% recyclable) and grouts can be part mixed for multiple use. This ensures less waste on-site for the fixer, while being better for the



environment.

Setting in 2 to 3 hours for fast-track project completion, the new grout is now also suitable for swimming pools and can be used up to 30mm joints widths with no shrinking or cracking.

Alex Underwood, Head of Marketing at BAL said: "The next generation of grouts, BAL Micromax3 ECO provides the leading technology to ensure a new benchmark in grout performance, with guaranteed long-lasting results and added eco-benefits.

"Micromax3 ECO delivers market-leading

solutions, with all the benefits of Micromax2 including the use of >25% recycled raw materials; a superior smooth finish, high flexibility and durability time and time again.

"Tilers demanded and we listened, delivering advanced technology with greater useability including easier clean-off and less haze.

"Made in the UK, with 36 colours and a range of matching Micromax Sealants, BAL Micromax3 ECO delivers best-in-class results."

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New Compact Range from Vitra - ArchiPlan



ArchiPlan 60cm mid-height wall unit in matt black showing the plywood edge complemented by practical and stylish display shelves, and mirror shelf combination unit, all in black metal framing. Countertop basin shown projects just 28cm to make maximum use of space.

Vitra Bathrooms, a global bathroom brand, has launched a striking range that provides plenty of options for designers and specifiers, particularly those working with small spaces. Designed by Design Studio Vitra, the new ArchiPlan collection is also perfect for bathrooms in the hospitality and commercial sectors.

ArchiPlan is modern and minimalist. The range offers a variety of sizes, including narrow cabinet widths and reduced projections (from just 28cm). Storage options include shelves in two sizes (45 and 60cm) and open shelving in the mirrors and mid-units. The contemporary

design also has black metal framing detailing. Elegant cut-out holes instead of door handles keep the design simple and add to the feeling of space.

The furniture is made from plywood, an eco-friendly material option. As well as requiring little energy to produce and being highly recyclable, plywood is incredibly hard-wearing and durable. The finish is water and moisture-resistant, offering a solid solution without compromising aesthetics or functionality.

With contemporary, clean lines, the furniture is available in a choice of neutral and timeless

matt colours - white, black, and taupe.

Wall-hung furniture units with washbasins are available in 45cm, 60cm and 90cm. A 52cm wide mid-unit provides valuable storage and open shelving.

ArchiPlan basins can be wall-mounted (with the option of chrome legs on 38cm x 90cm basins) or mounted in cabinetry. Each is available in 45cm, 60cm, 90cm and 120cm formats and is ideal for tight spaces in both 28 and 38cm projections.

01235 750990
www.vitra.co.uk

Riverside Apartments Integrate Vicaima stained doors



© Richard Gooding

Set in the beautiful surroundings of historic Chiswick, in London and positioned with excellent views over the river Thames, sit a group of select and classic new apartments created by modern living specialists Fruition Properties.

These stylish open-plan apartments have been complemented by their choice of interior doors, where Vicaima Crown Cut Ash Stained from the Vicaima Naturdor Range were selected. The finish specified in this instance was the

tasteful Marina Grey option. This finish not only depicts a contemporary tone, but also permits the attractive and natural grain configuration to shine through. Doors for the project were supplied in a mixture of both flush and glazed options, blending seamlessly with their surroundings and adding to the tasteful décor which a hallmark of Fruition Properties exemplary living space.

Marina Grey is just one of six attractive tonal options from the Naturdor Original

Stained Range and is available in an extensive array of performance options, including FD30 third-party accredited fire doors.

For other inspirational finish ideas, download a copy of the Vicaima Interior Door Selector: www.vicaima.com/files/files/catalog/vicaima-interior-door-selector-2022-2023.pdf

Visit the Vicaima website or email for more information info@vicaima.com

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Designer Contracts on trend refresh



Designer Contracts has refreshed two of its popular flooring collections. The new-look Apollo Plus Volume 2 offers an updated palette with on trend colours across this affordable, soft quality polypropylene two-ply twist carpet range. Apollo Plus Volume 2 now reflects the resurgence of beiges and more natural earth tones seen

at the Harrogate Flooring Show this Autumn. Hometex Volume 2 introduces in-vogue herringbone and chevron patterns to a competitively priced, felt back vinyl collection. Hometex Volume 2 is a traditional sheet cushioned vinyl, updated to include herringbone and chevron designs within the mixed collection of 14 colourways. Natural-look wood and stone styles also feature in the range which can be fitted over most existing smooth subfloors.

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

The most used kitchen appliance



As the original and only true 100-degree boiling water tap brand on the market, **Quooker** leads the way when it comes to innovative technology and design. We live in a world where people want things delivered at speed and on average, we spend four months of our lives waiting for the kettle to boil. Not so with a boiling water tap, delivering the exact amount of boiling water needed instantly. Once installed, users will find Quooker taps quickly become one of the most used appliances in the

whole kitchen, giving more efficient returns in terms of energy usage and water conservation.

enquiries@quooker.co.uk www.quooker.co.uk

Reginox celebrates success of the Belfast sink



Reginox is celebrating the success of the Belfast – a classic sink offering modern styling. The Belfast is manufactured from fireclay ceramic and features thin walls to each side, ensuring that it would make a stunning addition to both classic and modern kitchens alike. Available in white, it features a beautiful smooth gloss finish to all surfaces and is set off by a sparkling chrome waste. The sink measures 595 mm in length by 455 mm in width and is suitable for installation in 600 mm units. Dave Mayer, Commercial Director of Reginox UK comments: "Our new Belfast sink is an excellent product of outstanding quality and we are confident that it will perform extremely well in meeting the requirements of customers looking for a classic-style sink with modern appeal."

01260 280033 www.reginox.co.uk

Growing family story by Designer Contracts



When the show home team at **Designer Contracts** were asked to tell the story of a growing modern family on a new development near Ipswich, they responded with an inspired tale with a happy ending. Abbie Lockett of Designer Contracts led the project.

Said Bellway Essex sales manager Laura Trigg: "The scheme that Abbie and the design team put together has been a showstopper. Seeing the designs come to life was very exciting, and from the feedback our clients and colleagues have provided, we know we made the right decision with choosing the beautiful schemes. Thank you to the whole team at Designer Contracts, and a special thank you to Abbie for listening to what we wanted for these beautiful homes and making our visions come to life."

01246 854577 www.designercontracts.com

Earthborn Colour of the Year 2023

If you're looking for warmth and sophistication in a paint finish, look no further than **Earthborn's** Colour of the Year 2023, Lady Bug – a rich, jewel-toned burgundy.

As we enter the new year, interiors are moving away from the ever-popular soft neutrals and leaning towards cocooning colour and statement spaces. A dramatic yet cosy hue, Lady Bug adds endless warmth and timeless style to both contemporary and traditional homes alike. Lady Bug is available in Claypaint, Lifestyle, Eco Chic and Eggshell No.17 finishes.

For a sustainable, environmentally sound specification, check the paint is Ecolabel approved. Earthborn paints have achieved this demanding standard, which covers every aspect of a product's manufacture, use and disposal. Because they are virtually VOC free, they do not give off any toxic emissions, so rooms can be brought into use more quickly and are much healthier for the building and its occupants.

01928 734 171 www.earthbornpaints.co.uk

Riverside apartments feature A-rated Magply boards for kitchen fit out

An acclaimed new residential development in a Thameside location is currently being fitted out, with four of the apartment buildings featuring the use of 18 mm **Magply** boards, manufactured by IPP Ltd., being used in all the kitchens due to their unique range of physical benefits. With the design of the structure prioritising the use of non-combustible materials in response to recent changes to the Building Regulations, the A1 rated Magply boards were chosen to form pattresses within the external walls on the basis of the material's unique combination of strength and fire resistance as well as the product's past performance in similar applications. The Contract Manager for S & R London, Andrey Lukor, explained: "All of the external walls to the apartment buildings on this site have to feature non-combustible materials and the architects for the project, Reddy A + U, specified the use of the 18 mm Magply boards as meeting the stringent statutory requirements. The steel frames are assembled on site and we are attaching the lengths of Magply to support plates on the back of the frames before they are positioned against the outer walls. Although we have never used Magply before, we are finding the boards easy to install and they are taking the fixings for all of the kitchen units without any problems."

01621 776252 www.magply.co.uk

STAYING UP TO SPEED WITH FIRE SAFETY

Housebuilders and developers must stay up to date with the latest fire regulations to ensure compliance of a property portfolio is maintained. Here, Simon Jones of Kidde Safety Europe summarises the most recent updates to be aware of.



If you are responsible for a housing development, a robust approach to fire safety is vital to help safeguard residents as well as ensure regulatory compliance. There are many factors that contribute to this overall fire safety strategy – and alarms will have a fundamental role to play.

Despite this, a research survey undertaken in 2021 highlighted that 27% of UK renters did not have a smoke alarm on each storey of their home and private renters (32%) were less likely to have an alarm than social renters (20%). In addition, the research showed that 51% of tenants surveyed did not have a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm fitted in their property.

ENGLAND AND WALES

Approved Document B of the Building Regulations for England and Wales stipulates that new builds and any materially altered properties must have interlinked AC smoke alarms on each floor – equivalent to an LD3 alarm system as defined in BS 5839-6:2019. A heat

alarm in the kitchen is not a current legal requirement but is recommended in the aforementioned system. Approved Document J was recently amended to expand the requirements for CO alarms. As such, in addition to the requirement that any room with a new or replacement solid fuel appliance must include a CO alarm, it is now a further requirement for a CO alarm to be fitted in any room containing fixed gas and oil-burning appliances (excluding gas appliances solely used for cooking).

SCOTLAND

Scotland was the first to enhance its regulations for fire safety and under the Housing (Scotland) Act in February 2022. Since then, all homes in Scotland, whether new builds or existing, must have interlinked smoke and heat alarms installed, thus raising the category of protection to LD2. These can be either ceiling mounted or if there is not space and it is allowed by the manufacturer these can be wall mounted. The updates also stipulated:

A RESEARCH SURVEY UNDERTAKEN IN 2021 HIGHLIGHTED THAT 27% OF UK RENTERS DID NOT HAVE A SMOKE ALARM ON EACH STOREY OF THEIR HOME AND PRIVATE RENTERS (32%) WERE LESS LIKELY TO HAVE AN ALARM THAN SOCIAL RENTERS (20%)

- One smoke alarm in the living room (or the room that is used most regularly by the occupant)
- One smoke alarm in every hallway or landing
- One heat alarm in the kitchen
- Carbon monoxide alarms with sealed-in



or mains-powered batteries that last the full product lifetime installed in rooms where there is a fixed carbon-fuelled appliance or flue, excluding where appliances are used solely for cooking.

With Scotland leading the way and with the wider support of the industry, it is highly likely that England and Wales could follow in implementing Category LD2 as a minimum standard, given the improvements that could be made to occupant safety.

A commonality across all regions is that all new build or materially altered properties in Scotland, England and Wales require mains-powered interlinked alarms. This should help to ensure that occupants will be able to hear the alarm throughout the building – even if they are far from the source of the heat,

smoke or fire. By being alerted quickly, this can reduce the time it takes to evacuate to safety. Interlinking the alarms can be achieved either by hard-wired connection or by radio frequency-enabled alarm units.

The responsibility for ensuring that these requirements are put in place lies both with the specifier and housebuilder or developer. It is paramount that these regulations are adhered to before properties are sold entirely or in part to others, such as local authorities or housing associations.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

When selecting which alarms to install, we always suggest looking at reputable manufacturers and trusted brands. This means you can be better assured of product quality, that the alarms chosen are manufactured in line with all the relevant standards and will perform as intended in an emergency. It is also vital to check that mains-powered smoke alarms are compliant with EN 14604 and mains-powered heat alarms with BS 5446-2. In addition, a CO alarm should comply with EN 50291-1 for domestic premises.

To further enhance occupant safety, we also recommend that property owners UK-wide implement BS 5839-6, LD2 as

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENSURING THAT THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE PUT IN PLACE LIES BOTH WITH THE SPECIFIER AND HOUSEBUILDER OR DEVELOPER

a minimum requirement. This includes making sure that heat and smoke alarms have been installed in the correct locations in line with LD2 and that they have been interlinked to each unit. Building owners should ensure that CO alarms are correctly fitted in line with the latest guidance.

Simon Jones is marketing manager at Kidde Safety Europe

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Door closer improves fire door reliability

Powermatic controlled, concealed door closers are used extensively on fire doors in flats, apartments and HMOs throughout the social housing sector thanks to the safety, reliability and low maintenance benefits that they deliver. Unlike surface-mounted door closers, Powermatic is completely concealed when the door is closed, reducing the opportunity for the door closer to be vandalised, tampered with or removed and ensuring that the fire door continues to perform reliably.

Together with maintenance-free service and closing speed and latching action which can be adjusted without removal from the door, this can result in a reduced maintenance burden for social landlords. Powermatic boasts a plethora of performance accreditations, including UKCA marking, fire testing on half- and one-hour fire doors, opening forces that comply with BS8300 and the ability to enable doors to meet the requirements of Approved Document M. It is also the only Certifire jamb-mounted door closer. For more information, please visit the **Samuel Heath** website.

0121 766 4200 www.concealeddoorclosers.com



Triton Waterproofing range looking good for 'beautiful basements'

A Leicester based company which specialises in waterproofing and the construction of high specification basements, as well as the upgrade of existing sub-structures, has made extensive use of products from the range of **Triton Systems** in creating a complex new extension to an old farmhouse in Northamptonshire for a private client. Careful consideration of the water-proofing and damp-proofing detailing is always essential when constructing a basement, but in the case of the Northamptonshire project the situation was made even more challenging due to a very high water table and persistent bad weather during the work. As an approved installer of the Triton Systems, Beautiful Basements employed half a dozen of the well-proven products to create a large-scale, fully waterproof sub-structure that offers a ten year guarantee along with insurance backed guarantee. The products include TT admix incorporated into all of the waterproof concrete mix at the batching plant, Tri- Cream for the injected DPCs, three variants of the Platon drainage membranes, a pair of sump pumps and one of Triton's high level alarms. The Operations Manager for Beautiful Basements, Mike Connelly, comments: "Importantly for us, the products are very reliable and feature innovative technologies as well as being easy to use, while Triton Services provide very good customer service."

01322 318830 www.tritonsystems.co.uk



Eco-conscious housebuilder adopts Thermoblock for its developments

A housebuilder undertaking high specification developments in the Stockport and Tameside areas of Greater Manchester has incorporated **Marmox Thermoblocks** into its designs, to target improved energy performance and all-round higher build quality for its customers. Founder and Managing Director, Doug Woodman, comments: "As a regional developer, we have always strived for high build quality and we have a strong sense of conscience about delivering excellent energy performance. Working with our SAP assessor, we were keen to adopt Thermoblocks as part of a highly insulated, fabric first design, along with renewable technologies including heat pumps. As well this site we used Marmox Thermoblocks on our last scheme, which was eight houses at Gee Cross in Hyde and we will be looking at them again for our next development which is likely to feature a SIPs system for the external envelope." The 385 Marmox Thermoblocks, along with Marmox 360 Multipurpose adhesive for sealing the stepped joints, have all been supplied by St. Gobain in Huddersfield. With a proven track record going back more than a decade, Thermoblocks are available in widths of 100, 140 and 215 mm and feature a unique design where two rows of high strength epoxy concrete mini-columns are encapsulated in sections of XPS (Extruded Polystyrene).

01634 835290 www.marmox.co.uk



Procheck® A2 high-class protection for major regeneration scheme

Procheck A2, the high-performance fire-resistant vapour control layer system from the **A. Proctor Group** has been selected as part of a £6bn regeneration project that will create over 10,000 homes in Enfield, London, over the next 20 years. Sam Bennett, Commercial Director at SCL LONDON, a Structural Framing Systems and Drylining specialist, commented: "Procheck A2 was selected because it has a Class A2 performance and excellent vapour-controlling properties. In addition, the membrane comes with a high vapour resistance and is airtight, allowing its use as an AVCL. This means that Procheck A2 provides high levels of airtightness which ensures the thermal efficiency of the building. Procheck A2 has an A2-s1,d0 fire classification to BS EN 13501-1, is considered limited combustibility and minimal contribution to fire, and therefore, conforms with the requirements for high rise construction (18 m)." The superior performance of Procheck A2 from the A. Proctor Group is the perfect solution, delivering significant benefits to the combination of in-factory manufacture and onsite housing construction. Procheck A2 is designed to protect the building fabric from the potential risks of condensation whilst providing the added benefit of serving as an effective airtight barrier.

01250 872261 www.proctorgroup.com

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DOORS AND WINDOWS

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DOORS AND WINDOWS

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