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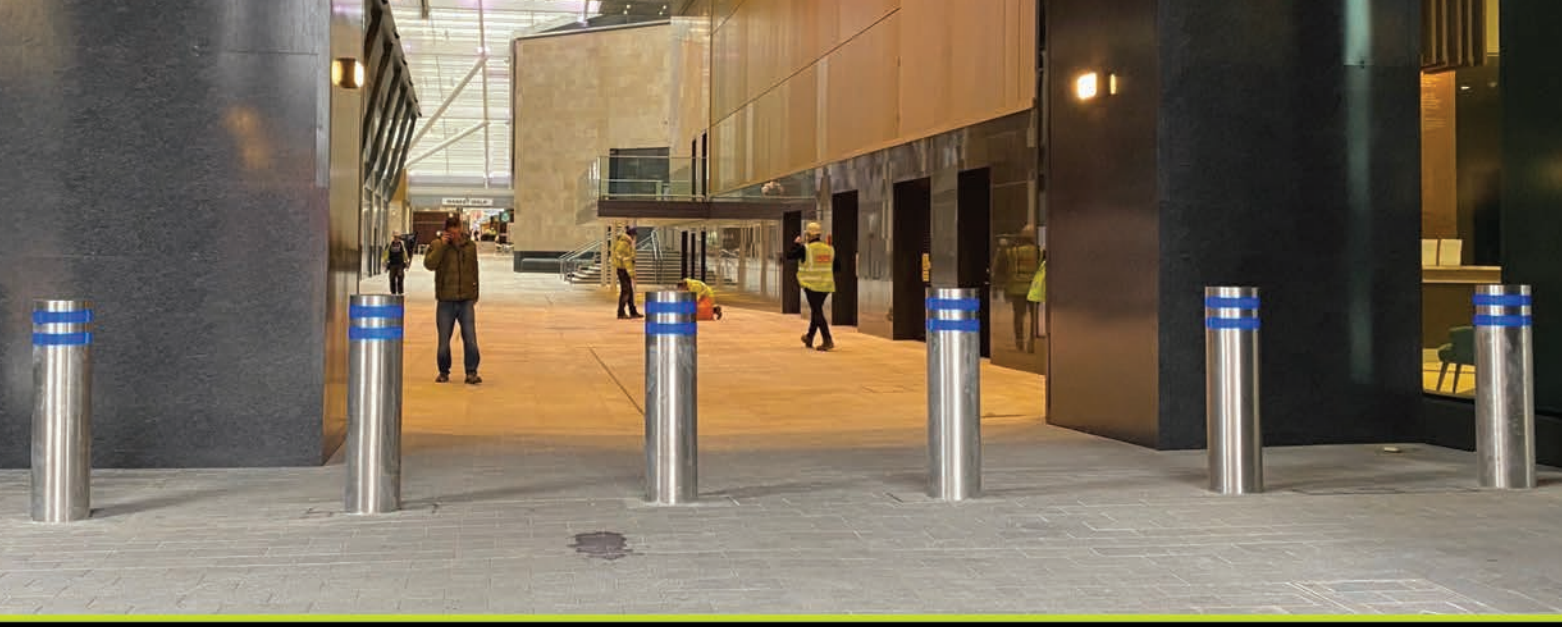
Scott Brownrigg takes leading role in world-class film and TV studio project that invests in UK's global cultural clout



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FROM THE EDITOR

The cold reality of where the Government is prepared to make quick savings to fund its wide and ambitious 'growth' plans hit the architectural education sector recently.

Although it was long-expected, Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson's cutting all funding of 'Level 7' i.e. Masters-level apprenticeships remains a disproportionate shock to the profession. Most students seeking to qualify to enter via this route will see their funding options removed.

Phillipson was accused of 'fudging' the decision, attempting to spin it as a positive by exempting 16-21 year olds in Level 7 apprenticeships or those already on apprentice schemes, and saying that the funding would be moved to 'lower levels' of apprenticeships. However, the further education sector responded to the move saying that the exempted age group was largely irrelevant, as fewer than 10% of providers running Level 7 schemes were enrolling students under the age of 21.

Mandy Crawford-Lee, chief executive of the University Vocational Awards Council called the 16-21 age restriction "ridiculous, daft and somewhat disingenuous," and said it was "driven by political posturing and positioning."

According to a survey by Further Education Week, there were no under 19 Level 7 apprenticeships underway in 2023/24 (students doing integrated degrees). Of the total 251 apprenticeships, 182 were taken up by students aged between 19 and 24.

Looking forward to hopefully more progress on some sensible regulation, as opposed to depressing defunding, has anyone seen Part Z of the Building Regulations recently? A few weeks back, RIBA published an online article entitled 'How can architects help reinvigorate support for Part Z,' which not only suggests that the proposed amendment to the regulations is currently buried in the long grass, but also that support for it has been drowned out by a hundred other priorities.

However, in addition to the voices from RIBA, Fielden Clegg Bradley, Landsec and the Association for Sustainable Building Products in the artcle, the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT) also voiced its support for the carbon reporting-centred Part Z, which it's hoped will soon reemerge in Parliament. It is essential that such a lever is produced to give full and necessary focus to specifiying for 'whole life' carbon in construction, and there is nothing else currently mandating a focus on embodied carbon in projects.

Part Z is 'only' embodied carbon, but even that would be a huge step forward.

James Parker, Editor

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ON THE COVER...
With UK demand for film and TV studio space, Shadowbox Studios enlisted architect Scott Brownrigg to design the ambitious Shinfield Studios complex near Reading.
Cover image © Daniel Shearing for Curo Construction. For the full report on this project, go to page 20

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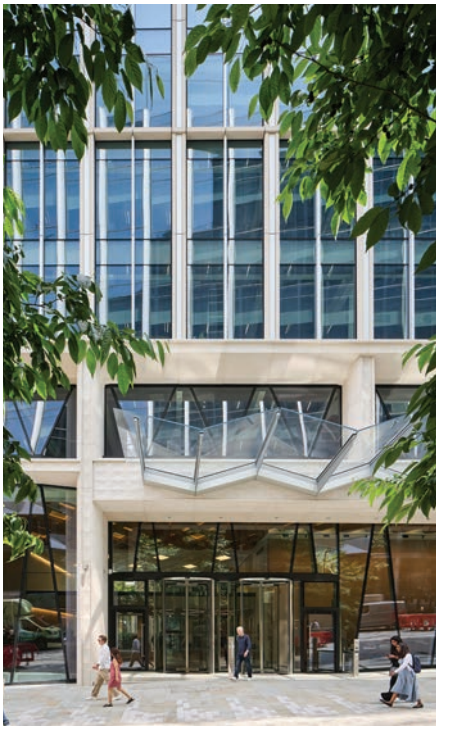
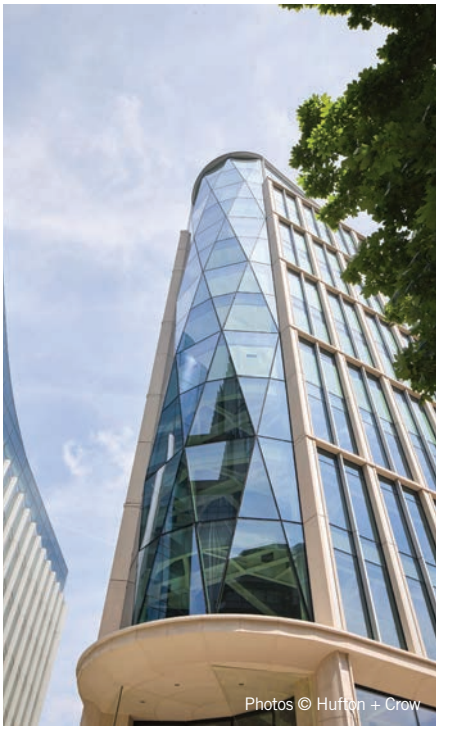
Stonecutter: setting new standards for sustainable offices in the City





Photos © Hufton + Crow

International architecture and design practice tp bennett has announced the completion of Stonecutter, a "highly amenitised, user experience-driven and tenant centric new office building within central London."

Commissioned by Ivanhoé Cambridge, the real estate group of CDPQ, and PIMCO Prime Real Estate, and developed by CO—RE, the building "sets a new standard for sustainable office environments and post-pandemic workplace design," said the architects. Stonecutter is the first office building to deliver the City of London's 'Aspirational' target for as-built embodied carbon, achieving lower upfront emissions than any other major new build in the city since the Life Cycle Carbon Assessments came into force in 2022.

As lead architect, tp bennett's design for Stonecutter reimagines an entire urban block within the evolving Fleet Street Quarter with a 240,000 ft², 13-storey office building with ground floor retail units.

Stonecutter's architectural design responds to its diverse surroundings in this evolving part of the City of London. Externally, the use of materials and geometries in the facade reflect the diamond cutting heritage of the adjacent Hatton Garden. Internally, the building features large open floor plates, floor-to-ceiling windows that maximise the amount of natural light, and multiple roof terraces with exceptional city views.

The ground floor includes a dual reception, coffee bar, townhall space, art gallery, and seating areas, creating a dynamic and welcoming environment. The podium level is designed to be a super flexible space that can support the ground floor with a business lounge and additional retail area.

"Advanced construction and energy conservation methods were used in the making of Stonecutter," including reusing existing foundations on the site to save an estimated 2,600 tonnes of CO_2. The development benefits from a fully electric-powered system that further reduces carbon emissions. Utilising smart technology, the building will collate data around energy usage, allowing occupiers to monitor and react to their own emissions.

The building aligns with BREEAM and WELL certifications and follows the CRREM pathway ensuring compliance with the Paris Accord and meeting the highest standards of environmental performance. Sustainability is at the forefront of the design, with a 'whole life cycle' approach being taken. The building's core has been centrally located to ensure good natural sunlight. Topped off by gardens and extensive green roofing, the development encourages the proliferation of biodiversity and clean air supplies.

"Stonecutter is one of the first new office buildings to be completed in the City that has been designed in a direct response to the future of workplace concerns arisen by the pandemic," concluded tp bennett.

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Chris Pollard

PRACTICE PROFILE

Fereday Pollard

Kim Neville speaks to practice co-founder Chris Pollard to uncover how the privately-owned firm, turning 30 this year, specialises in large-scale infrastructure projects with the differentiator of putting 'humanising architecture' at the forefront.

Fereday Pollard was established in 1995 by Chris Pollard and Ben Fereday, although the latter departed the firm in 2008. Today, the London-based studio comprises around 30 architects (including landscape architects), led by four key directors: Jan Kroes, Clare Donnelly, Chris McCarthy, and Jennifer Dixon. Chris Pollard emphasises that the firm's continued success stems in part from its status as a privately owned, independent practice, which has enabled it to remain agile and adaptable.

Although initially working across a range of sectors, Fereday Pollard gradually built what are now deep-rooted relationships within the transport and infrastructure industry. The firm now specialises in design and delivery within this specialised sphere, as Pollard explains; "We aim to fill a distinct gap in the market by providing well-designed, humanised architectural and landscape solutions created by designers who understand and enjoy the dynamics, culture, and governance of civil engineering-led projects."

The team identified what Pollard describes as a "missing link" in the way such projects were traditionally perceived, funded, and designed. While high-quality design had long been present in the sector, it often went unnoticed, overshadowed by more 'iconic,' big-budget developments. The desire to elevate the visibility and impact of thoughtful, people-focused design across all scales of infrastructure became a central driver for the practice's evolution.

Pollard explains that the biggest challenge became how the company could support and complement the engineers and contractors already working in and leading much of the output in transport and infrastructure, to deliver good architectural design.

Practice organisation

Pollard reflects that over the decades that the practice has been in operation, they've been part of a 'step change' that has seen local government bodies rising to the challenge of integrating nationally driven and funded infrastructure projects into local areas. The firm believes that enhancing both the built environment and people's everyday experiences in such projects is only achieved through close collaboration with clients and project teams, ensuring "practical and impactful" outcomes.

Pollard says their "typical" practice set up of more senior staff than junior enables the directors to be "deeply involved" in projects. He adds that this ensures "clients get the expert service that their projects require in highly regulated sectors, where design compliance and assurance are part of the DNA."

Bradford city centre transport and public realm project (2020–2024)
© Richard Lewisohn

Infrastructure projects, by their nature, are long-term undertakings. Pollard says that sustaining the passion for each project is achieved by encouraging designers to work on a mix of major and smaller projects simultaneously. He explains that this gives staff "regular, whole-life project experience and allows them to engage with complex operational constraints and tackle knotty design problems."

Design ethos & approach

Pollard asserts that the practice, which operates an Access for All inclusive staffing policy, also has a strong "humanising" design ethos. "The common denominator in much of our work," he explains, "is how vast transport and infrastructure programmes impact the individual and their environment, and how thoughtful, human-focused design can mitigate this impact. Placemaking is key to this, as is focused stakeholder engagement."

Fereday Pollard doesn't conform to a signature design model however; Pollard explains that the practice acts as 'design champion' in projects, seeking to create a 'golden thread' of

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“We aim to fill a gap in the market, by providing well-designed, humanised architectural and landscape solutions”

Chris Pollard

quality which means maintaining the integrity of the original vision. “Without a design champion, the ambition and impact of infrastructure projects can be diminished by well-intentioned changes,” says Pollard. He says this potentially endangers already-included design features that matter to communities.

Toward the goal of upholding design excellence in major infrastructure schemes, he says that integrating key design principles at the earliest project stages via collaboration is vital. Fereday Pollard has successfully applied this on three major programmes, Silvertown and Thames Tideway Tunnels, and the Lower Thames Crossing, working closely with civil engineers in each case. The practice reports that infrastructure client teams are increasingly seeing this early integration as essential for projects to progress without opposition, and not just as a ‘nice to have.’

Sustainability aims are generally embedded in the practice’s projects, such as reducing road traffic or improving river water quality. Functioning as a small part of large multidisciplinary teams, Fereday Pollard aims to contribute to projects’ overall sustainability strategy collaboratively.

Nonetheless, the firm plays a key role in shaping sustainability outcomes, influencing significant elements such as reusing excavations from new reservoirs to create landscape features, or carefully specifying hard landscaping materials. For example, the firm pioneered the use of timber structures over operational railway lines at the RIBA award-winning Abbey Wood station, which is now being adopted in the design of new stations at Cambridge South and Beaulieu Park, both due for completion later this year.

Pollard acknowledges that the company tends to perform a different role from a typical architectural practice, as in infrastructure projects, the Lead Designer role is usually held by civil engineers. This dynamic has required the firm to flex in order to master the art of collaboration; “creating impact through advocacy and influence, and above all, being great team members who understand when to lead and when to follow,” says Pollard.

A crucial element of the technical service Fereday Pollard provides is the creation of “Design Principles’ which underpin DCO (Design Consent Orders) in projects, and which inform the subsequent Design & Build contractors and their design teams. Pollard says that having supported five DCOs to date, including the recently approved Lower Thames Crossing, makes the practice “unique in the profession.”

The Bradford City Centre Transport and Public Realm Project, undertaken between 2020 and 2024, is a key demonstration of the firm’s human-centric design philosophy in infrastructure projects. Appointed to lead the feasibility and concept design stages, the team “reimagined key streets and connections” between the train station and a retail area, placing emphasis on low-carbon travel, accessibility, and high-quality public space. The scheme introduced pedestrian- and cycle-friendly streets, simplified junctions, and autonomous ‘pods,’ all integrated within an enhanced public realm.

The project transformation of Bradford Interchange through an ambitious public art programme was delivered in 2023-2024.

Lower Thames Crossing © Fereday Pollard

Spanning over 1,500 m², the murals and wayfinding installations create a vibrant new gateway to the city, aligning with Bradford’s UK City of Culture role in 2025. The project is a standout example of Fereday Pollard’s ethos of “fusing infrastructure, landscape, and cultural identity to achieve sustainable and inclusive urban regeneration.”

In general, the firm is studio-based, but a flexible working model also enables staff to work from home. A more complex challenge is posed by the need for team members to co-locate with clients and project partners, often away from the office for part or all of the week. This requires staff to make a “conscious effort to sustain the practice’s culture, identity, and shared ways of working across dispersed teams.”

The practice’s 30th birthday coincides with the completion of several landmark projects. Among these is the delivery of surface sites for the Thames Tideway Tunnel, and the RIBA award for Abbey Wood Station on the Elizabeth Line. Both achievements reflect nearly two decades of dedicated involvement and exemplify the firm’s long-term commitment to “transformative infrastructure.”

Future Fereday Pollard growth

Pollard is hopeful looking forward, boosted by the current momentum in the infrastructure sector. “There is huge public and political interest in infrastructure, so our sector is buoyant.” However, he acknowledges ongoing challenges, particularly around “increasing the visibility of what we do,” to promote the importance of architecture in infrastructure.

To support new infrastructure client teams, the firm is currently developing a publication designed to be a practical tool outlining how architects and designers can contribute in the early stages of a project to help “ensure long-term programme success.”

As with many practices, attracting top talent remains a challenge. However, again Pollard is optimistic, based on past experience: “Those who do join soon start to appreciate the professional fulfilment and sheer excitement of working in infrastructure.”

Pollard sees the next phase of the practice as including exporting its expertise in rail, highways, water, and power and energy to other sectors including small modular reactors, data centres, flood defence projects, and airside aviation. He concludes: “We aim to bring best practice from our core sectors into other highly regulated environments where assets directly impact communities.” ■

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VIEW POINT

Dr Stephen Hamil of NBS explains why better data standards and Digital Product Passports are vital to fix the industry's fragmented systems and safeguard its future.

For several years now, UK construction has been beset by issues around material quality, skills shortages and project delivery. These challenges have dominated the conversation and while there is no doubt that these are important issues, there's something even more significant holding our industry back. Once we spotlight and solve this problem, it could unlock effective responses to all the previously mentioned issues and more; how we think about and manage our data.

Despite numerous initiatives, the way we handle data is still problematic. Too often, across our industry, information about construction products remains fragmented, outdated or unattainable to the people who actually need it. It's a hurdle to successful project delivery, but worse still, it's a roadblock preventing our industry from innovating.

There is a solution here, but it doesn't involve adding more layers of box-ticking bureaucracy. What's needed is genuine collaboration and a concerted move towards agreeing shared industry standards. To help us get there, we need to embrace Digital Product Passports (DPPs), which have the enticing potential to transform how we deal with the data on the materials we use throughout the construction industry.

From compliance to competitive advantage

In essence, DPPs are thorough digital datasets that accompany products from the factory floor through to their end-of-life. These digital companions contain crucial information including manufacturing details, performance information, compliance certifications, and environmental impact data. All accessible through a simple scan of a QR code.

This is more than a layer of compliance. It's about making swift and assured decisions. With straightforward access to standardised data through DPPs, everyone in the supply chain can benefit; from designers and contractors to regulators and building owners.

Enter the regulator

Across the Channel, the European Union's Construction Products Regulation (CPR) 2024 has made DPPs mandatory for critical construction materials including concrete, steel, and insulation products. This means manufacturers must provide comprehensive digital documentation covering technical specifications, safety, performance metrics, and environmental data such as carbon footprints and recycling guidelines.

While it's true the UK no longer operates under EU authority, the interconnected nature of construction product markets means lining up with European data standards is effectively a must-do.

Looking closer to home, the Government's ongoing consultation, the Construction Products Reform Green Paper, suggests the UK may adopt similar requirements, making early preparation essential for manufacturers looking to maintain access to key markets.

Breaking down data barriers

Unfortunately, construction data management practices often resemble a maze of disconnected systems. Product information remains trapped inside static PDFs, scattered databases, and perishable paper documents. Project teams often create their own data records, leading to inconsistent information sharing and limited functionality across systems.

This disconnect creates cascading problems: manual data re-entry increases error rates, inconsistent information leads to specification mistakes, with the wrong products turning up on-site, and compliance verification becomes a time-consuming drain on resources. It can become all but impossible to track environmental performance. These issues also hold back the successful implementation of digital tools like Building Information Modelling (BIM) and artificial intelligence (AI) applications.

DPPs are set to transform this landscape by establishing machine-readable, standardised data formats that connect professionals to essential information. Designers gain instant access to verified, up-to-date product data. Installation teams receive clear guidance and compliance documentation. Facility managers obtain critical insights

TrägerHAUS / HAUS Collective / Tom Manley Photography

for efficient building operation and maintenance throughout the asset's lifecycle. Everyone gets what they need.

Laying the foundations for change

Despite current headaches, or arguably because of them, the construction industry has begun laying the groundwork for digital transformation. The Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI) provides essential guidance for data structuring, while digital platforms like NBS Source demonstrate how standardised product information can be effectively managed and shared.

The integration of global product identifiers and alignment with established standards, such as EN 15804 for Environmental Product Declarations, creates a helpful framework for lifecycle impact reporting. This supports the wider move towards implementing principles of the circular economy.

Strategic implementation

Successfully transitioning to a DPP-enabled environment will require more than just upgrading IT systems, it will involve fundamental changes in outlook, culture and processes. To achieve all that, companies must embrace transparency, work collaboratively, and make a sincere commitment to continuous improvement.

Manufacturers should run comprehensive audits of their current data management systems, flagging areas for development and actively participating in industry standardisation efforts. Specifiers and contractors must push for high-quality, accessible product data, while partnering with organisations committed to digital excellence. Over time, these efforts will yield results. Better data means more than compliance, done right, it can give your organisation a strategic edge.

Gaining a competitive advantage

The shift toward Digital Product Passports represents a strategic opportunity to solve construction's stubborn data challenges. Organisations that welcome standardised digital collaboration will soon see the benefits in significantly reduced errors and far more efficient operations. What's more, they'll be ideally positioned to access the full potential of AI and other emerging digital technologies.

The shift toward Digital Product Passports represents a strategic opportunity to solve construction's stubborn data challenges

With regulatory momentum building across the UK and EU, now is the time for action. Companies that digitise their product data and prepare for DPPs will be poised to succeed in an increasingly connected construction ecosystem. The question isn't whether Digital Product Passports will become standard industry practice, (they will); it's whether your organisation will be ready to exploit the opportunities they create.

Dr Stephen Hamil is innovation director at NBS

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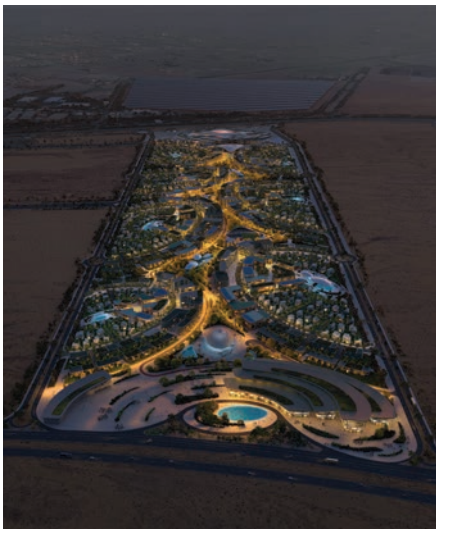

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KHALID BIN SULTAN CITY MASTERPLAN, UAE
ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS

Designed by Zaha Hadid Architects (ZHA), the masterplan for Khalid Bin Sultan City is adjacent to BEEAH's headquarters in Sharjah. Anchored by four guiding principles – sustainability, smart technology, culture, and people – ZHA's design continues the philosophies embedded with the architecture of BEEAH's headquarters, "drawing inspiration from the fluid forms of wind-swept desert dunes to define a multi-centred urban network with seven distinct residential neighbourhoods," said the architects.

Each neighbourhood is organised around a central public space, strategically placed within a five-minute walking distance from one another. These civic plazas offer public facilities and a range of local amenities that act as vital social and wellbeing anchors, helping to foster a strong sense of community.

Khalid Bin Sultan City's design cultivates walkability, environmental cohesion and a strong sense of place. Pedestrian pathways are crafted to enhance the comfort of residents and visitors as they move throughout the city. Shaded by canopies of Sharjah's native trees and plants, recessed facades, and colonnades, these routes offer an inviting outdoor environment year-round.

This approach of prioritising walkable spaces for each neighbourhood is further reinforced by shaded colonnades and outdoor seating areas that are interconnected to encourage interaction between neighbours. A diverse array of amenities – including children's hubs, sports facilities and wellness clinics – are conveniently within walking distance from everyone's home, promoting the highest quality of life.

Adjacent to the BEEAH Headquarters at Khalid Bin Sultan City's northern edge, a design and business district emerges as an important new urban hub for Sharjah. Incorporating incubator spaces for the UAE's rapidly-growing creative sector, together with a variety of cultural venues, this new district will foster circular design and innovative entrepreneurship.

Khalid Bin Sultan City is envisioned as a year-round living environment. From landmark destinations such as the contemporary mosque to the cultural centre and sheltered outdoor sports areas, every element of the city is designed to support health, well-being, and the highest quality of life. "With sustainability as its foundation and human experience as its core, Khalid Bin Sultan City sets a new benchmark for future urban living – a forward-thinking approach where innovation, culture and nature coexist in harmony," said ZHA.

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NEWS FEATURE

Why tiles are the sustainable choice

Nick Bratt, national technical sales manager for tile adhesive manufacturer Palace Chemicals, describes how tiles should be considered a sustainable option for wall and floor finishes, compared to the alternatives available to specifiers today.

Although various other options are available, tiles have the benefit of a strong sustainability proposition, compared to other types of wall and floor coverings. For a start, they are durable and longlasting, as well as being fireproof, anti-allergenic, waterproof and scratch-resistant, assuming of course that the area is prepared correctly and they are installed using appropriate high quality adhesives and grouts. According to the Environnmental Product Declaration (EPD) of Confindustria Ceramica of Italy, which represents the Italian tile manufacturing sector, ceramic tiles have a reference service life of 60 years, well beyond many alternatives. From the point of view of a building specifier who is looking to maximise the energy efficiency of a building, tiles also have the key benefit of adding to the thermal mass of the structure, aiding the retention of heat and minimising its loss through walls and floors. In today's modern builds, underfloor heating is often incorporated into the build-up of floors. Thermal mass, of which tiled surfaces are an important part, combined with the low energy, low heat technologies of underfloor heating, make an important contributon to the modern energy efficient home.

Furthermore, tiles are made from naturally occurring raw materials and are fully recyclable at the end of use. While there is concern about VOCs and chemicals used in tile adhesives, grouts, cleaners and preparation products, the manufacturers of these products have made major changes in their product formulations in recent years to improve the environmental performance of their products. Due to advances in technology, there are now for example lightweight adhesives on the market, which are easier and more sustainable to transport to site, requiring less mixing and involving less weight. They are also designed to provide much improved coverage, reducing material usage during installation. Additionally a new generation of levellers is available nowadays, which use recycled material rather than quarried sand, helping improve the sustainability of floor tiling projects.

It is interesting to note that the tiling sector, through The Tile Association, is now fully committed to ensuring that its materials, methods and processes are helping to achieve sustainable targets by 2050. The main focus is on circular design, meaning that product development should consider the lifecycle of such in order to extend its use. This involves using longlasting materials, reusing offcuts, introducing take-back schemes and recycling old tiles into rubble for other construction uses. These and other initiatives provide reassurance to architects that they can specify tiles and adhesives, secure in the knowledge that they are a more sustainable choice.

Supplied by Nick Bratt, national technical sales manager for Palace Chemicals

Bespoke security for cultural spaces

In 2021/2022, over £3.2 million worth of cultural property was stolen from museums, art galleries, and stately homes in the UK. Heritage insurer, Ecclesiastical state that nine in 10 heritage organisations surveyed had suffered a crime in the previous 12 months.

Protecting art galleries, cultural spaces and museums means not only addressing safety and security but also considering the social and aesthetic aspects of the building.

With over 20 years' experience, Charter Global designs, manufactures and installs bespoke, high-security roller shutters certified to LPS 1175. Suitable for any building style or age, their shutters provide internal or external protection while preserving aesthetics—even for listed properties.

One project example is MK Gallery; an impressive public gallery designed by 6a Architects. It was important for the clients and designers to include security that aligned with the stunning architecture and cladding of the building, maintaining security but also aesthetics.

The exhibition loading area required an abnormally large shutter but lacked the headroom to support a standard motor. Devising a unique system with a bespoke motor specification that reduced the headroom required, an Obexion MD SR4 Shutter from Charter Global was installed.

Bespoke controls were incorporated along with status indication, a remote confirmation of opening and closure. As the loading area was located on the other side of the gallery to the security reception, this mitigated the risk of internal sabotage. Two further security roller shutters were provided for the personnel fire escape to and from the fire exit staircase. Both also certified to LPS 1175 Issue 7 SR4, these heavy duty shutters were connected to the fire alarm interface with battery back-ups.

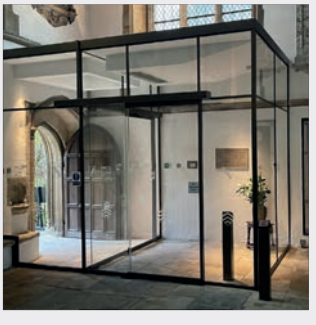
0845 050 8705 enquiries@charter-global.com

Essex church chooses Style moveable walls

St Mary the Virgin Church in Henham, Essex, is an Evangelical Anglican parish church situated at the western end of the village, with a modern extension providing facilities for broader community events. Partitioning expert **Style** was contracted to work with Freeland Rees Roberts Architects and Punch Construction to deliver flexible space to the main function area. Style installed two Dorma Huppe Variflex moveable walls enabling the area to be divided into three separate rooms, one large and one small room, or left as a completely open plan space. With effortless, smooth operation, these light walls can be opened and closed quickly and easily, and their exceptional 55 dB acoustic ratings mean concurrent events can take place undisturbed from one another. Another advantage of the Variflex is that the panels are manufactured separately to the frame, which means that the panel linings are easy to change if one is damaged or scuffed. This saves both time and money in busy public environments because if a panel is knocked or scratched it can be quicky exchanged for a new one.

sales@style-partitions.co.uk

Glass entrance lobby creates automatic entrance to Oxford chapel



Working with commercial glazing specialists IQ Projects, **TORMAX** has delivered discrete and reliable automation to a new draught lobby installed inside the main entrance to the 13th century chapel at Merton College, Oxford. Successfully reducing heat loss from the building whilst improving the internal ambient temperature, the elegant glass lobby features two sets of automatic sliding doors. Working in tandem, the doors are powered by in-house designed TORMAX iMotion 2202.A operators. Helping maintain the heritage aesthetics, the iMotion 2202.A has an installation height of just 100 mm which, along with a slender guide track, makes it suitably unobtrusive. Reliable AC motor technology combines with a state-of-the-art microprocessor control system to deliver near-silent movement quality, for an appropriate entrance into this ancient place of worship. "We have worked with IQ Projects on a number of different installations," comments Simon Roberts, MD for TORMAX. "This glass lobby is a truly elegant solution with the automatic sliding doors offering seamless and unhindered access for everyone."

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BUILDING PROJECTS

SHINFIELD CREATIVE MEDIA HUB
READING

That's a wrap

The rare chance to create a new film and TV studio complex from scratch in the UK, equipped with the high performance and flexibility credentials to attract Hollywood, was perfect casting for Scott Brownrigg. Roseanne Field reports.

Photos © Daniel Shearing for Curo Construction

The plans for Shinfield Studios came at a time when demand for film and TV studio space in the UK was at an "all time high." A 2021 report compiled by JLL with input from the British Film Commission, Hoare Lea and architectural practice Scott Brownrigg – 'Reel Estate, Film and TV Studios as an Investment' – found a growing desire for film and TV content meant there was a demand for increased studio capacity. The report revealed that at the point of writing, 4.5 million square feet of new development space was under consideration – more than doubling the amount of space currently available.

To aid the search for an appropriate size site, Shadowbox Studios – the team behind the project – were introduced to Scott Brownrigg, who were excited to be involved in such a unique project. "Designing an entirely new film studio complex from scratch in the UK is rare, and presented a unique opportunity to consider what's been done before, what's needed now and how we can transform the design of film studios for the future," explains Jason Lebidineuse, director & head of media, culture & sport at Scott Brownrigg. The chance to create the largest new build film and TV studio campus in the UK was also a way for the practice to "help boost our creative industry

"It enabled us to rethink the typology and create a new offer that could disrupt the market"

Jason Lebidineuse, Scott Brownrigg

and build on the UK's global reputation for content production," said the architect.

The search wasn't entirely easy; Lebidineuse explains that sites of the scale they were looking for are limited near London, their focus therefore was on the area around the M25, where there is already an established hub of film studios. Their search was narrowed to two potential sites, before they settled on a piece of land that bordered the M4. In particular the land offered two key benefits – it had existing planning approval for a (partially constructed) science park, and it was owned by the University of Reading, bringing inherent links to the university. The media courses on offer meant it "could therefore become a source of new talent for the new studios," explains Lebidineuse.

The practice had some experience in the media sector, beginning in the 1960s when it designed the now Grade II Listed Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford. It has since designed facilities for organisations such as the BBC and Thomson Reuters, but this was to be "our first foray into designing new build film studios," Lebidineuse says. He continues, however: "This was a natural step for us, given our ability to draw upon our expertise in a wide range of sectors, which includes providing bespoke technical building solutions for advanced technologies and life sciences."

As well as it seeming a natural progression for the practice, Scott Brownrigg was also enticed by the "unique" opportunity presented by the fact it was to be the first completely new film studio complex in the country. "It enabled us to rethink the typology and create a new offer that could disrupt the market," explains Lebidineuse.

Flexible & functional

The practical side of the brief was to create a complex that would be large enough to accommodate up to three large-scale productions at one time, "to enable the continuous generation of new content," says Lebidineuse. This also fed into the search

for a suitable site, as it meant it needed to span at least 65 acres.

The project comprises a one million ft² studio facility with 18 fully soundproofed and climate controlled soundstages, varying in size from 17,000 to 43,000 ft². These all have flexible layouts and state of the art equipment to ensure they meet the needs of modern production standards. There are also 38 multifunctional workshops to accommodate various production requirements, and a studio cafe and canteen offer social spaces for the production teams working onsite. Finally, there's a nine acre filming backlot, and 130,000 ft² of 'contemporary' office space.

As well as the necessary practical elements in terms of space and facilities, flexibility was also a key part of the brief. Not only did all of the studio and workshop spaces need to be flexible to meet the varying needs of the productions that would be utilising them, but the facility as a whole needed to be ready to change and adapt as the media industry and technology evolves. "We worked hard with the client to challenge preconceived ideas of how a studio operates and how it should be designed so that we could set a new standard of studios which can effectively flex to future needs and as the media industry continues to change over time," says Lebidineuse. "We developed a brief for flexible studios fully geared to meet sustainability objectives with the ability to adapt to the changing requirements of each production."

The design development was, overall, a team effort, he explains, with the resulting design deriving from good collaboration between the practice and client. "It was a highly collaborative process, working closely with the client and alongside a range of industry experts with experience of designing and delivering large and complex masterplans to ensure the best outcome," Lebidineuse says.

Throughout the process the key design drivers were at the "forefront of everyone's minds." As well as the need for flexible and

PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS
The brief was to create a complex that would be large enough to accommodate up to three large-scale productions at any one time


STAGE
3
5

functional spaces, sustainability and speed to market were also highly important. Aside from the finished design, the collaboration resulted in the development of a structural system that would tick all the necessary boxes – operational needs, sustainability, and speed to market.

The latter was especially important given the "unprecedented requirement" for new film and television studio space in the UK at the time. Sustainability was high on the client's list of priorities, as was acoustics – particularly given the site's location adjacent to the M4 motorway. To address these, the team asked themselves the most basic questions: "Asking what we need, why we need it, and who it's for at the beginning of a project is key to challenging preconceived ways of design and construction," says Lebidineuse. "We developed an innovative twin wall structural solution that facilitated speed of construction by reducing the number of materials and trades required on site."

This twin wall system saw a steel frame initially constructed onsite, then the external face of the interior wall was built, acting as a weatherproof layer and therefore meaning work could begin internally at a much earlier stage than what would have been possible with other construction methods. "The outer and inner skin of the twin wall is then built out at the same time, allowing the concrete floor to be poured and M&E installation to start before the final envelope is finished," Lebidineuse explains. The result is a "quick to build" 800 mm thick wall which is "packed with insulation, and provides fantastic acoustic and thermal properties."

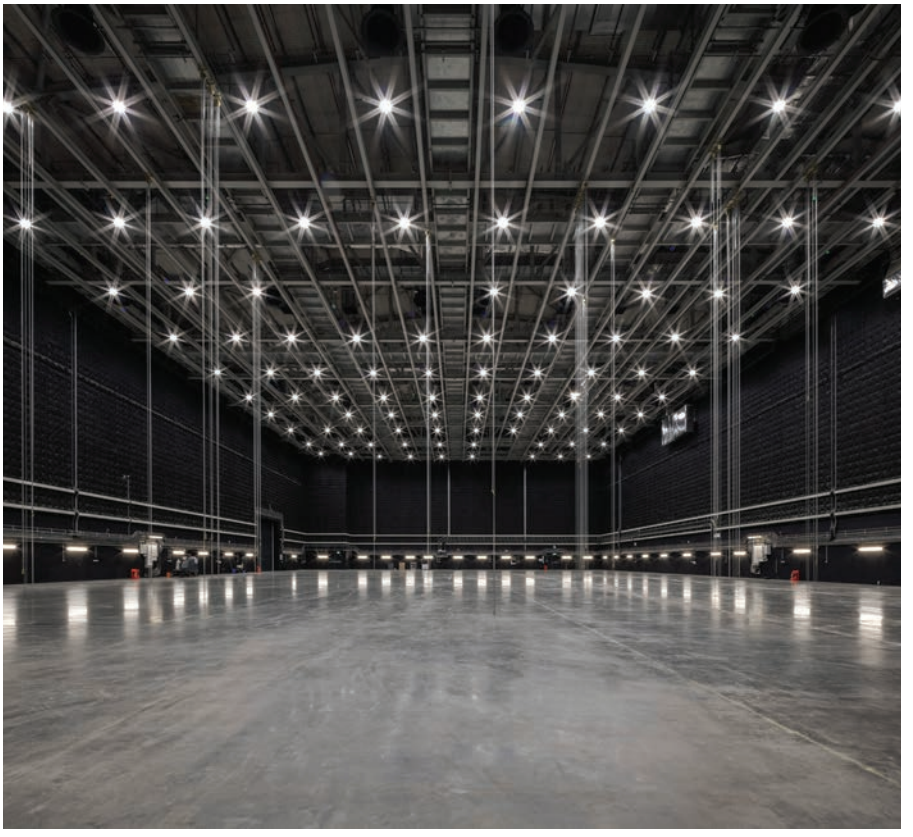
Helping towards the project's sustainability goals, the system components and materials can be dismantled, recycled, repurposed and reused in the future. It also has the added benefit of improved thermal and acoustic properties, over the concrete which is traditionally used to build large studios.

Safety and privacy were also given a lot of thought, with the constraints of the busy environments that would be found in the finished studios. "Acoustic buffers, visual privacy, limitation of access and of course safety were fundamental within the masterplan, landscape and architectural design," Lebidineuse says. "Much of the design process involved careful consideration of how people would move across the site – the division of pedestrians and vehicles, and how to ensure that multiple productions can run onsite while maintaining the highest levels of security."

While considering those who would be working on the site once finished, the team simultaneously wanted to create a well-integrated scheme with minimal impact to surrounding communities as well. The local authority planning department and local community were engaged at a "very early stage," explains Lebidineuse, to ensure the design "could evolve to reflect wider community needs and concerns." One such example of how the design evolved to consider its neighbours was the positioning of the two largest buildings at the centre of the site to "minimise visual impact on nearby residential developments."

To support the necessary flexibility, the team included studios and facilities in varying sizes to accommodate different scales of productions. They also included multifunctional spaces that could, for example, be utilised as an office one day and a workshop space the next. "Even spaces between – and some of the landscape surrounding the buildings, including the nine acre filming backlot – can be used to create content," adds Lebidineuse. "This means the site can appeal to the widest range of productions and host multiple productions at various stages of filming, all at one time."

Some design decisions were also made to reference the vernacular of agricultural buildings



TWIN WALL
The twin wall design saw a steel frame initially constructed, then the external face of the interior wall was built to act as a weatherproof layer

The final cut

Once all the practical and functional elements of the brief had been discussed and finalised, the team focused on the aesthetic details – though much of these practical considerations still fed into the overall look. "Robust materials and a simple colour palette were used to suit high pedestrian areas and help the scheme integrate into its surroundings," Lebidineuse explains.

The studios were finished with a dark grey profile metal cladding in order to reduce the perceived mass of the studios within the surrounding landscape, Lebidineuse continues. It contrasts with an impressive three storey yellow portico with 'Shinfield Studios' in Hollywood-style lettering above, signposting the entrance. The bright yellow colour has been referenced and continued throughout the site in wayfinding.

As with every aspect of the project, wayfinding and the layout and placement of various elements have been thoughtfully considered. Dictated by the landscape and stream to an extent, the site was 'split' into two, accessed from the south via the main entrance. The entrance itself comprises the three storey Shinfield Studios sign, with two large office buildings framing it on either side. These offices include naturally anodised fins which provide solar shading to the workspace inside, as well as helping to "further accentuate the dramatic entrance archway."

Workshops were placed along the northern edge of the site, "to create a visual and acoustic buffer between the M4 motorway to the north, and sound stages to the south," explains Lebidineuse. At the centre of the site is what's known as The Hub – a dining area which overlooks a recreational green space.

Before the University of Reading had gained outline planning for a science park masterplan, the land had previously been an agricultural site, so some design decisions were also made to reference the vernacular of agricultural buildings. For example, the buildings feature simple low profile pitched roofs, the profiled metal cladding, and robust materials such as block concrete flooring.

As well as offering a source of inspiration, the site did also present some challenges. In addition to the proximity of the M4 causing acoustic issues needing to be overcome, the topography meant water drainage was a challenge, which was mitigated by above and below ground sustainable drainage systems. The decision to split the plot in two was partially influenced by an existing stream that runs from the north of the site to a river on the south. "The natural segregation of the site has been used to define two groupings of sound stages and enhanced to provide the attractive recreational green space at the heart of the complex," says Lebidineuse.

The sustainability drive also played a role in final decisions. The studios have been designed to achieve BREEAM Excellent certification – an ambition since the project's conception. "Fundamental to achieving this was the structural solution which enabled greater efficiency onsite, helped minimise materials required, and resulted in highly insulated buildings that require minimal heating," Lebidineuse explains.

The reduction of waste was also an important design consideration, given the constant change and adaptation the studios would be undergoing as productions changed: "The key was to provide flexible spaces that act as a blank canvas for productions to make their own, therefore reducing waste associated with fit out and

building permanent sets," says Lebidineuse. The team were also able to avoid the use of fossil fuels entirely, with all energy generated from renewable sources, such as an air source heat pump and photovoltaic panels onsite.

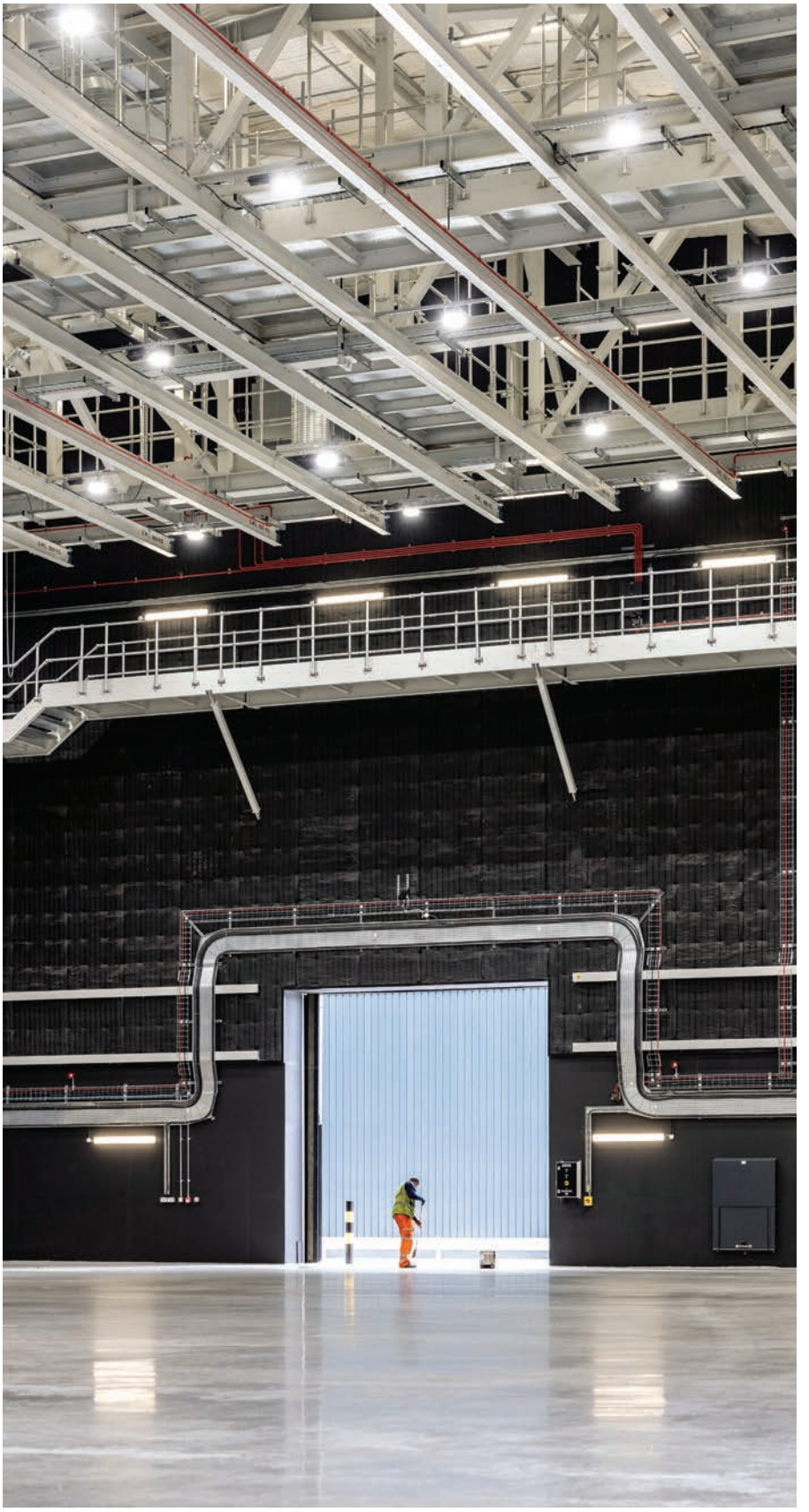
Construction onsite began in 2021, with the studios delivered in phases by main contractor Curo Construction. The delivery of the spaces in phases was critical, with 80,000 ft² of studio space needing to be erected and fully functional within the first six months in order to adhere to production schedules. Here, the team's innovative construction method came into its own, not only allowing for the required space to be successfully finished within the necessary timeframe but also meaning construction could continue elsewhere onsite while production began in the finished studio space. "With the site partially occupied, the production and construction teams communicated regularly to make sure that neither was impacted by ongoing works and activities onsite," says Lebidineuse.

A wider impact

The whole team behind the project was passionate about ensuring the impact on the local community was not simply minimised but made to be positive. This began with their desire to engage the community and local planning authority in the design process from the outset. Local businesses and suppliers were also utilised wherever possible throughout the build – a theme that has continued since completion with potential collaborations with studio productions being promoted to businesses.

The project is thought to have generated up to 3,000 new jobs for the community since its completion in 2024. The studios also worked with Shinfield Parish Council to create a new cinema in the town and support local charities.

On top of helping those nearby and providing much needed filming and production space, the studios is also playing a vital role assisting young people aspiring to work in the industry, as Lebidineuse explains. "Shinfield Studios have invested into the local community," he concludes, showing how the building is a catalyst for local economic sustainability. Also, various outreach programmes include collaborating with local schools, the University of Reading and Screen Berkshire to "help educate and support the next generation into the industry." ■



Transforming spaces with natural light

It is well established that maximising natural light boosts wellbeing and transforms living spaces. Victoria Brocklesby of Origin shares expert tips on using glazing and design to brighten homes beautifully.

Those who live in bright properties report being happier in their home

Natural light in a home has all kinds of benefits, alongside performing the practical role of illuminating spaces. Research shows that a lack of natural light harms physical and mental wellbeing, including sleep quality and general mood, while those who live in bright properties report being happier in their home.

There are simple ways to maximise light using glazing, but also some more dynamic and creative options. These are my top tips and considerations for bringing more natural light into your next project.

Function

How to best maximise natural light will depend on the function of the room and where it is in a property. A common example is a kitchen extension at the back of a house, which offers the ideal opportunity to make a statement and flood the space with daylight throughout the day when the room is most in use. Outside of the kitchen, a homeowner using a room as an office space is likely to want light in the morning and early afternoon, but not necessarily the evening.

Orientation

The orientation of the home will also have a significant impact on how you can make the most of the natural sunlight. An east facing wall will benefit from the sun in the morning, but will be in shade by the afternoon. Use this to the homeowner's advantage by considering when they will be using certain rooms the most. Using the office space as an example again, prioritise south facing walls for glazing, so the room benefits from light throughout the daytime.

Type of products

To pull as much of this all-important light into a room as possible, opt for a combination of slimline sliding doors, or bi-fold doors, and larger panels of fixed glazing.

Replacing solid internal doors with designs that feature glazing will also help filter brightness throughout a home. These not only let light stream through, but also break up space without creating a cramped or closed-off feeling, playing into the growing 'broken plan' trend.

Glazed extensions are another option. These are growing in popularity because they help bring in daylight, but also add an interesting, modern design feature that works well with both contemporary and period properties. However, if limited by planning or budget constraints, a single wall or bi-fold, or sliding doors will have a similar effect. Not only will they pull in lots of natural light for that airy,

open feel, but they also allow the space to be physically extended when the doors are open, as the inside space will seamlessly connect to the outdoors. This works particularly well for clients with families or those who enjoy entertaining.

Size

Not all spaces are created equal. For smaller projects where functionality needs to take priority when it comes to fitted elements of the room, like cabinets in a kitchen, consider other ways to increase the feeling of space in the room.

Large picture windows, bi-folding windows or corner windows are great options for maximising the view without taking up as much wall space as doors. Aluminium frames also benefit from ultra-slim sightlines to further help bring the outdoors in.

Windows also don't have to be at eye level. For example, clerestory-style windows (a row of windows set above eye level) are a great way to switch things up and be creative with positioning. These can be used in conjunction with standard positioned windows to add interest and maximise light. Gable-end windows are another sure-fire way to make a light-filled design statement. They are also the perfect solution where a shallow roof pitch needs to be taken into consideration, like in loft conversions.

Colour

The colour of door and window frames can also influence how light enters and moves through a room, so I'd recommend opting for lighter coloured frames to disperse light, especially in smaller spaces or areas where natural light can be limited. Opting for a manufacturer that offers over 150 RAL colours means that clients aren't limited to a select few light colours to choose from, thus allowing a truly bespoke glazed door or window statement to be made.

In summary

The most effective way to make the most of natural light in a property is to utilise glazing wherever possible. When this is more challenging, it is vital to consider the orientation of the home to best channel light to the homeowner's advantage.

Victoria Brocklesby is COO and co-founder of Origin

Framing nature: fenestration design for comfort & compliance

Andrew Cooper of Senior Architectural Systems says architects can embrace principles of biophilic design and wellness, while keeping regulation compliance clearly in view.

Fenestration systems can help create truly inspirational interiors where inclusivity, wellbeing, and comfort are prioritised

As well as being functional, fenestration systems can help create truly inspirational interiors where inclusivity, wellbeing, and comfort are prioritised, and where the natural environment is always at the forefront.

Greater use of natural light, wider views of the outdoors, and easier access to external areas are all recognised as having a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of building occupants. However, this must be balanced with the operational cost – both monetary and environmental – of incorporating large amounts of glazing.

The WELL Building Standard places strong emphasis on creating healthier indoor environments, and there are several areas where the correct design of aluminium fenestration systems is essential. These include access to natural light, quality views of the outdoors, thermal comfort, and enhanced ventilation. Meanwhile, both the updated Building Regulations and Passivhaus standard require buildings to achieve exceptional levels of energy efficiency and thermal performance, with strict criteria for airtightness and heat loss.

Through early and close collaboration within the supply chain, the most appropriate solutions can be found to create stunning fenestration designs that provide optimal daylighting, reduce energy demand, and boost occupant comfort, while supporting key biophilic design principles.

Aluminium fenestration systems offer a number of practical and environmental benefits that make them a reliable choice for both contemporary and biophilic design schemes. The inherent strength of aluminium enables larger panes of glass to be supported by slimmer frames, allowing more natural light into the building while maintaining structural integrity. This is particularly advantageous when creating open, light-filled spaces that foster a deeper connection with the surrounding landscape.

Aluminium is also one of the most sustainable materials in use today. It can be recycled repeatedly without any loss of quality, and many manufacturers are working to improve the availability of recycled material in the UK.

Opening the curtains to nature

Aluminium curtain wall systems continue to offer architects a versatile way to create striking facades that strengthen the visual and physical connection between interior spaces and the outside world. Whether used across full-height elevations or as feature areas, curtain walling is an effective way to maximise views, increase daylighting, and bring a sense of openness to a building.

Slim sightlines are key to achieving these benefits, as they reduce visual barriers and allow for a greater expanse of glass. Alongside this, thermal enhancements to both the frame and glazing can support

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energy-efficiency objectives by reducing heat loss during colder months. The inclusion of solar shading or louvre systems can also help prevent solar gain and overheating during warmer periods, creating a more consistent and comfortable internal climate throughout the year.

Door systems & access to outdoor spaces

Aluminium door systems provide a flexible way to meet a variety of access needs while contributing to the overall building performance. Options such as sliding or bi-fold doors help to open up interior spaces and create seamless transitions to external areas, supporting outdoor learning, working, or leisure activities, and further enhancing the sense of connectivity with nature.

Commercial entrance doors, particularly those designed with robust glazed panels, also contribute to improved daylighting in communal or high-traffic areas. With the availability of different threshold types, inclusive access can be more easily achieved without compromising on thermal performance.

In refurbishment or heritage projects, traditionally styled aluminium doors offer a sympathetic design solution while delivering modern performance standards. This allows older buildings to meet today's requirements for energy efficiency and accessibility while preserving their architectural character.

Window systems & thermal performance

Windows play a vital role in both the design and environmental performance of a building and it's important to look for a system that offers exceptional thermal efficiency but is also available in a range of different opening styles. Given the proportion of a building's energy that can be lost through poorly performing windows, ensuring compliance with Part L and achieving low U-values are crucial steps in reducing operational carbon.

As sustainability becomes more deeply embedded into both the regulatory and practical requirements of modern architecture, aluminium glazing systems are playing an increasingly pivotal role.

Andrew Cooper is national specification manager at Senior Architectural Systems

SIMONSWERK UK strengthens sales leadership with new appointment

Leading hinge system manufacturer SIMONSWERK UK has announced the appointment of Andrew Kite as head of sales. The appointment represents a strategic move to strengthen the company's presence in the UK market as it continues to expand its premium door hardware solutions.

Andrew brings over a decade of strategic sales leadership experience from the kitchen industry, having worked with some of the sector's most prominent names. His career began with the Franke Group in the UK through their Future Leaders Programme, where he progressed from sales manager to national sales manager, leading the UK Projects Channel.

Subsequently, Andrew played a key role in launching the House of Rohl in the UK, consolidating four unique British heritage brands under a single umbrella for Fortune Brands. Most recently, he served as Head of Sales at Omega Kitchens, a leading British kitchen furniture manufacturer.

"I'm thrilled to be joining SIMONSWERK at such an exciting time in the company's development," says Andrew. "The company's reputation for premium quality and innovation in hinge systems, combined with their strong heritage of over 135 years in European manufacturing, makes this an ideal opportunity for me to apply my experience in a new sector. The parallels between the kitchen industry and the door hardware market are significant, particularly when it comes to serving discerning customers who demand both aesthetic excellence and functional performance."

Andrew's appointment comes as SIMONSWERK continues to build on its strong UK presence, with manufacturing operations in Tipton dating back to 1977. The company has established itself as a leader in premium hinge solutions across multiple applications, from traditional timber and PVCu doors to sophisticated glass door systems and the innovative TECTUS concealed hinge range.

In his new role, Andrew will work closely with the existing UK team to drive continued growth and strengthen SIMONSWERK's market position.

01215 222848 www.simonswerk.co.uk

Marmox's silver jubilee a roaring success

At the big Cat Sanctuary in Kent, around 50 of **Marmox's** staff and family gathered to relax and celebrate the company's 25 years in business. After visiting Lions, Tigers, Pumas, Jaguars, Cheetahs and Leopards, they enjoyed a buffet lunch before founder Harry Parsons cut a cake suitably decorated with the company logo and gave a short speech on, as he put it, 'how it all started.' This was followed by Sarah Viney, Harry's daughter and managing director and her brother Jonathan Parsons who is business development director, together with long time member of the Marmox team, finance director, Richard Kent-Smith presenting certificates to many long serving employees and as an extra thank you, under each guest's glass on the dining table was a lottery ticket – so three lucky winners' prize was to feed the Tigers. While Marmox remains a family business, staff retention across the company's various departments is excellent, with the stability this offers boding well for the future. Here, Sarah sees the industry as shifting towards off-site fabrication, in the knowledge Marmox is well place to respond.

01634 835290 www.marmox.co.uk

What products may contain asbestos that architects still need on-going training and awareness of?


Inspectas Director, Matthew Fahy

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral, widely used throughout the 20th century because of its unique properties including resistance to heat, fire, and chemicals. Given its durability and insulating capabilities, it became the material of choice for many industries and was used in a variety of products and structures.

Its popularity and heat resistance meant that asbestos was a key component in insulation for pipes, boilers and was also used for fire protection purposes. Asbestos as a product is very versatile as a binding agent when other chemicals/materials are added and hence it was used in products such as ceiling tiles, floor tiles, roofing shingles, cement undercloaking, decorative coatings, joint compound and spray-applied fireproofing, WC seats, switches, cisterns and more.

As we now know, despite its advantages, asbestos was later found to be extremely hazardous to human health. When asbestos fibres become airborne and are inhaled, they can lodge in the lungs and cause serious illnesses such as asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma.

Despite regulation eradicating asbestos use in 1999, its previously widespread use in construction means it still poses a challenge in refurbishments and management of older buildings. Seeking the correct advice at the outset on removal or maintenance is critical to the feasibility of a project and significantly impacts on an architect's design proposal.

Why is Asbestos still an issue in buildings and important for refurbishment schemes?

Although asbestos removal, encapsulation and management methods have improved over the decades, asbestos-based materials are still susceptible to deterioration and damage. This is particularly prevalent in the education sector, health, heavy industry and retail where its use was popular. Generally, lack of build documentation or document retention for past projects/buildings mean that finding asbestos in older buildings needs specialist, intrusive surveys to allow the correct action plan to be devised for the scheme or building.

While the use of asbestos is strictly controlled or banned in over 60 countries, it poses an ongoing challenge for architects. Asbestos used in fire doors and fire compartmentation materials is continually considered in the re-modelling of buildings as fire strategies change.

Although the "duty to manage" asbestos hasn't seen significantly changes recently, the Grenfell fire disaster and the following changes to building regulations, responsibilities and emphasis to "the Golden Thread of Information" means that asbestos must be managed if left in buildings or correct and full documentation completed around its removal. Because asbestos-based materials will be around and in buildings for years to come, architects need full awareness of the product, its complexities and challenges.

info@inspectas.co.uk inspectas.co.uk

Advanced celebrates success

Advanced has won an award at the 2025 Fire & Security Matters (FSM) Awards, recognising its achievements in fire safety, customer service, innovation, and sustainability. At the ceremony, held at Coventry's CBS Arena on 5 June, Advanced won the award for Fire Safety Project of the Year, and was also commended in the Fire Safety Manufacturer of the Year category. These accolades follow Advanced's double win at last year's FSM Awards and mark a significant milestone in its ongoing mission to create a safer, more sustainable future.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

Oscrete acquires waterproofing specialist

Concrete admixture manufacturer **Oscrete** has acquired structural waterproofing specialists, PUDLO, in a strategic move to diversify and strengthen the business. Oscrete, a leading UK supplier of specialist construction chemicals since 1983, manufactures and supplies a wide range of concrete admixtures for precast and ready-mix concrete, as well as the ready-to-use mortar industries. PUDLO, with over 150 years of expertise, is a market leader in structural waterproofing and gas protection systems across the UK.

www.oscrete.com www.pudlo.com

New fact sheets from the SWA


The Palace Hotel, Manchester

The **Steel Window Association** has developed 12 fact sheets which give the architect, contractor and installer important information and advice for the specification of steel windows and doors. To view and download, go to the website. The collection covers security, installation, aftercare and maintenance of steel windows, commercial refurbishment, domestic refurbishment, standard metal windows, W20 windows and doors, W30 windows and W40 windows, along with fire safety, ironmongery and W50 TB.

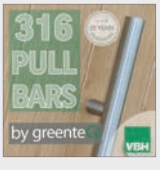
www.steel-window-association.co.uk/fact-sheets

Introducing Catnic SolarSeam

Catnic has launched Catnic SolarSeam, a photovoltaic (PV) solution for standing seam roofs that has been engineered to deliver exceptional performance without compromising on aesthetics. Catnic SolarSeam consists of a flexible solar laminate bonded to the popular Catnic Urban standing seam roofing panel, delivering efficient renewable energy without the traditionally highly visible frames. Catnic SolarSeam panels can be installed on roof pitches down to 5° for true design flexibility. Supplied as a complete kit, including the panels, flashings and fixings, SolarSeam is simple to order and straightforward to install.

catnic.technical@tatasteeleurope.com www.catnic.com

architeQ Marine Grade Pull Handles



Hardware supplier **VBH** has introduced a new range of marine grade 316 door pull handles. The new pulls, which are part of the architeQ family of stainless steel door furniture, are described by VBH as 'the perfect choice for composite and timber entrance doors.' The handles are available with 90° and 45° projection from the door face, and in sizes from 330 up to 1,800 mm. Concealed fixings provide the option of fitting handles back-to-back, or on one side of the door only. There are fixings available to suit composite, wood, aluminium and PVCu doors.

01634 263263 sales@vbhgb.com

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Wraptite® external air barrier helps to create state-of-the-art learning environment

The specification and installation of A.Proctor Group's Wraptite® external air barrier is helping three separate secondary school projects in Scotland to achieve the Passivhaus standard. As a result of the high-quality new school buildings, more than 4,500 pupils will benefit from learning in thermally comfortable classrooms with excellent indoor air quality.

The external walls of each new school are constructed in a slightly different way, showing that the Passivhaus standard can be achieved using different construction methods. Building on and using its sustainable construction expertise, main contractor Robertson Construction Tayside ensured the standard was capable of being met on these three projects.

A similar procurement process to Riverside Primary meant that using Wraptite satisfied the requirement for using local suppliers, on top of the experience gained in using it to meet the airtightness requirements.

Perth High School is a concrete frame with mineral wool insulation and a facing brick facade. The school buildings to the other two campuses feature a mix of concrete and steel frame, with high performance insulation. Facing brickwork is the finish at Monifieth, while East End Community Campus will have finishes of facing brickwork, precast concrete and cladding.

Wraptite is well-suited to Passivhaus projects, and the different construction methods demonstrate its versatility in helping to meet the standard's high levels of airtightness. By moving the airtight line to the exterior face of the wall structure, it avoids a lot of complex detailing around services and other penetrations that typically occur at the internal face.

As a fully-adhered vapour permeable membrane, Wraptite saves on labour and material costs, without compromising airtightness levels and without increasing condensation risk within the structure. Not all detailing issues can be avoided, of course, and where particular areas of detailing do need to be addressed there is the added benefit of Wraptite tape.

On-site quality checks are a hallmark of the Passivhaus standard and accreditation. The simple solution offered by Wraptite allows those checks to be carried out with the minimum of fuss.

01250 872 261
proctorgroup.com/products/wraptite

don't turn the page

~~No~~ Sky

~~No~~ Sun

~~No~~ Soul

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GLAZING VISION

Luxury window and door hardware by Croft

It's easy to overlook window and door hardware, but these details play a crucial role in defining a room's style and functionality. Whether renovating, upgrading or simply making small changes, investing in high quality hardware is a smart and stylish way to add character and definition. With an array of design and finish options, Croft offers solutions to suit a variety of needs and styles, allowing spaces to be transformed into something special.

When it comes to interior design, upgrading window hardware is a small but impactful way to refresh the aesthetic. Croft products are made from brass which resists corrosion and wear over time, making them ideal for windows that receive a lot of regular use. Elegant designs, such as the Sliding Stays in Polished Brass, add a sophisticated and luxurious touch to windows, while more traditional options like the Reeded Window Espagnolette Handle in Aged Brass enhance the charm of period properties with a timeless appeal.

Externally, the hardware used on a front door significantly increases a property's kerb appeal, enhancing the visual impact from the outside. Not only are they functional elements of the house, but they also create a lasting first impression for guests, who will notice the attention to detail in the tactile aspects. Croft offers a wide selection of beautiful, high-quality architectural products designed to enhance front doors, including doorknobs, knockers, letter plates, and bell pushes.

Beyond aesthetics, high quality hardware enhances the way we interact with spaces, with easy-to-grip handles, smooth operating hinges and sliding mechanisms all adding to the level of comfort. Ensuring smooth operation and longevity, Croft's range of luxury window and entryway hardware makes opening and closing effortless.

As a proud British, family-run company, Croft has been a leading name in architectural hardware in the UK since 1868, designing and handcrafting a diverse portfolio in over 25 different finishes and patinas.

01902 606 493 www.croft.co.uk

Schöck are offering free design support for BSA projects

Thermal breaks in external wall systems play a pivotal role in meeting the revised Building Safety Act 2022. Professional design input is a vital part of this process.

Following the Grenfell tragedy and the subsequent Hackett Review, The Building (Amendment) Regulations were introduced in December 2018. These set out restrictions on the combustibility criteria of 'specified attachments' forming part of the external wall. For example, balconies, solar panels or solar shading, attached to the external wall of a 'relevant building' in England (over 18 m above ground level, or seven storeys). Now, the Building Safety Act 2022 further reforms building safety regulation and has also introduced a Building Safety Regulator; whose primary goal is to improve the design, construction and management of higher-risk 'relevant' buildings.

Designers play a critical role in this new regime

At Schöck, we understand the increasingly critical role designers now have. Ensuring the safety and compliance of building projects is of course a given, but the avoidance of unnecessary delays by resolving possible issues early on and minimising the need for late-stage changes is also pivotal. That is why we are delighted to offer complimentary design support services, allowing specifiers to create seamless, compliant, and efficient thermal break solutions with confidence. Whether you're working on connecting balconies, canopies, or solar shading, our thermal breaks provide exemplary load-bearing insulation solutions.

How does the Isokorb range comply with the Amended Regulations?

In part 7(3) of Approved Document B in the Amended Regulations there is a list of materials exempt from the restrictions, which includes thermal breaks. Because Schöck Isokorb thermal breaks form part of the external wall, it is critical that they comply with the Amended Regulations. The Isokorb uses thermal insulation material to improve thermal performance (verified to meet the requirement of Part L by independent thermal testing from Oxford Brooks University) and consequently they are exempt according to the amended regulations.

What makes Schöck thermal breaks so effective in meeting Part L?

The quality of the components used in their construction guarantee superior thermal performance. Stainless steel (in the thermal zone) is used for its greatly reduced thermal conductivity when compared with carbon steel. The HTE (High-performance Thermal Element) module used is a concrete thrust bearing designed to both transmit compressive forces and optimise thermal conductivity. When Neopor®, an expanded polystyrene (EPS) insulation with superior thermal performance, is used together with the HTE module, thermal bridging is almost entirely eradicated.

Design of the Isokorb range addresses key safety requirements

The Building Safety Act emphasises the importance of using tested and certified components in safety-critical systems. Substituting specified products, such as thermal breaks, without ensuring compliance and suitability, could breach the regulations, leading to significant liability risks. The Isokorb range exceeds the demands of the Building Safety Act by addressing key issues such as: BBA Agrément Certified to exceed fire resistance standards (REI120); helps mitigate fire spread risk as required by the Act for use in high-risk residential buildings – and provides critical documentation (including design calculations) to support the 'golden thread' of safety information.

We would be delighted to partner with you and ensure your BSA projects not only meet, but exceed, safety and thermal performance standards.

To leverage our expertise and create a robust engineering solution for your next project, connect with us.

bsa@schoeck.com
www.schoeck.com/en-gb/isokorb

Arnot St. Mary School Terracotta coping stone replacements with Leca® Uno

Resapol were contacted by Liverpool Council/Kier to ask to tender for the Arnot St. Mary School Project, a listed building. Liverpool Council, are being advised by Kier throughout the duration.

For over three years, the classrooms at the school have suffered from leaks and internal plaster damage at the base of each apex.

This initiative aims to prevent further water intrusion and to repair all internal damage. The project involves replacing the existing terracotta coping stones with Leca® Uno, a material known for being easier to move into position and fit compared to a heavier filling material.

The project will be executed by a skilled team from Quadriga Ltd, in collaboration with Kirk Scaffold and Darwen Terracotta. This cooperation is crucial for ensuring that the work meets the high standards expected by the council while ensuring minimal disruption to the school's activities. By taking these measures, the project promises to enhance the structural integrity of the buildings.

All the terracotta coping stones will be replaced, except for the top decorative fleur-de-lis, and a damp proof course (DPC) installed underneath to prevent future water ingress. Leca® Uno, a lightweight filler, is being utilized to fill the sections where terracotta was replaced.

The use of materials like Leca® Uno underscores a commitment to sustainability by reducing the carbon footprint associated with transportation and installation. Additionally, this approach reduces the overall weight on the structure, minimizing the risk of further damage over time.

Please call or visit Resapol's website for further information.

0800 083 1942
www.resapol.com

Senior delivers fenestration package for new Monkwearmouth Hospital development

Senior Architectural Systems has supplied a high-performance aluminium fenestration package as part of the major redevelopment of Monkwearmouth Hospital in Sunderland.

Designed by Ryder Architecture and built by main contractor Sir Robert McAlpine, the new three-storey outpatient facility creates a welcoming gateway to the wider hospital site. At the heart of the building is a light-filled atrium that houses the main reception area and café facilities, helping to provide a bright and inclusive space for patients, visitors, and staff.

A variety of Senior's aluminium fenestration systems were fabricated and installed by Hadrian Architectural Glazing Systems. Senior's thermally efficient SF52 aluminium curtain wall, specified as both fully capped and silicon glazed systems, has been used extensively to create large glazed areas that maximise daylight and support a calm, therapeutic environment. To create the

glazed elements in the atrium and courtyard areas, Senior's SF62 aluminium curtain wall was chosen. Similar in appearance to the SF52 system to ensure consistency of the fenestration design, the SF62 curtain walling option offers a wider 62 mm box which allows greater flexibility in accommodating structural movement.

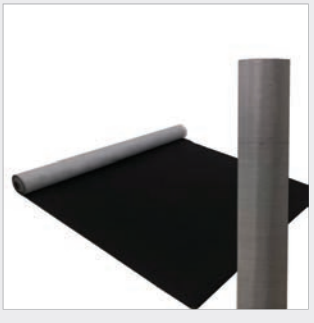
Senior's curtain walling systems have been further complemented by the installation of durable SP501 commercial doors and stylish PURe® SLIDE doors, which together offer both ease of access and durability in high-traffic areas. Senior's PURe® Commercial Door, which is the manufacturer's largest and strongest option, has been installed to the courtyard with the patented low U-value PURe® aluminium windows fitted throughout.

The use of aluminium throughout the fenestration package not only enhances the building's contemporary design but also supports its environmental credentials. Offering excellent recyclability and low maintenance, Senior's glazing systems have also helped contribute to the scheme's BREEAM 'Excellent' rating through their enhanced thermal performance.

The completed building provides a modern, functional, and welcoming environment and has been nominated in the Best Commercial Project category at 2025 North East Property Awards.

01709 772600
www.seniorarchitectural.co.uk

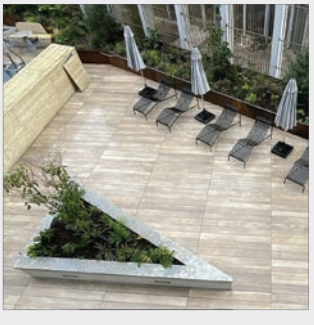
Probreathe® A2 Fire-Rated Breather Membrane awarded BBA certificate



The Proctor Group is proud to announce that Probreathe® A2 has been awarded British Board of Agrément (BBA) Certification No. 25/7384, further validating its technical performance and suitability for modern construction demands. Probreathe A2 is an airtight woven glass fibre membrane with a PU coating, combining breathability, water resistance, and airtightness in a single, versatile layer. Now BBA certified, the membrane provides specifiers, contractors, and developers with added confidence in its proven reliability and compliance with UK building regulations. "We're delighted that Probreathe A2 has achieved BBA Certification," said Pamela Howat, senior technical advisor at The Proctor Group. "This accreditation confirms what our customers already know – that Probreathe A2 is a market-leading membrane that delivers performance, especially in the most demanding applications." With this BBA certification, Probreathe A2 is now one of the few breather membranes on the market offering a combination of limited combustibility, airtightness, and vapour permeability – making it an optimal choice for safe, sustainable, and compliant building envelopes.

01250 872 261 proctorgroup.com

Dura Composites advises specifiers on meeting high-rise fire regulations



Many specifiers are unaware that the testing and implementation of decking and cladding for buildings over 11 meters can affect their compliance with the Building Safety Act fire regulations. **Dura Composites** advises on how they can ensure they're meeting current guidelines.

Specifiers can protect themselves by asking the following questions: Is the certificate provider UKAS accredited? Has every component of the product received a fire rating? Different aspects of a product may perform differently. Do the fire rating and test certificate match the field of application? Does the installation guide advise on installation methods to match the field of application? Has the right orientation been tested? Different orientations may impact the fire rating of the product. Have all of the available colours been tested? This may impact its fire rating. Does the fire certificate state which colours are covered, as outlined in section-4 of the field of application?

For more guidance speak to Dura Composites' high-rise decking and cladding team.

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Berkeley's Oval Village Technical Team:

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"The MAX FRANK non-combustible thermal break was specified at the Oval Village in direct response to the ban of combustible materials on HRB buildings 18m and over in height. There are still products on the market with combustible thermal breaks and the unique product from MAX FRANK addresses this by use of a non-combustible A1 rated Rockwool core. This was integrated into the design as Berkeley's strict direction with the designer to specify products regardless if excluded under Reg 7(3) to be non-combustible. The MAX FRANK product has been used on all current phases of the Oval Village on concrete balconies where the structural engineers have worked closely with the MAX FRANK team to structurally input their product as part of the frame design."

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BBA APPROVAL INSPECTION TESTING CERTIFICATION
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Time for a rethink on timber

Helen Hewitt of the British Woodworking Federation challenges outdated myths about specification of timber, which belie its durability and high-performance credentials.

Timber is considered the oldest building material in the world, yet it remains one of the most misunderstood. Despite its natural beauty, low carbon footprint, and performance, timber is often overlooked. As the UK construction industry continues its journey of decarbonisation, the use of timber should be at the forefront of the built environment.

At the British Woodworking Federation, we're working to challenge outdated perceptions and champion timber's essential role in building a more sustainable future. We must tackle persistent myths about timber's longevity, cost, maintenance requirements and suitability. Only then can this versatile material take its rightful place in helping to deliver net zero goals and more liveable, future-ready buildings.

Outdated myths vs innovation

Timber is often subject to misconceptions. Frequently cited concerns often include high cost, maintenance challenges, and limited durability. However, these perceptions are typically grounded in outdated information or anecdotal evidence, rather than the realities of modern technical performance.

Modern cladding or structural elements have advanced coatings, engineered profiles, and rigorous manufacturing standards. These innovations have vastly improved durability and consistency, putting timber on equal footing with, or ahead of, materials like PVCu or aluminium when it comes to performance, lifecycle cost, and aesthetic value.

Take timber windows; many assume they are high maintenance. In fact, factory-finished timber windows, correctly installed and maintained, can last over 50 years. Today's acrylic resin coatings are designed to gradually erode, and are easily reapplied, often just once per decade. By comparison, PVCu windows often have a 20-30 year lifespan and can suffer yellowing, brittleness, and limited repair options.

In terms of being a truly sustainable material, what sets timber apart is not just operational performance, but its entire lifecycle. Timber is renewable and when responsibly sourced, its sourcing supports well-managed forests and biodiversity.

With the net zero carbon target in 2050, and the Future Homes Standard set to tighten energy performance in new builds, now is the time to embrace materials that align with these objectives. Timber stores carbon throughout its life and requires significantly less energy to process than materials such as PVCu and aluminium. As a result, specifying timber can substantially reduce a scheme's embodied carbon.

What sets timber apart is its role as a truly sustainable material, not just in operational performance, but across its entire lifecycle

Challenging misconceptions

There is also a misconception that timber is a 'premium' choice for conservation areas or high-end developments. If we are to increase the use of timber across volume housing, education, healthcare, and other public infrastructure, all of industry and customers must play a part. This includes helping to educate not just our

Timber is often subject to misconceptions; frequently cited concerns often include high cost, maintenance challenges, and limited durability

peers, but also housebuilders, developers, and homeowners that the common misconceptions about timber are no longer valid. Timber is often seen as only suitable for specific cases, like heritage projects, rather than a mainstream building material. The reality is that timber is appropriate for any context – urban, rural, new build or retrofit – and can enhance both aesthetic and performance across the board.

We should be highlighting not only the value timber adds, but its practicality and compatibility with modern construction methods. Engineered timber, for example, lends itself to offsite manufacturing and precision installation.

One of the most enduring myths is that timber demands excessive maintenance. While it's true that wood benefits from care and attention, the scale of effort needed is often grossly exaggerated. While many alternative materials also require periodic cleaning, repair or replacement, timber can be repaired and refinished rather than replaced, an important distinction in terms of sustainability and cost-efficiency.

Sectional repair and re-coating is possible insitu, with modern finishes designed for easy renewal. This not only extends the product's life well beyond 50 years, but also reduces waste, supports circular design principles, and offers the flexibility to adapt finishes to changing tastes over time.

Educating the market

Another challenge lies in where people get their information. Housebuilders and homeowners tend to turn to search engines or anecdotal sources for product info, rather than trade associations or manufacturers. As a result, myths persist, and opportunities are missed.

This is where architects and specifiers can lead. Using accurate, up-to-date guidance and third-party certifications such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), the profession can play a pivotal role in driving higher standards and more sustainable choices. Architects are in a unique position to challenge clients' assumptions, and highlight timber's long-term value, to ensure it's part of the specification conversation from the earliest design stages.

Helen Hewitt is chief executive of the British Woodworking Federation

A2 Boards add to AIM's high impact soffit liner range

High Impact Soffit Liner Boards with Euroclass Reaction to Fire A2-s1,d0 classification are now available from AIM – Acoustic & Insulation Manufacturing. For use with concrete soffits where thermal or acoustic performance is required, the boards offer excellent impact resistance, so providing an insulated lining designed for semi exposed soffits, such as in car parks.

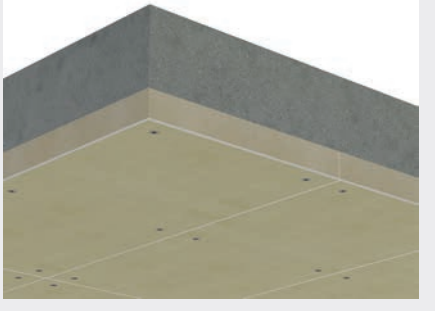
AIM manufactures a variety of non-fire rated High Impact Soffit Liner Boards. Now, the fire, acoustic and thermal insulation specialist has invested in reaction to fire testing for its stonewool backed board, resulting in an A2-s1,d0 classified 'limited combustibility' option to add to the range.

The primary job of a soffit liner is to provide thermal insulation to the soffit typically the ceiling within semi exposed places, including car parks. In such instances there is a requirement that the soffit insulation is protected with a cement board and that the combined product is of limited combustibility. AIM's A2 High Impact Soffit Liner Boards manufactured with stonewool insulation are classified in accordance with BS EN 13501-1 as A2-s1,d0 'limited combustibility'. This applies to boards of a thickness from 56 mm to 256 mm.

AIM's A2 High Impact Soffit Liner Boards can also be used as internal linings for walls and ceilings. They are available in a wide range of thicknesses and insulation materials to suit the thermal resistance (U Value) required to support the thermal performance of the construction. The AIM Technical Support Team can provide U Value calculations as required.

The boards can also contribute to the overall acoustic performance of the soffit/floor construction. Acoustic testing is covered by Z11012 – Acoustic Performance BS EN ISO 10140-2.

The fibre cement facing board can be easily decorated to match colour schemes. However, decoration would be outside the scope of the classification report for reaction to fire. Pre-decorated and through coloured facing boards are available but these have not been classified for reaction to fire.



Part of the Performance Technology Group, UK-based AIM – Acoustic & Insulation Manufacturing has over 30 years of experience in the design, testing and manufacturing of high-quality fire, thermal and acoustic barriers. The company produces a wide variety of bespoke insulation products to customer specification and a range of standard products.

01293 582400
www.aimlimited.co.uk/solutions/a2-high-impact-soffit-liner-boards

EJOT flat roofing solution helps housing developer avoid weather-related delays

An EJOT fixing combination, which is designed for rapid installation of flat roof systems with tapered insulation, has been instrumental in market-leading retirement property developer McCarthy & Stone meeting the strict completion deadline at one of its latest developments in Wiltshire.

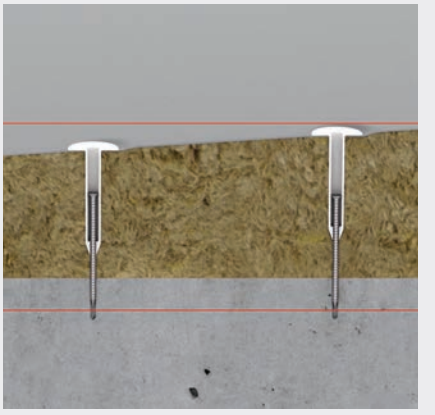
The scheme at Wichelstowe in Swindon is formed of two blocks which accommodate a range of one and two bedroom apartments designed to offer stylish independent living for the over 60s, with around 120 new properties in total. McCarthy & Stone has co-developed the site with Anchor Hanover Group (Anchor), England's largest not-for-profit provider of specialist housing and care for people in later life, to deliver a retirement community close to the picturesque Wilts and Berks Canal.

The developer's firm commitment to delivering the scheme to new residents on time, as promised, meant that the construction team had to pull out all the stops to find creative solutions to keep the build schedule on track. One particular challenge resulted from the relatively small window available to install the extensive flat roofs of the apartment blocks which fell at a time when temperatures had plummeted unexpectedly.

The original proposal was for a tapered insulation system, incorporating a Bauder PVC membrane plus mineral wool insulation, to be bonded to the concrete deck. However, given the cold weather conditions, it was not possible to apply the adhesive during the planned installation window.

As waiting for the temperature to rise to the required level would have resulted in unpalatable delays to the construction programme, nationwide roofing contractor Protec Roofing was tasked with finding a solution that would ensure the proposed flat roof system could still be used.

Protec Roofing's managing director Ian Green approached EJOT UK's flat roofing specialist Kevin Rackley for assistance. He had recently been introduced to EJOT's mechanical fixing solution for flat roof systems involving a combination of the JBS-R fastener and EcoTek tube-washer at an industry event, and after recommending it to the project team, it was subsequently approved for use by Bauder.



The EJOT JBS-R/EcoTek combination brings together a high-performing organically coated concrete screw (JBS-R 7.5) with a high-quality telescopic tube-washer (EcoTek) to provide a fixing solution that is adjustable to fit the required depth of insulation. It is suitable for all types of commonly used tapered insulation, principally mineral fibre, EPS, XPS and PIR.

The combination is suitable for any insulation depth of between 70 mm and 590 mm, and it has the benefit of requiring fewer fastener/washer combinations than any other current mechanical fixing approach. As a result, fastener use can be significantly rationalised, subject to the application, a site survey and pull-out tests, which EJOT UK is able to assist with.

At the Wichelstowe development, the tapered insulation depth on one of the roofs ranged from 90 mm to 330 mm, using four lengths of JBS-R fastener of between 80 mm and 210 mm. The roof on the second building involved insulation depths between 140 mm and 380 mm, which required three fastener lengths of between 120 mm and 210 mm.

In addition to keeping the construction schedule on track during the cold weather, the installation process also proved popular with the team on site. Installation of the EcoTek/JBS-R combination is easy because only one embedment depth is needed whatever the insulation thickness. Easy adjustability is also provided through the innovative way that the EcoTek tube-washer is driven into place using a custom tool with the fastener already in place.

Where the roof features a particularly deep layer of tapered insulation to maximise thermal performance, as was the case at Wichelstowe, EJOT's flanged A-cone and driver bit extension is used to avoid the awkwardness associated with drilling deep using standard SDS drills. This means installers can avoid a highly delicate procedure requiring long-length SDS drills, which are often difficult to source.

The simplified installation process offered by the EcoTek/JBS-R tube-washer and fastener combination also means that fewer on-site calculations were required compared to using other mechanical fixing approaches.

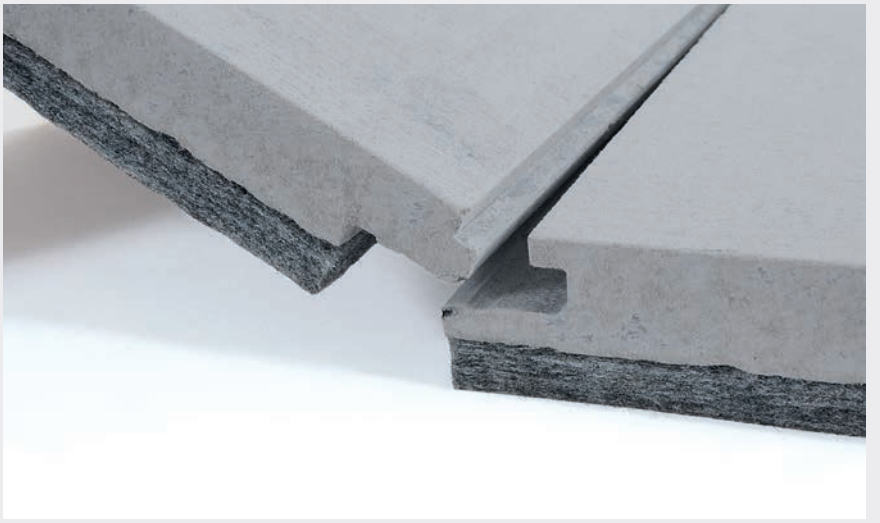
Long term performance is assured when using the JBS-R/EcoTek fastening system given the quality materials used to manufacture both fastener elements. The JBS-R fastener is manufactured from case hardened steel and the EcoTek tube-washer is formed from high quality plastic to provide a lasting solution.

The EcoTek/JBS-R combination is part of EJOT's extensive range of fastening solutions for flat roofing, encompassing fully mechanical and part-bonded systems, and fully compliant with the guidelines published by the Single Ply Roofing Association (SPRA). Flat roof designers, contractors and installers benefit from highly specialised support from the EJOT UK team at all stages of the flat roofing project to ensure all the performance objectives can be met without compromise.

01977 687040
www.ejot.co.uk/jbs-r_ecotek_combination

Remain vigilant when assessing products that resemble ScreedBoard® in name or description

Cellecta is urging architects, developers, and contractors to remain vigilant when assessing products that resemble ScreedBoard® in name or description.



Cellecta Ltd, the UK manufacturer of the trademark-registered ScreedBoard®, is urging construction professionals to exercise caution as imitation products and misleading terminology continue to appear across the market.

ScreedBoard® 28 is one of the UK industry's leading high-density dry gypsum acoustic floor panel. Renowned for its outstanding performance, unique interlocking edge design, and third-party certifications, the panel helps a separating floor exceed Part E Building Regulations for acoustic performance typically by over 5 dB. For over 18 years, it has been widely specified across residential and commercial developments for its proven compliance and consistent results.

"We are increasingly seeing companies use similar names, such as 'screed board' or 'screed boarding', in ways that can mislead specifiers and compromise the integrity of compliant builds," said Ben Banks, technical director at Cellecta.

He added: "We are committed to protecting our brand and supporting specifiers in making informed, confident decisions that are backed by independent and comprehensive levels of testing. Where necessary, we will pursue legal remedies to address any misuse of our trademarks. We've seen developers forced to rip up and replace floors after post-completion testing exposed substandard acoustic performance from inferior alternatives. Any initial cost savings are quickly erased when remediation is required."

Cellecta is also warning that some competitors are misrepresenting their products as Robust Detail (RD) compliant, despite lacking proper certification. While these companies reference general floor types such as E-FC-1, E-FC-2, or E-FS-1. All of which require a 17 dB impact improvement from an acoustic treatment, to show compliance with RD. It is important that this can be backed up by independent test data. It should also be made clear that these references do not equate to system-level approval, especially when proprietary components such as underfloor heating layers are introduced or the acoustic board is used in applications such as timber frame or steel joisted floors. Proprietary Robust Details must utilise the components shown in the RD, and these must not be substituted.

Literature should be clear on what application and exactly which Robust Detail their products are suitable for, remember unless the entire system is tested in accordance with the handbook, it is not suitable.

As part of its ongoing commitment to brand integrity, Cellecta enforces a strict policy of monitoring and defending its intellectual property. Legal action will be taken against any organisation using misleading or derivative variations of its trademarks that risk causing confusion or diluting the ScreedBoard® brand's reputation.

More than just a product, ScreedBoard® is a legally protected brand and a proprietary Robust Detail solution. Backed by UKAS-accredited test data and supported with a minimum 10-year warranty, it delivers certified acoustic performance with complete peace of mind both with and without underfloor heating.

Cellecta encourages all specifiers to seek clarification where any doubt exists regarding a product's authenticity, certification, or compliance. Asking the right questions up front can prevent costly issues later.

"We stand behind our product, our trademark, and our customers," added Stephen Cain, communications manager at Cellecta. "We'll continue working to ensure the industry has access to clearly certified, high-performance acoustic flooring solutions—without compromise."

ScreedBoard® is a registered trademark of Cellecta Ltd (UK Trademark No. UK00002454165).

01634 296 677 www.cellecta.co.uk

Gilberts slots into Manchester regeneration

The historic Manchester Central railway station is embarking on its latest evolution as an award-winning venue with the opening of a new bar, restaurant, cafe and social workspace. Built under the iconic arch of the 140 years-old station, 'Junction' aims to create a relaxing meeting point for visitors to the event venue- an ambition being achieved in part through its ventilation, supplied by **Gilberts Blackpool**. In response to the industrial concept developed by Up North Architects, project consulting engineers Hulley & Kirkwood specified Gilberts' new JSC radial blow circular slot diffuser mounted into the exposed ductwork within Junction's bar and coffee shop with louvre faced diffusers air the main restaurant. Louvred and perforated face diffusers provide air supply and extract for back-of-house area. Installation was carried out by Pure Vent. Gilberts has a proven track record in supporting creation of a relaxing, odour-free ambience within hospitality venues including Black Sheep Battersea, GPO Metquarter, the UK' first Virgin hotel, Gleneagles Edinburgh and Radisson RED.

01253 766911 info@gilbertsblackpool.com

Domus Ventilation delivering comfort

Domus Ventilation rigid ducting has been installed at a new luxury aparthotel in one of York's most architecturally renowned streets, Micklegate, as part of the Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) system installed throughout. Domus 204x60 Rigid Duct and fittings have been used at the new aparthotel throughout, along with Domus sound attenuators. The latter absorbs sound over a range of audible frequencies travelling through ductwork, such as the MVHR fan, external traffic noise or room-to-room-cross talk, making it an ideal addition in a hotel.

03443 715523 www.domusventilation.co.uk

Nuaire now with Passivhaus certification

Nuaire is pleased to announce Passivhaus certification has been achieved on BPS Passivhaus air handling units (AHU) and XBC Passivhaus packaged heat recovery units. BPS Passivhaus is a range of high specification packaged AHUs designed and engineered to provide an efficient, high performing, compact solution for a multitude of applications. With a plate heat exchanger with efficiencies of up to 95%, XBC Passivhaus are high performance packaged heat recovery units designed to improve indoor air quality while saving energy.

enquiries@nuaire.co.uk nuaire.co.uk/commercial/passivhaus

Quicker delivery for Stelrad coloured radiators

Stelrad has introduced a new quicker turnaround service for the supply of some of its radiators in colour. Initially this new rapid turnaround service will apply to the popular Column and Concord ranges, and to the Classic Towel Rail, Caliente and Concord towel rail products when ordered in one of the now 55 standard RAL colours and finishes within the huge range of radiators available – that's a significant increase over the previous 32 or 35 colour options. The lead time has been reduced from the current eight weeks to up to 14 days.

0800 876 6813 www.stelradprofessional.com

West Fraser's CaberMDF in the house

When it comes to consistency, quality and ease of use, **West Fraser's** CaberMDF leads the way with its legendary performance and popularity. CaberMDF is designed as a cost-efficient, versatile alternative to hardwood, without the inherent knots or grains. Stable and dense, the panels have a high-quality surface, are strong, resist impact and accept fasteners securely. They are easy to work and can be sawn, drilled, shaped, and routed cleanly with minimum fuss, using hand or machine tools. When it comes to appearance, quality finishes are easily achieved, and the smooth surface of the panels is ideal for painting, veneers or paper foils.

uk.westfraser.com

Zest unveils new range of acoustic wall panels

Zest Wall Panels, part of Swish Building Products, has announced an extension to its range with the launch of its new contemporary Acoustic Wall Panels. Manufactured with real wood veneers and rigid, fully recycled plastic backing, these stylish slatted wall panels are specifically designed to absorb noise and improve sound quality. With the real wood veneer covering all three sides of each slat, these panels are beautiful from every angle. They are available in four timeless shades, Washed Oak, Oiled Oak, Ash Grey, and Contemporary Oak, allowing them to blend seamlessly into any style of interior design. Available as single panels and standing 2.6 m high, Zest Acoustic Wall Panels are easy to install and ideally suited to both modern and older properties and any size and shape of space. "An increase in customer demand for a quality product, together with a desire to extend our range led us to create our new Zest Acoustic Wall panels," explains Brian Neville, national account manager, at Zest. "Our aim is to offer a high specification wall panel which beautifully combines style, substance, and sustainability."

01827 317 200 zestwallpanels.co.uk/wall-panels/acoustic-wall-panels

Lift Youth Hub renovations create new studio space for Islington's young performers

Lift Youth Hub joins forces with Tidal Architects and Harlequin to create a sustainable, high-quality studio supporting young talent and dance professionals.

Lift Youth Hub, a community space in Islington, expanded its facilities in May 2024 by transforming an underused corner of its site into a studio space.

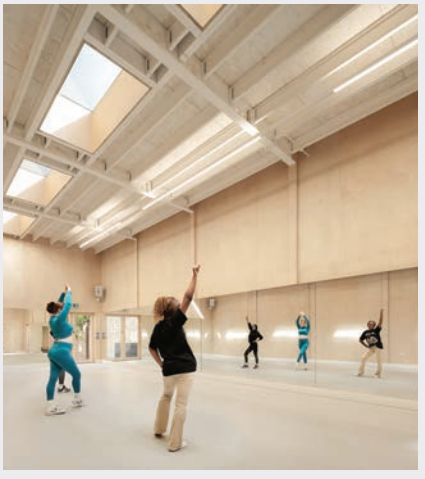
The new studio is equipped with a Harlequin Activity sprung floor and a Harlequin Cascade performance vinyl floor as well as Harlequin freestanding ballet barres and mirrors.

Based in a former Victorian school, Lift Youth Hub provides extensive support services and facilities for young people between the ages of 12-21, including meeting and training rooms, large multi-use halls, a gym, indoor and outdoor kitchens and a recording studio.

Damien Swan, head of operations, who has previously worked with high-end performers, explains the decision behind choosing Harlequin floors for the new studio. He said: "Whenever we plan a project, it has to be both commercially viable and beneficial to young people. By providing them with the best possible floor, we're able to offer dancers and artists a safe and welcoming environment."

With several professional dance studios nearby, including Sadler's Wells, Damien and the team knew they needed to meet a high standard. Their goal was to attract a broad range of users, from community groups to elite dancers. The result being a high-spec studio that offers the ideal rehearsal space for the Hub's young performers, many of whom take part in community events such as the Notting Hill Carnival.

Photos © Adam Scott | Tidal Architects



London Borough of Islington helped fund the renovation as well as Isledon Arts gaining additional funding from the Backstage Trust and The Clothworkers Company.

Designed by Tidal Architects, the studio was built with sustainable materials to provide an energy efficient and low-carbon building, both in its construction and use. Tidal Architects Director, Brian Heron, said: "Lift Youth Hub was very clear from the outset that they wanted a professional quality dance studio. In early discussions with potential end users, like dance companies and performing arts organisations, it became clear that specifying a Harlequin dance floor was an essential requirement if we wanted to attract professional dancers to hire the space and so, together with the Lift Youth Hub team, we factored this into the brief from an early stage."

The space has now become the new home of London City Ballet with Sean Flanagan, General Manager of London City Ballet, praising the space as "the best dance studio of its kind in London".

Other dance companies and organisations such as Studio808 and HIPA, also hire the studio space, generating vital income to support Lift Youth Hub's wide range of services and programmes.

Lift Youth Hub continues welcoming both young people and professional organisations, ensuring the space stays active, inclusive, and financially sustainable.

For more information about Harlequins products and services please contact us.

01892 514 888
enquiries@harlequinfloors.com

HARLEQUIN
www.harlequinfloors.com

The world performs on **Harlequin floors**

Sam Arellano _ ORA Architects

Trusted by leading technical directors, theatre consultants and architects, Harlequin's expert teams specialise in the design, build and refurbishment of stages and performance spaces, creating bespoke solutions tailored to the unique needs of each venue.

For more information contact our technical team:

architects@harlequinfloors.com +44 (0) 1892 514 888

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Weber and CMS Danskin Acoustics launch new acoustic floor systems incorporating REGUPOL

Saint-Gobain Weber and REGUPOL in partnership with CMS Danskin Acoustics have collaborated to develop, test and launch a suite of new impact sound insulation floor systems designed to reduce sound transmission. The new 'weberfloor acoustic systems' can be used to meet challenging acoustics targets across both new construction and refurbishment projects, including residential, healthcare, commercial and leisure schemes.

Aimed at making acoustic floor system specification more straightforward for architects, acousticians, contractors and installers who are designing and delivering developments where controlling impact sound is required or desired, the new weberfloor acoustic systems work with most floor finishes, such as LVT, sheet vinyl, laminate, timber, ceramic tiles and carpet.

The collaboration draws together Weber's flooring screed expertise developed over more than 40 years, REGUPOL's cutting-edge acoustic product technology and the strengths of leading acoustic insulation supplier CMS Danskin Acoustics. The capabilities of the three respected brands have been combined to offer the construction market this new, wide range of fully tested acoustic flooring options.

Fully tested for compatibility, the weberfloor acoustic systems unite Weber screeds and smoothing/levelling compounds with REGUPOL impact sound insulating membranes for both under screed and over screed applications to reduce noise transmission. Each component of the system is equally important in achieving the specified acoustic performance.

Acoustic under screed and over screed system product selectors are clearly outlined in Weber's new Acoustic Flooring Solutions brochure, which can be downloaded at the company's website. The systems are also shown on CMS Danskin Acoustics' website. Product specific technical data sheets are available from Weber and from CMS Danskin Acoustics.

"In today's construction landscape, where noise pollution is a concern, the need for effective sound insulation is critical. This is where weberfloor acoustic systems will come into play by offering solutions designed to improve the acoustic quality of spaces," says Ian Dennis, Weber's national flooring manager.

"With three market leaders at the heart of these new acoustic systems, this is a significant development," explains UK REGUPOL consultant Jamie Symons. "The market can be assured of the compatibility and integrity of the weberfloor acoustic systems, making product selection much simpler."

Andy Hayes, technical manager at CMS Danskin Acoustics and associate member of the IoA, adds: "The extensive development and testing work at the foundation of these systems means that, when specifying the weberfloor acoustic systems, the market can be confident in achieving both effective acoustic performance and excellent loading performance with minimal construction height."

The weberfloor acoustic systems are supported by a fully trained team of specification and technical managers who can guide clients throughout their specification and installation journey. Training, including CPD modules for architects and installers, will be announced shortly.

www.uk.weber/weberfloor-acoustic-systems
www.cmsdanskin.co.uk/weber

marmox multiboard

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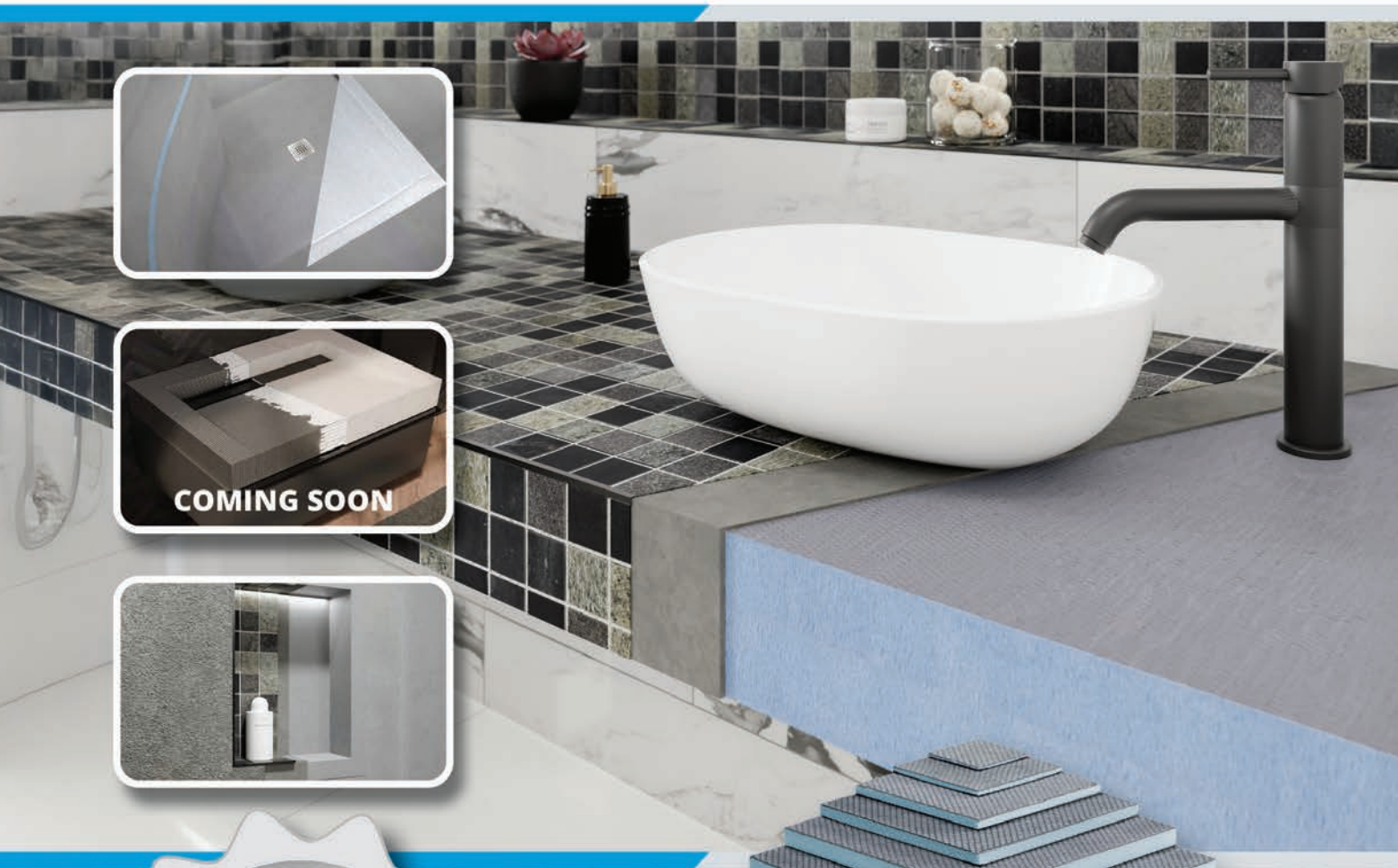
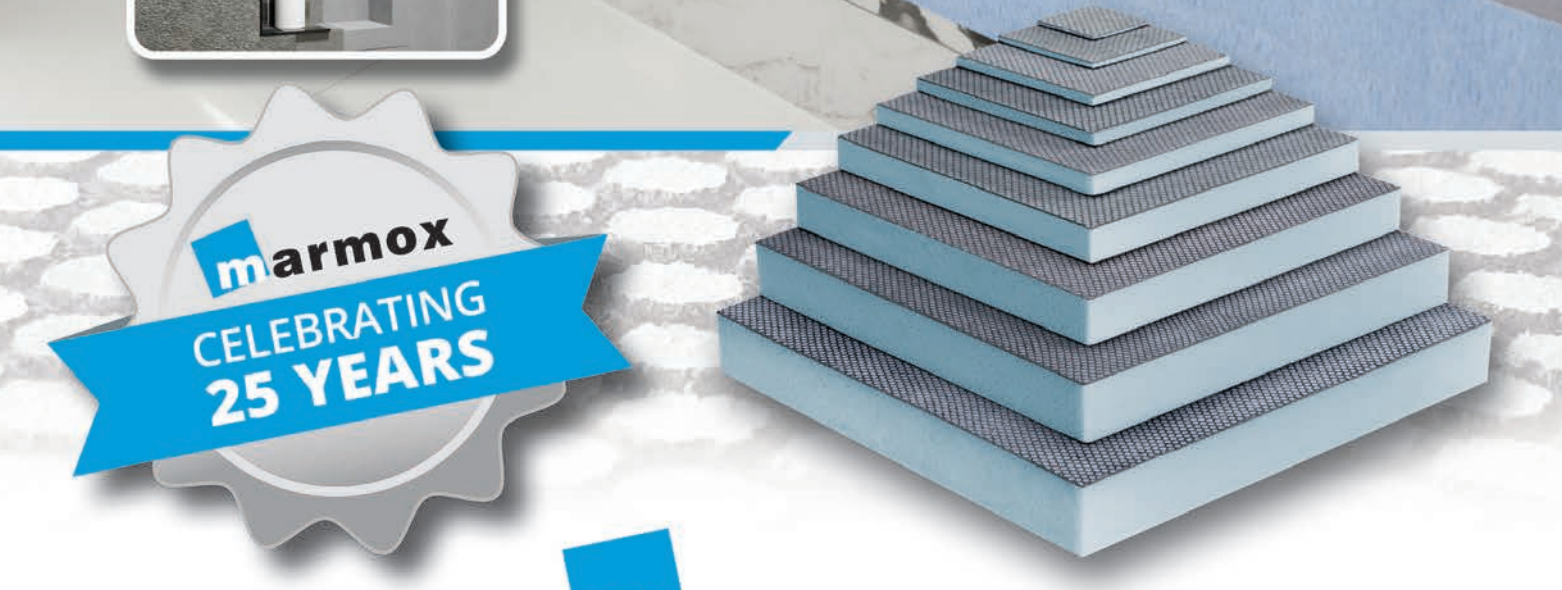




marmox

Waterproofing & Insulation Solutions

W: www.marmox.co.uk **T:** 01634 835290 **T:** sales@marmox.co.uk

New HQ provides a test-bed for circular economy principles

Unusual Rigging, the bespoke rigging company specialising in providing services for theatres, film, TV and museums is flying high with its new HQ in Bugbrooke, Northamptonshire. Designed by Corstorphine & Wright, the building is a test-bed project for circular economy principles and low-carbon design and has exceeded all expectations. This approach moves away from traditional linear building concepts of take, make, use and dispose to a more circular methodology of using materials with low embodied carbon and which can be dismantled and reused at end of life.

The building was designed to Passivhaus principles and includes a glulam and timber frame envelope with the interior fit-out, also by Corstorphine & Wright, focusing on materials selected for high performance and durability, coupled with Cradle to Cradle certification where possible and their potential for reuse or recycling. For this reason, Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panels were specified across the entirety of the first floor.

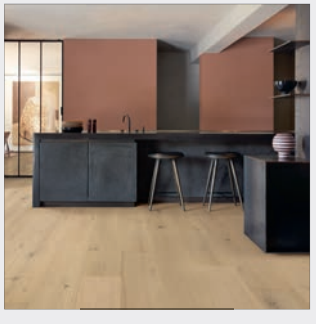
The panels help to control the sound reverberation from the hard surfaces and double-height atrium, improving comfort and wellbeing for the building's users and providing a visually appealing surface in an unpainted finish.

Troldtekt's wood wool acoustic panels are Cradle to Cradle Certified® at Gold level and manufactured using wood from certified forests (PEFC/09-31-030 and FSC®C115450), positively contributing to a building's BREEAM, WELL or LEED points. Panels can also be manufactured with FUTURECEM® which achieves an approx. 30 per cent lower carbon footprint than that of Troldtekt based on white cement. Depending on the panel specified, reaction to fire is classed in accordance with EN 13501 as B-s1,d0 or A2-s1,d0 respectively.

Available in a wide variety of different structures and colours, they combine optimal sound absorption with an award-winning design. The Troldtekt range has a minimum expected life cycle of 50 years coupled with excellent resistance to humidity and tested to meet ball impact standards. Panels can be supplied as natural wood, unpainted based on FUTURECEM™ offering a reduced carbon footprint or finished in almost any RAL or NCS colour.

www.troldtekt.co.uk bit.ly/3vxoTfq

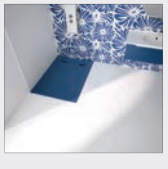
Waterproof floors in every flavour for all project interiors



Unilin Flooring is home to the Quick-Step brand and Moduleo, known for its innovative and award-winning Moods collection as well as LayRed, a solution popular in housing and hospitality environments. Across its product portfolio – wood, vinyl and laminate from Quick-Step and dryback, rigid core and loose lay vinyl from Moduleo – Unilin Flooring provides waterproof flooring that excels in commercial locations. The waterproof status of Quick-Step and Moduleo floors is achieved with exacting manufacturing tolerances for a precision fit and wear layers that prevent water ingress. In the Faro wood collection, Alpha Vinyl and Majestic, Capture and Impressive laminate flooring ranges; Quick-Step brand floors give premium and refined natural designs that are waterproof, scratch-resistant and stain-resistant, easy to maintain and suitable for use in commercial locations. Moduleo brings design diversity that can help project interiors to stand out from the rest. Its Roots and Moods dryback vinyl, Intoo loose lay and LayRed rigid click floors are all waterproof and come with a scratch-resistant and stain-resistant surface that's easy to care for.

info.panels@unilin.com www.unilin.com

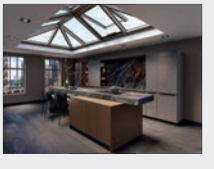
New from Kinedo – for the diva in your life!



Kinedo has launched the newest addition to its portfolio of cuttable shower trays. The stunning Kinediva lives up to its name with its elegant styling and unique lateral water flow design for efficient drainage. Available in three colours, including beautiful marine blue, beige and white and with a stylish matt finish, Kinediva oozes elegance and style. Just 35 mm thick, it is available in square and rectangular profiles in 17 popular sizes ensuring there is a match for pretty much every shower space. The colour coordinated waste has an extra-flat matching waste cover and drains up to 24 l/min.

info@kinedo.co.uk kinedo.co.uk

Bronze framed glass cabinets from Keller



Keller, a leader in sustainability in the European kitchen market, is also known for innovative designs, and a vast palette of colour, finish and material options. A new range of bronze-framed smoked glass units in 39 different sizes has been developed for modern, stylist kitchen schemes; they are designed to emulate hotel chic and elegant industrial interiors, especially in Japandi style. Also available are complementary new bronze handless profiles and matching handle. Tip-on/push to open options for the ultra-sleek look included in the range.

www.kellerkitchens.com

Designs for efficient living

Stephen Johnson of Quooker delves into how boiling water taps are helping architects design kitchens that reduce waste, conserve energy, and support sustainability for users, without compromising on style.

As sustainability becomes a central consideration in architectural design, attention is shifting beyond energy use to how buildings manage water. This is particularly relevant in the kitchen, a space where water plays a vital role in hydration, hygiene, cooking and cleaning.

We have observed a clear shift in the way homeowners and designers approach kitchen efficiency. Instant boiling water taps are no longer seen as a luxury. Increasingly, they are being specified for their ability to reduce water and energy waste, while also supporting modern design requirements.

Rethinking water use in the kitchen

Water is often used inefficiently in kitchens. Standard kettles are a prime example. They are frequently overfilled, reboiled unnecessarily, or left to cool unused. These habits may seem small, but over time they can lead to significant water and energy waste. Instant boiling water taps provide a more precise and controlled alternative.

By delivering 100°C water on demand, these taps help eliminate the guesswork and excess typically associated with kettles. This promotes more mindful use and can support the wider goals of sustainable design.

Everyday efficiencies

In a typical household, replacing a kettle with a boiling water tap can help avoid the wastage of several hundred litres of water each year. While savings vary depending on usage, the reduction in overfilled boils and discarded water becomes meaningful over time. Energy efficiency is also a core feature. Using high-vacuum insulation, the tap's tank maintains water at boiling point using as little as 10 watts of standby power. Which is roughly equivalent to a standard Wi-Fi router and is particularly effective in homes or workplaces where boiling water is needed frequently throughout the day.

From a design perspective, boiling water taps also help to streamline the kitchen. Removing the kettle frees up valuable worktop space, which is especially useful in compact kitchens or open-plan environments. The under-sink tank fits neatly into cabinetry and does not compromise storage, making it a practical solution for contemporary layouts.

A versatile addition to sustainable design

While a single feature cannot define a 'sustainable kitchen,' boiling water taps

can complement a broader strategy for improving water efficiency. When used alongside other elements such as low-flow taps, smart water monitoring or reuse systems, they contribute to a more balanced approach to resource conservation.

Many systems also include chilled and sparkling water options. By offering filtered alternatives directly from the tap, these features can help reduce reliance on bottled water. This supports efforts to cut down on single-use plastics and the emissions linked to bottling and transport.

Real-world application: a thoughtful retrofit

In a recent renovation of a Victorian townhouse in south London, the design team aimed to modernise the kitchen while retaining the home's character. A boiling water tap was chosen to reduce the need for multiple appliances and to align with the client's sustainability values. The result was a cleaner and more efficient layout that blended seamlessly with the property's traditional features. Within the first six months of use, the household reported clear reductions in both water and energy consumption.

While a single feature cannot define a 'sustainable kitchen,' boiling water taps can complement a broader strategy for improving water efficiency

Small changes, long-term value

Sustainable design is often achieved through a series of well-considered decisions. Instant boiling water taps represent one of those subtle but impactful choices. By reducing waste, conserving energy and enhancing usability, they offer a simple way to improve the kitchen's environmental performance.

For architects seeking solutions that balance form and function, while supporting sustainability goals, this technology presents a compelling addition to the modern kitchen.

Stephen Johnson is managing director at Quooker UK & Ireland

CMS Danskin Acoustics launches improved acoustic underlay

CMS Danskin Acoustics' new acoustic underlay REGUPOL sonus multi 500 series provides excellent acoustic performance, contains a higher percentage of recycled material and offers a commercial advantage over previous REGUPOL variants.

Available to add to your project specification now from NBS, the REGUPOL acoustic underlayment is available as sonus multi 530 (3 mm) and sonus multi 545 (4.5 mm). Developed to attenuate impact sound beneath a range of floor – finishes, including vinyl sheeting, LVT and tiled floors such as ceramic, granite, stone, and marble,

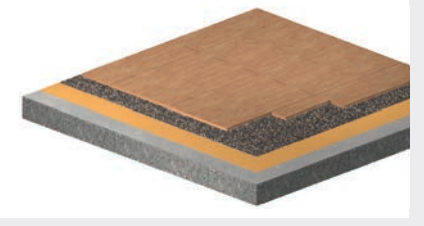
sonus multi 500 offers long term performance without collapse or bottoming.

As with the earlier products, REGUPOL sonus multi 530 and 545 demonstrate compliance to Approved Document E (England & Wales), Technical Booklet G (Northern Ireland) and Section 5 (Scotland).

New REGUPOL sonus multi 500 is manufactured using post-consumer recycled materials with material content @ 90% recyclate @ 10% PU binder ref: EPD-REG-20230194-IBC1-EN as per ISO 14025 AND EN 15804+A2.

In another step change, REGUPOL sonus multi 500 is to be supplied as rolls without cardboard cores, reducing shipping weight and eliminating site disposal of cardboard. This can help to reduce transportation emissions, and, most significantly, it will reduce waste from site compared to its predecessors.

Andy Hayes, technical manager at CMS Danskin Acoustics and associate member



of the IoA, comments: "This development makes it easier for our customers to choose the right acoustic underlayment to deliver acoustic performance whilst having the advantage of being commercially attractive. With improved price stability due to the availability of the raw materials, REGUPOL sonus multi 500 series does not contain any rubber, removing concern over plasticiser migration. The recycled content of REGUPOL sonus multi 500 series is now 90%, compared with sonus multi and sonus eco at 72% and 87% respectively."

The new acoustic underlay has tested successfully for compatibility with approved REGUPOL adhesives.

New Product Data Sheets and Installation Guidelines are available on the website below.

01925 577711 www.cmsdanskin.co.uk

Enhancing the iconic Gosfield Collection with new Taps, Showers & Water Controls

Fitzroy of London is proud to unveil the latest evolution of its signature Gosfield Collection, now enhanced with a full range of Taps, Showers & Water Controls. The launch marks a significant step forward in the brand's mission to deliver cohesive, design-led bathroom solutions that balance elegant aesthetics with outstanding performance.

With the introduction of these new products, the Gosfield Collection becomes a truly complete and unified offering whether for accessible or standard spaces. Featuring beautifully crafted deck and wall-mounted taps, contemporary handheld and overhead shower solutions, shower arms, precise shower mixers, and advanced infrared sensor taps, the range has been thoughtfully designed to ensure a seamless water management solution across all bathroom elements.

Each product within the Taps, Showers & Water Controls range reflects Fitzroy of London's commitment to quality and innovation. Engineered for reliability and ease of use, they provide precise water flow and temperature control, supporting comfort and safety in both residential and commercial environments. All products are WRAS-approved and Regulation 4 certified, meeting stringent requirements for water efficiency and compliance.

A selection of customisable finishes ensures versatility, giving architects and designers the creative freedom to tailor schemes without compromising visual consistency. With its understated styling and inclusive functionality, the expanded Gosfield Collection delivers a timeless solution and reliable performance at every touchpoint. Whether designing for a luxury hotel, office washroom or leisure facility, Gosfield is crafted to meet the highest standards, ensuring seamless integration and durability.

With expertise in inclusive design solutions for today's modern world, Fitzroy of London creates spaces which are truly functional and aesthetically pleasing, while honouring individual needs. The new Taps, Showers & Water Controls are available now – enquire through the website today.

0203 773 1050
www.fitzroyoflondon.com

A clear upgrade for AMC Hospital with Pyroguard's fire safety glass

AMC Hospital, which is the largest healthcare facility in the Netherlands, has undergone a major renovation, which has modernised the 1,000-bed facility with a clear focus on enhancing the safety and well-being of staff and patients. As part of the renovation, the decision was made to replace all existing wired safety glass with new, transparent glazing solutions from fire safety glass manufacturer **Pyroguard**, to ensure that the hospital adhered to current industry standards. This upgrade also addressed long-standing challenges with maintaining accurate product data records for the glass partitions and doors, many of which had been extended or replaced over the years without clear traceability. By upgrading the glass throughout the facility, AMC Hospital not only enhanced its aesthetic appeal and improved safety standards but also ensured data consistency across the entire site. Pyroguard Rapide (Impact 7 mm and Impact Satin) was specified for the internal partitions throughout the hospital, incorporating both clear and satin fire safety glass. Pyroguard Protect (Pyroguard T EW30 and T EI30) was installed in areas requiring larger, bespoke pane sizes.

info@pyroguard.eu www.pyroguard.eu/case-studies/amc-hospital-the-netherlands

Draig 30 – Fire Protection from Hörmann Truedor

The range of Draig 30 composite fire doors from **Hörmann** Truedor provide uncompromising protection against fire and smoke for both external and internal installations. The range offers a robust solution that is built to last without compromising on style and performance. Proven to keep fire at bay for more than 30 minutes, the Draig range of doors have been bi-directionally tested in accordance with EN1634-1 for fire and EN1643-3 for smoke control. Constructed from premium materials the doors are built for durability and are tested to PAS 24:2022 for impact resistance. They offer outstanding performance with exceptional weather resistance, sound insulation, and thermal efficiency. Security is a key feature, with advanced multi-point locking systems and 'Secured by Design' accreditation provided as standard. Each door unit holds third-party accreditation under the BM Trada Q-Mark scheme. Draig fire doors are available in four external and two internal styles, with the external doors being offered in both solid and glazed options, with or without a fixed fanlight. A comprehensive range of hardware and accessories is also offered, alongside the choice of six popular colours.

01530 516868 hormanntruedor.co.uk/door-collections

Pyroguard joins new umbrella brand Saverto: svt Group realigns international brand strategy

The svt Group is restructuring its international brand architecture by introducing Saverto as its new umbrella brand, under which **Pyroguard** will now operate. This strategic move reinforces Pyroguard's global position in the sector of fire safety glass and establishes a cohesive, future-oriented brand landscape for passive fire protection across international markets. The name Saverto is derived from "to save" and "to avert," encapsulating the core values of the product division: safety, reliability, and structured solutions. The new brand architecture enhances Saverto's international visibility, providing customers with clear orientation, a distinct market position, and direct access to trusted product brands across all segments. Pyroguard contributes over 40 years of expertise to the Saverto brand network and assumes a central role as a core brand. As part of the rebranding, its affiliation with the new brand architecture will be subtly reflected – such as through an additional design element in the logo. Pyroguard will continue to operate in the market with its existing portfolio, familiar contacts, and established services. The former holding company, Technical Fire Safety Group, will now operate under the name Saverto UK Ltd.

www.saverto.com www.pyroguard.eu

CAST-PRO wins Fire Innovation of the Year

C-TEC is thrilled to announce that CAST-PRO, the company's integrated 'all in one' fire detection and alarm device has been named Fire Innovation of the Year at the FSM Awards. Fully compatible with ZFP and XFP CAST addressable fire panels, CAST-PRO is a UK-manufactured EN 54-certified heat, smoke and CO fire detector with a tone or voice sounder and onboard visual alarm device. Packed full of features, many of them patented, CAST-PRO doesn't just reduce installation costs, it reduces false alarms effectively, detects real fires reliably and indicates true alarm conditions decisively.

01942 322744 c-tec.com/cast-pro-info-request

Stannah Lifts deliver multi-lift project

Ben Harrison Photography

Welcome Break opened its 60th service station at Junction 33 on the M1 in January, featuring a **Stannah** escalator, passenger lift and goods lift. By offering both a passenger lift and an escalator solution, Stannah ensures full accessibility for wheelchair users and pushchairs, allowing easy movement between floors while maintaining smooth traffic flow, even during peak periods. A separate goods lift further enhances operational efficiency while ensuring customer safety. Stannah Lifts completed the project ahead of schedule and within budget.

contact@stannah.co.uk www.stannahlifts.co.uk

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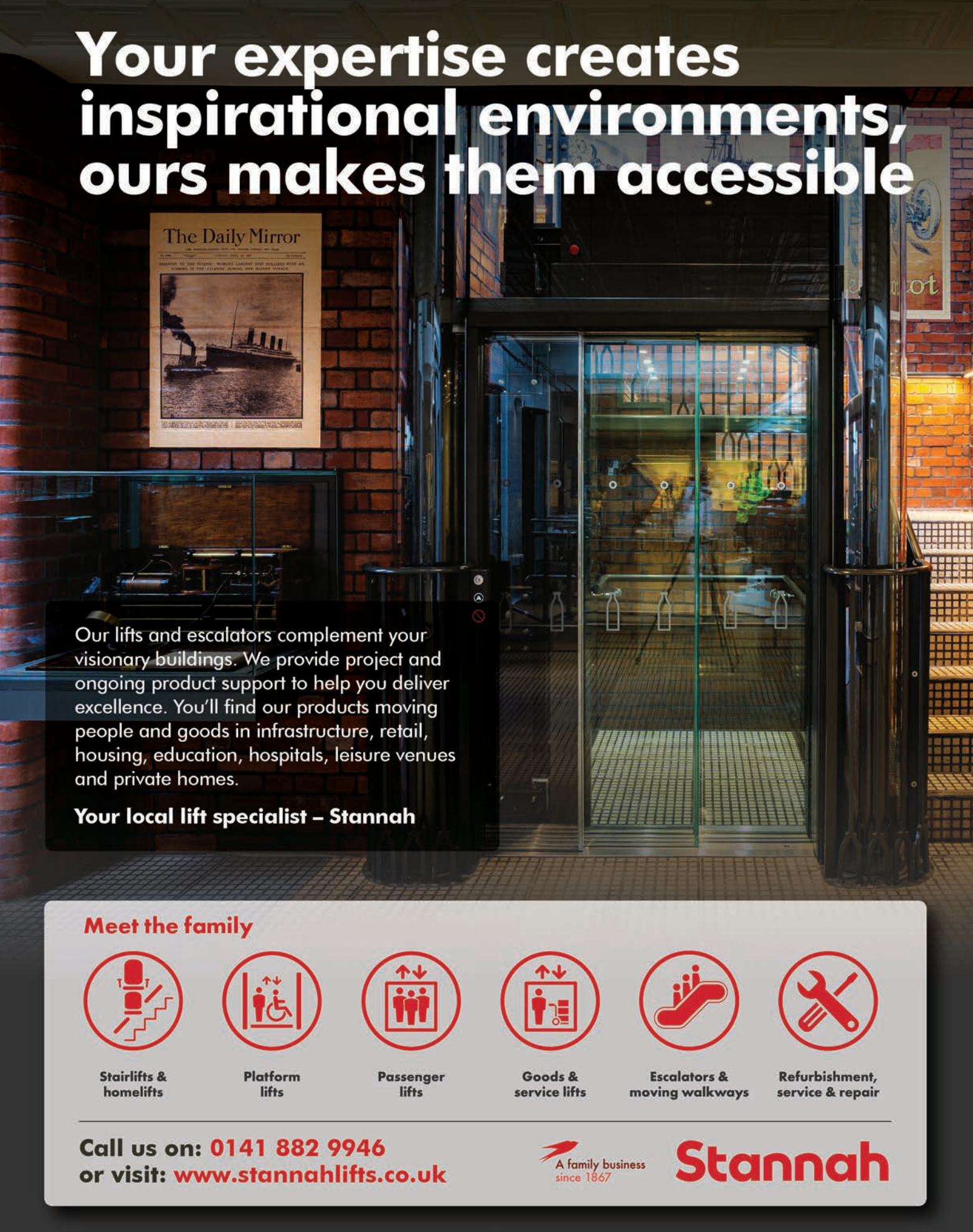

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Redefine inclusive building design with evacuation lifts

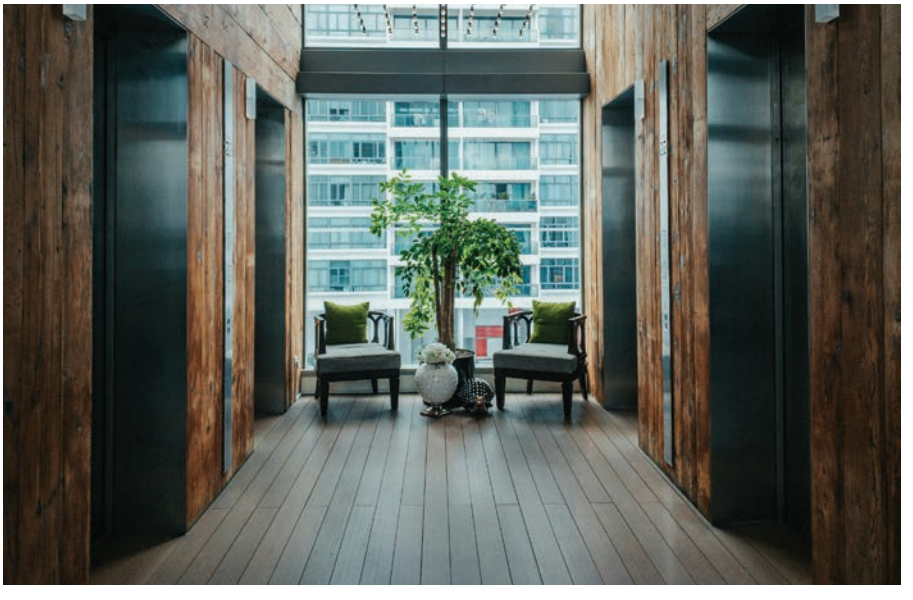
With the priority now inclusive design for all, evacuation lifts offer the chance for architects to go 'beyond compliance,' says Nick Mellor of LEIA.

The introduction of the Building Safety Act 2022 and updates to BS 9991 and Approved Document B have reignited the conversation around safe and equitable evacuation. For architects, the growing emphasis on evacuation lifts is not merely a matter of regulatory alignment but an opportunity to lead in creating buildings that are truly inclusive, and futureproof.

Historically, evacuation strategies in high-rise and complex buildings have relied on staircases. This may serve able-bodied occupants well, but marginalises those with reduced mobility, older users, pregnant individuals, and others who may struggle to evacuate quickly in an emergency. The limitations of this traditional thinking have become increasingly apparent.

Designing for inclusivity means more than ensuring access; it encompasses the entire user experience, including how occupants can safely exit a building during an emergency. Evacuation lifts, thoughtfully integrated, offer a dignified and efficient solution for those who cannot use stairs, aligning closely with increasing social value.

Designing for inclusivity means more than ensuring access to spaces; it encompasses the entire user experience



Modern evacuation lifts are designed to remain operational during a fire, protected by the building design, provided with protected power supplies, robust communication systems, and water ingress protection. They have advanced control systems to respond to the building's fire detection and alarm system.

When specified early in the design process, these lifts can be seamlessly incorporated into the building layout, reducing the need for additional structural alterations later, and ensuring aesthetics and functionality are not compromised.

The regulatory landscape for evacuation planning has recently shifted, with the government's introduction of Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (RPEEPs), replacing the previously anticipated workplace-style PEEPs for residential settings. The London Plan now requires all new developments with lifts to include at least one evacuation lift per core.

There is a growing recognition that evacuation lifts can contribute positively to a building's operational life. From a client perspective, this multifunctionality can be a powerful argument, balancing both inclusivity and efficiency without compromising on design.

For architects, the challenge and opportunity lie in moving evacuation lifts from a compliance checkbox to a design cornerstone. Doing so requires early-stage collaboration with lift consultants, fire engineers, and accessibility experts. By integrating the evacuation strategy into the overall design philosophy from day one, architects can avoid costly retrofits.

Nick Mellor is MD at The Lift and Escalator Industry Association (LEIA)

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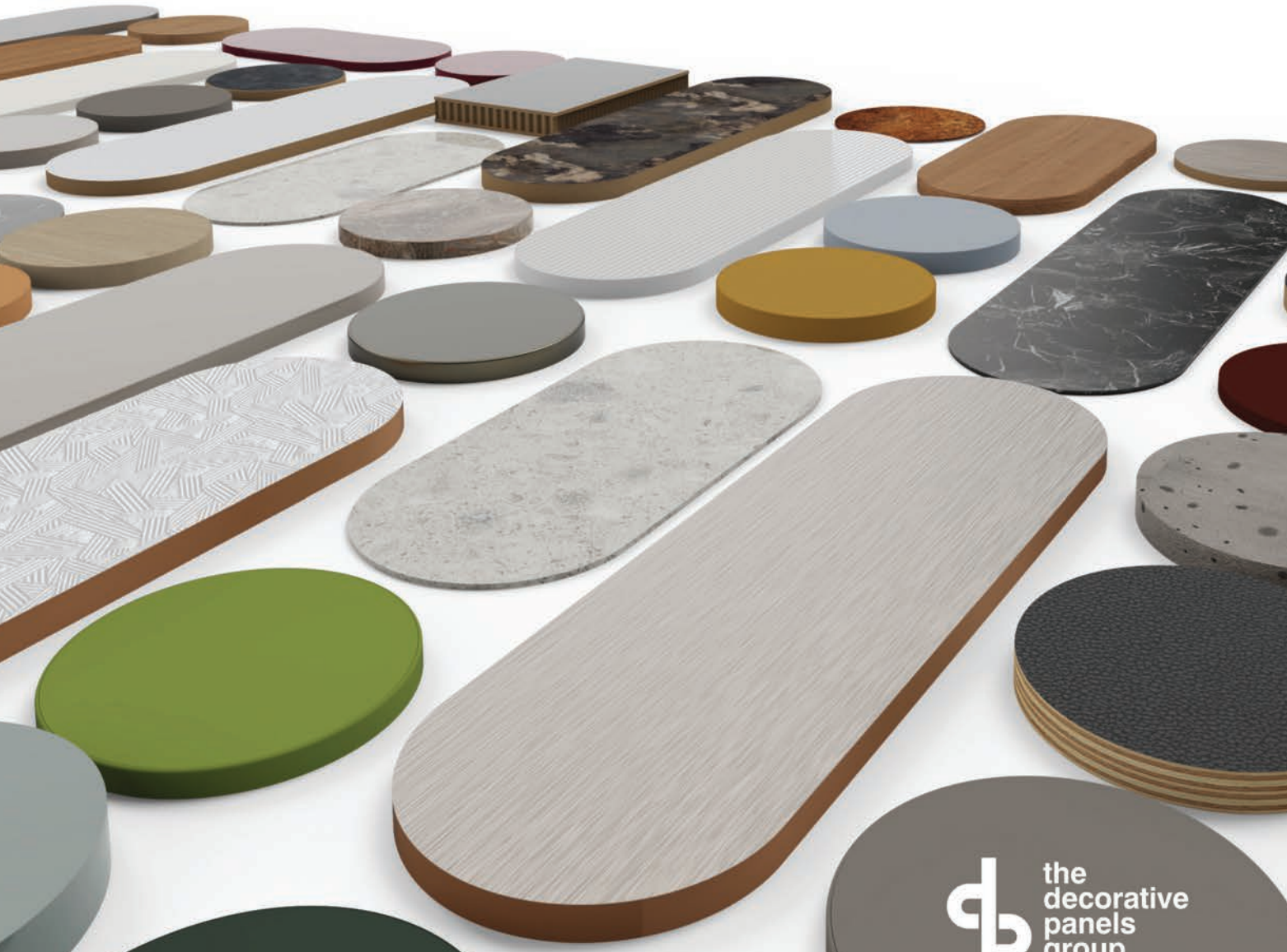

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