

# HOUSEBUILDER & DEVELOPER

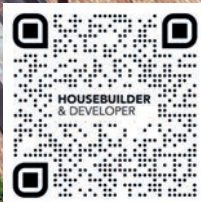
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025



## CAPITAL INVESTMENT

The Guinness Partnership completes a modernist-inspired urban block in Clerkenwell, east London, with curvaceous visual appeal aligned to affordable housing credentials

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## THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

As climate change and its effects intensify, the UK's built environment faces mounting risks. Kirsty Girvan of the UK Green Building Council outlines why urgent, systemic action is needed.



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James Parker

ON THE  
COVERHOUSEBUILDER  
& DEVELOPER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025

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FROM THE  
EDITOR

There's a very interesting piece by Stephen Callow of MPA Masonry on a recent Future Homes Hub report in this issue, which is worth turning to page 65 to check out.

The comprehensive report is titled 'Embodied and Whole Life Carbon of Future Homes Standard Options.' It compares the carbon impact on dwellings (both up-front and operational) of the two most popular structural methods of constructing homes. Callow, representing the masonry lobby (who you'd normally expect to come out guns blazing against timber), says it is "very fair in its reflection of the data studied, with some reassuring and positive news for the industry as a whole."

Comparisons on current timber vs. masonry options on embodied and whole carbon, he says, give "a broadly similar outcome." This means "there is no silver bullet when it comes to reducing new homes' embodied carbon."

Part Z is still a going concern, soon to be resuscitated in the form of a proposed Government amendment to a forthcoming Building Regulations White Paper. It homes in on mandating reporting (at least) of embodied carbon in projects.

According to an architect source, the plan "is being revived, and there is a meeting over the next few weeks to discuss." While the Government has an awful lot on its plate, I would very much like to see this particular plan come to fruition – the missing piece of the carbon jigsaw.

The Planning & Infrastructure Bill, currently trundling its way through the Lords, contains solid provisions for protecting nature and Environmental Development Plans, but arguably not a lot on embodied carbon. Something like the proposed Plan Z, i.e. specific legislation, is needed to truly make the industry sit up and take notice.

In the meantime, as advocated by Callow, the 'measure embodied carbon first, regulate later' approach is surely a pragmatic one. Don't wait for the regulatory stick to appear, futureproof schemes and cut carbon by measuring embodied carbon now; or as much as is humanly possible!

Whether your choice is masonry or timber (and there are good arguments for both), working with suppliers to count the cost of carbon embodied in products as well as post-construction has to be the way forward.

*James Parker*

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# Sigma Homes submits application for 45 unit scheme & community hub in Basingstoke



Sigma Homes has submitted an outline planning application to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council for a new residential development on land to the south west of Ashford Hill Road in Ashford Hill.

The planning application is for 45 new homes, 40% of which will be affordable, alongside a landscape led design and a series of community focused enhancements that reflect extensive engagement with local residents and stakeholders.

The scheme has been shaped by a commitment to sustainability, local character, and infrastructure improvement. Central to the proposal is a new coworking community hub designed to support home and hybrid working. This flexible facility will also provide space for local activities and act as a social focal point for the village. A children's play area will also be added.

To promote sustainable travel, Sigma Homes has secured funding for the reintroduction of a previously discontinued community bus service, which will operate during weekday peak hours to and from Basingstoke train station. The transport initiative and coworking space were key reasons the scheme was highly commended in

the Motion Green Project of the Year 2025 Awards.

Chris East, group land director at Sigma Homes, commented: "This planning application has been carefully designed, having regard to the reasons for the refusal of an earlier planning application in 2022 and following a robust process of community engagement."

"The scheme has been reduced in scale and incorporates a coworking community hub to facilitate home and hybrid working, thus reducing trips outside of the area and providing a flexible venue and focal point for village activities. The scheme will also provide funding for the resurrection of a community bus service that ceased during the Covid pandemic due to a lack of patronage. This service will initially provide two peak hour morning and evening services between the village and Basingstoke train station. The scheme comprises 45 dwellings, including 18 affordable homes."

The new neighbourhood aims to integrate seamlessly with the village of Ashford Hill, complementing the adjacent Kingfishers development and preserving key views of St Paul's Church. A carefully planned layout, generous green spaces, a landscape buffer, and sustainable drainage measures are all integral parts of the design, ensuring the scheme enhances local character and biodiversity.

Backed by a £2.5m investment in land and planning, Sigma Homes and its strategic land division have already secured seven sites across the South East in 2025, totalling 28.3 hectares (70 acres) and with the potential to deliver up to 525 new homes. Sigma Homes' specialist land team continue to work closely with planning authorities, community organisations, and sustainability specialists to bring forward places that are socially responsive, environmentally sensitive, and economically viable.

## Poole firm AJC makes three new appointments

Poole-based residential developer AJC Group has made three new appointments as it continues to scale operations across the Wessex region. The award-winning housebuilder, which is delivering multiple affordable housing schemes across Dorset and Hampshire, has welcomed Daragh Keane, Myles Emmanuel, and Millie



Whittaker to its team.

Daragh Keane joins as senior site manager and brings over a decade of experience in construction management. Previously a qualified electrician, Daragh now leads site operations at The Becton Centre in Barton-on-Sea. His remit includes overseeing health & safety, ensuring quality control, and delivering projects on time and on budget.

Myles Emmanuel joins as technical coordinator. With a background in architecture and residential refurbishment, Myles Emmanuel is currently supporting the delivery of AJC Group's Buzz Bingo scheme in central Bournemouth and various upcoming projects. He plays a key role in coordinating technical aspects across the construction and preconstruction phases.

Completing the trio is Millie Whittaker, who has been appointed as customer care coordinator. A recent interior design graduate, Millie Whittaker supports customer and client communications and coordinates contractors across AJC Group sites. She is based in the firm's Sandbanks office and is already playing an important role in liaising with housing association partners and residents to close out post completion works.

David Cracklen, director of AJC Group, commented: "As we continue to deliver more affordable housing across Dorset and Hampshire, expanding our team with skilled and committed individuals is essential. Daragh, Myles, and Millie each bring their own strengths and enthusiasm to the business, and we are delighted to have them on board as we build communities and homes that make a lasting difference."





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# Legacy Properties secures planning for 80-home Cornwall development



Legacy Properties has secured full planning permission for a new housing development on the southern edge of the village of Trispen, in the heart of Cornwall near Truro. The award-winning Newquay based developer will deliver 80 homes, including crucially needed affordable housing, on the 3.8-hectare (9.5-acre) site located south of Eglos Road.

The planning permission has been granted following extensive community consultation and collaboration with St Erme Parish Council and a detailed Section 106 agreement. This confirms over £560k contributions to the local community and infrastructure, including over £180k for education and healthcare, among others.

The approved development will bring a “thoughtfully designed mix of homes” to Trispen, said the developer, ranging from one bedroom apartments and two or three bedroom houses and bungalows to larger five bedroom family homes for open market housing. Over a third will be allocated for affordable housing, available for rent or shared ownership, to include rare four bed affordable options catering for larger families.

The development will feature generous public open space, including a Plen-an-Gwari (traditional Cornish playing place), as well as rewilding initiatives, new planting to enhance biodiversity, and a new cycle link connecting the village to the wider local network.

Legacy’s approach throughout the

planning process has been shaped by direct engagement with local residents and parish representatives. Since early 2023, the team has hosted two public consultation events and maintained ongoing dialogue with the Parish Council to ensure the proposals reflect local priorities and needs.

Nick Long, managing director at Legacy Properties, said: “This planning approval is the result of open and constructive dialogue with the local community. From the outset, we’ve been focused on delivering a scheme that genuinely responds to local housing needs and retains the character and charm of Trispen. We’re proud of the collaborative journey we’ve been on with the Parish Council and look forward to delivering homes that will help more people stay and thrive in the community they call home.”

The site was identified as the most suitable location for new homes outside the settlement boundary in the St Erme Neighbourhood Development Plan. Importantly, it meets a demonstrable local need, with 72 households currently registered on Cornwall Council’s HomeChoice Register as seeking affordable housing in the parish.

With a new dedicated footpath and cycle route, “future residents will benefit from proximity and sustainable access to village amenities,” including the local primary school, post office, shop, parks, and playing fields.

The detailed plans confirm retention of the southern portion of the site for extensive ecological mitigation. Legacy’s plans also include enhancements to existing hedgerows, new tree planting and the creation of a wildlife corridor to maintain the rural setting.

The houses, bungalows, and apartments will be built with “locally sourced materials whenever possible,” including stone, white render and slate to reflect and enhance the local vernacular of Trispen and St Erme. In addition, each home will incorporate wildlife features to promote the natural habitat for bats, birds and bees.

With full permission now granted, Legacy Properties aims to begin construction on the scheme later this year. The first homes in the development are expected to be available in the summer/autumn of 2026.

## Redcliffe partners with shared ownership firm



Redcliffe Homes, the award winning independent housebuilder, has announced a new partnership with national Shared Ownership provider Home Reach to deliver more affordable housing at its Nup End Meadow development in Ashleworth, Gloucestershire.

As part of Redcliffe Homes’ commitment to supporting local communities and increasing access to high quality housing, 40% of the homes at Nup End Meadow have been designated as affordable. Of these, 12 homes have been allocated for affordable rent, while five homes are now available through Shared Ownership in partnership with Home Reach.

This marks the first collaboration between Redcliffe Homes and Home Reach, and reflects both organisations’ shared mission to make home ownership more accessible for local people. The homes on sale are a mixture of two and three-bedroom units.

Jon Burcombe, chief operating officer at Redcliffe Homes, said: “We are proud to be working with Home Reach to bring more affordable housing options to Ashleworth. This partnership is a key part of our commitment to building thriving, inclusive communities. Nup End Meadow is a beautiful development in a sought after village location, and we’re delighted that more people will now have the opportunity to call it home.”

Rachel Baker, national head of sales for Home Reach added: “We’re excited to be partnering with Redcliffe Homes for the first time to offer Shared Ownership homes at Nup End Meadow. Home Reach is all about helping people take their first step onto the property ladder in a way that’s affordable and flexible. These homes offer a fantastic opportunity for local buyers to secure a high-quality new build home in a picturesque rural setting.”





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## COMMENT



David Churchill

# High hopes for low value Green Belt

David Churchill, partner at estate agent Carter Jonas, argues that a more flexible approach to releasing low value Green Belt land could help meet housing targets without compromising the countryside, or sustainability goals.



BUILDING ON  
THE EXISTING  
GREEN BELT  
WILL ONLY  
EVER BE  
PART OF THE  
SOLUTION

Throughout the General Election campaign, the Green Belt was central to the debate about the housing crisis. The Government has committed to building 1.5 million homes during this Parliament. As part of the means of achieving this, it has pledged to adopt a strategic approach to the use of Green Belt land as part of the delivery solution, including building on poor quality, so-called 'Grey Belt' land.

In a research report, 'Rethinking the Green Belt,' Carter Jonas has moved the debate on a stage, by considering what land might be used and how it might be released. The analysis takes an in-depth look at the subject, determining to what extent land within the Green Belt differs from land outside it; how much of the Green Belt is protected by other

(and perhaps more appropriate) designations, and exploring options for using Green Belt land in order to achieve more sustainable patterns of development.

The rhetoric surrounding the Green Belt can be powerful – and politically charged. Take, for example, the common claim that building on the Green Belt amounts to 'concreting over the countryside'. While some Green Belts do contain larger proportions of environmentally protected or publicly accessible land, there is also a significant amount of land with little environmental or amenity value – now coined the 'Grey Belt.' This raises the question of whether it is necessary to protect so much land, and whether greater flexibility within the Green Belt would allow for a better allocation of land.





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NO FEWER THAN 60% OF THE  
JUNCTIONS ON THE M40 FALL  
WITHIN THE GREEN BELT

The amount of land designated as Green Belt has recently increased: in the two years to April 2023, it rose by 25,443 ha (1.6%), returning Green Belt coverage to 2004 levels.

The commitment to building 1.5 million homes this Parliament equates to 300,000 per annum over five years. Assuming an average plot size of 0.033 hectares, and even on the (highly unlikely) assumption that all of these homes would be built in the Green Belt, meeting this target would only equate to 3% of the current extent of Green Belt. The reality is that any Green Belt 'land take' will be far lower, with brownfield and non Green Belt locations being prioritised. Hence, the quantum of land to be removed from the Green Belt is likely to be pretty modest in the overall scheme of things.

As of now, 6.8% of Green Belt land has been developed, compared to 9.0% for non Green Belt land. Of that land, the majority is used for transport and hardstanding, such as car parks, paved or tarmacked areas, accounting for 5.2% and 6.1% of Green Belt and non Green Belt land, respectively. Land developed for buildings accounts for just 1.2% of Green Belt land, and 2.5% of non-Green Belt.

Furthermore, while 18.9% of the Green Belt is in the form of forest, open land and water, the proportion of land outside the Green Belt within this classification is only slightly greater, at 20.3%. These stats emphasise that the Green Belt is no more than a planning policy tool to be deployed

for specific purposes; not a landscape or ecological designation, as some might incorrectly assume. This could lead to markedly different land use data.

Furthermore, our research shows the extent of Green Belt release required by region if housing stock were increased by 6% (to align with the 1.5 million homes target, and again provided solely on the Green Belt). In London, a 6% increase in housing stock would require 21.1% of Green Belt land. In contrast, in five regions (South East, North West, North East, East of England, West Midlands, and Yorkshire and the Humber), a 6% increase in housing would equate to less than 3% of Green Belt land being released.

While this modelling is interesting, it is only theoretical. Of course, we are not advocating all new homes being located on the Green Belt, but are suggesting that there are strategic benefits in releasing some Green Belt land for housing. For example, this approach could reduce the number of 'leapfrogging' developments, those located further from urban areas than is desirable, which increase residents' carbon footprints through extensive commutes and impacts on both businesses' and residents' proximity to urban centres.

There are several options to address the urgent need for housing, each with its own benefits. For example, we have considered major transport routes running through Green Belt land, which present potential for sustainable development

and prevent both 'leapfrogging' and urban sprawl. This showed considerable potential: for example, no fewer than 60% of the junctions on the A40 fall within the Green Belt. Greater leniency in developing the Green Belt, particularly around these interchanges, would pave the way for much needed residential and commercial development, while helping to shorten journey times and reduce congestion.

The modest release of land from the Green Belt, perhaps through the edge of town development or development along major transport arteries, is part of this solution. Selecting sites of lower environmental value which are not designated for conservation would ensure that the impact on the natural environment is minimised.

The reality is that any Green Belt 'land take' to meet housing needs will be far lower than the figures shown above, as brownfield and non-Green Belt locations would remain the focus of new housing, as the revised NPPF makes clear.

Building on the existing Green Belt will only ever be part of the solution. The Government has recognised this, and the development of new towns alongside urban extensions and regeneration projects will also be an option for planners and developers. Raising the rate of housebuilding is a major challenge, and a combination of all these approaches is necessary.

David Churchill is a partner at Carter Jonas



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Patrick Mooney  
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CAN PERSUADE  
THEM THAT  
IT'S WORTH  
THEIR WHILE

## COMMENT

# The housing target – out of practice?

Pressure is mounting on the construction sector, planners and policymakers to hit the Government's housing targets. Patrick Mooney outlines what must change to achieve them, and who will be left behind if it doesn't.

**I**n 10 years' time the development process will look very different to how it does today, with far more use being made of modular building and AI in its various forms, including the use of robotics and algorithms, as well as a transformed planning system. Without such changes, it is difficult to see how we will get remotely close to delivering the Government's target of 1.5 million new homes by 2029.

In the meantime and to ensure we do not create a huge backlog in building, we face a series of fundamental problems, such as: have we got the bricklayers, the roofers, the onsite trades, the planners and other vital human resources needed to significantly upscale our outputs from construction?

The Spending Review is investing £39bn to deliver more social and affordable homes, an unexpectedly large shot in the arm to the housing sector, with bigger funding increases over the next decade than had been forecast. Across all parts of the housing sector, policy leaders and influencers were full of praise for Ministerial initiatives and new announcements.

In addition, hundreds of thousands of extra homes could be delivered through a Government-backed 'housing bank' that is projected to unlock billions of pounds of private sector investment to 'turbocharge housebuilding' according to Whitehall press releases.

The National Housing Bank, a subsidiary of Homes England, will be publicly owned and backed with £16bn of financial capacity, on top of £6bn of existing finance to be allocated this Parliament, in order to accelerate housebuilding and leverage in £53bn of additional private investment, creating jobs and delivering over 500,000 new homes.

### PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

The sums quoted above are eye-wateringly large, and they should provide an enormous stimulus, but as we all know, as important as new money is, on its own, it can't build the new houses. And this conundrum is at the

root of the problem. What else needs to be put in place, and who is going to build what and where?

The construction sector has an older than average workforce with huge numbers due to retire in the next decade, adding further to the already lengthy lists of vacancies. This is not a new problem; it predates our departure from the European Union, when foreign workers helped to mask many structural problems in the labour market.

The Government plans to train 60,000 new construction workers to fill the gaps, but industry bosses are warning that this figure falls well short of what is needed, and we will only build the required number of homes by importing large numbers of skilled and semi-skilled construction workers from abroad. So, we are likely to be welcoming back European tradespeople, but only if the politicians can persuade them it is worth their while.

In other parts of the workforce, we face similar difficulties with a widespread shortage of skills and experience. One of the earliest announcements made after last year's Election was the recruitment of hundreds of new planners by the end of 2026 and an overhaul of Local Plans.

Research from the Home Builders Federation has found a shortfall of more than 2,000 planners in local authority departments, and the average time taken to agree a Section 106 agreement is regularly exceeding one year. And even the most optimistic estimates for the updating of Local Plans are predicting that these will take a minimum of two years, albeit that is significantly down from the snail-like seven years currently being delivered.

Meanwhile, overstretched councils are already failing to spend infrastructure and community payments made by developers, with the combined running total of unspent Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy reaching a massive £8bn in 2024. This amply demonstrates that money alone is not the solution.



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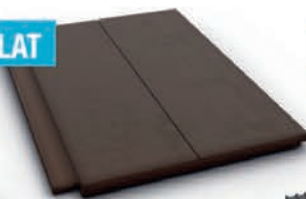
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### MULTI-RIDGE

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## DOWNTURN IN APPROVALS

Perhaps of more immediate concern was the news that the number of new home building sites given planning approval in England during Q1 2025 was the lowest since reporting began some 20 years ago, representing less investment in new sites than during the global financial crisis and the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Approval was given for just 2,064 sites in Q1, a 16% drop from the previous quarter. The rolling annual number of projects approved in the year to Q1 2025 was 9,342, itself a new record low and is the 12th quarter in a row that the annual rolling number has been the lowest since the report began recording.

In total, approval for just 45,521 new homes was given in Q1, the lowest number of quarterly approvals since 2012, a 37% drop on the previous quarter and 21% drop on Q1 2024.

The rolling annual number of units approved in the year to Q1 2025 was just 233,695, a 5% drop on the previous 12-month period and the lowest 12-month outturn recorded since 2014. The figure is just 63% of the 370,000 number the Government has cited as an ambition to achieve through cumulative local authority housing targets across the country.

The figures starkly illustrate the urgent need for the Government to address problems in the housing market and the ongoing barriers to housing supply if they are to get anywhere near the 1.5 million homes target.

Estimates suggest that we are currently delivering around a maximum of 200,000 new homes a year, meaning we are already 100,000 behind the rate needed to hit the new build target. With housing construction levels flatlining at best and planning permissions for new sites and new homes continuing to fall, the likelihood of imminent increases seems remote.

While the planning system changes already announced are very welcome, housing supply is determined by several key factors. Without further policy interventions, the industry will struggle to deliver on the Government's wishes to build more homes.

## PLAN FOR GROWTH

Neil Jefferson, chief executive at the Home Builders Federation, said: "The latest planning figures are disastrous. With current supply flatlining and permissions for new homes plummeting, there seems little chance of us building the homes we know are desperately needed. Increasing housing delivery requires much more than good intentions and planning reform.

"Ministers have to address the fact that potential home owners are unable to buy

due to the lack of affordable mortgage lending and the absence, for the first time in decades, of any Government support scheme (for first time buyers). Similarly, it needs to ensure Housing Associations are financially able to purchase the affordable homes housebuilders deliver. Without a functioning market for private or affordable homes it is impossible for industry to deliver them.

"Planning permissions and house building levels will not increase unless Ministers work with industry and tackle the issues preventing companies from pressing the accelerator and investing in the sites, skills and supply chains needed to build the homes the country needs." The HBF wants Ministers to deliver on five key points:

- Bring forward effective support for first time buyers. Previous governments for the past 25 years have assisted first time buyers with equity loans or shared equity mortgage support, and for more than 60 years, governments have supported home ownership in other ways.
- Address the long-term problems in the Section 106 Affordable Housing market, which sees tens of thousands of new homes designated for Social and Affordable Rents going unacquired by Housing Associations.
- Resolve the ongoing delays and uncertainty caused by the failure of the Building Safety Regulator to meet its service requirements. The new Regulator has been unable to deal with its workload, leading to investment in new apartment blocks collapsing because of the uncertainty.
- Speed up the planning process. While the planning framework changes delivered by the Government have helped to create a more progressive planning system, the day to day operation of planning services at a local level continues to frustrate.
- Recognise the impact that a suite of new taxes, levies and policy costs is having on the viability and deliverability of new housing. Since 2020, builders have seen costs of government interventions balloon with a new industry specific Residential Property Developers Tax, Biodiversity Net Gain, Nutrient Neutrality charges and multiple regulatory changes. The government recently confirmed the introduction next year of a new levy on house building, and launched a consultation on a new Build Out Tax, empowering councils to impose additional costs on builders if construction rates decline due to market slowdowns.

## A NEW WAY OF WORKING

An example of a different approach to development, which is already paying off, is being delivered by Edaroth in its work with social landlords like Raven Housing Trust in Surrey and Bristol City Council, where previously unviable parcels of land are being transformed into high quality, sustainable homes. Many of the sites had previously been overlooked by the private sector due to their complexity, size or location.

Their approach brings land, planning, design, manufacturing and construction together into a single, coordinated development service. It is proving adept at unlocking publicly-owned land through delivering homes that are ready for long-term public ownership. As production increases, costs should come down as they have in other sectors such as automotive and consumer electronics.

By using an offsite manufacturing model, they have been able to deliver precision-built homes (in half the time of traditional construction methods) that exceed national space standards and achieve net-zero performance in use, along with 100-year structural warranties.

The approach not only increased delivery speed and quality, but also dramatically reduced whole life maintenance and operational costs, critical for social landlords managing long term assets. Central to the success of this model is offsite manufacturing. By designing homes in a digital environment and manufacturing them in controlled factory settings, they can achieve greater consistency, precision and speed.

If more companies and social landlords are able to adopt similar approaches, then there is hope they can play a significant part in bridging the gap to the Government's target for new homes.

In response to the Chancellor's Spending Review, Kate Henderson, chief executive of the National Housing Federation, said: "This is a transformational package for social housing and will deliver the right conditions for a decade of renewal and growth. It is the most ambitious Affordable Homes Programme we've seen in decades, and alongside the long-term certainty on rents, will kickstart a generational boost in the delivery of new social homes.

"This package demonstrates the Government understands the foundational difference a secure and affordable home makes to people's lives. Housing associations look forward to working in partnership with the Government and with the Deputy Prime Minister, who has tirelessly championed social housing."



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## THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

# Defence of the realm

As climate change intensifies, the UK's environment and buildings face mounting risks. Kirsty Girvan of the UK Green Building Council outlines why urgent, systemic action is needed to adapt to the changes being seen.



© Getty Images

**T**he climate crisis is no longer a distant threat. The UK is experiencing more frequent and intense storms, floods, droughts, wildfires, and heatwaves. These hazards are reshaping our environment, economy and daily lives. Without urgent and coordinated action, the impacts will worsen, putting lives, livelihoods and long-term prosperity at risk.

The UK is warming at a faster rate than the global average. All of the top 10 warmest years on record have occurred this century, and with global emissions yet to peak, temperatures are projected to continue rising for decades.

In the UK, this will mean a range of challenging impacts. Firstly, hotter, drier summers: The Climate Change Committee forecasts that by 2050, the average summer will be 1.6°C warmer than 1981-2000 levels. The hottest summers from recent years will become the norm, and reduced rainfall will raise the risk of drought and strain water systems.

Secondly, warmer, wetter winters: The World Weather Attribution organisation's modelling expects heavier winter rainfall and more wet days, increasing flood risks from overwhelmed rivers and surface water. According to the Met Office, between 1961-1990 and 2014-2023, the number of 'hot days' above 28°C has more than doubled, and 'very hot days' above 30°C have more than tripled.

These ongoing trends demand a national, long term response grounded in data, funding, and coordinated strategy. Resilience cannot be delivered in siloes. It must be systemic and cross-sectoral, addressing hazards like overheating or flooding requires looking after both the structural vulnerabilities of buildings as well as their users and communities.

## IMPACT OF CLIMATE RISKS

Climate change is already putting unprecedented pressure on homes, infrastructure, and public services. Overheating is rising: the English Housing Survey shows that households reporting part of their home as "uncomfortably hot" increased from 11% in 2022 to 13% in 2023. Even under the current climate, more than half of UK homes are vulnerable to overheating.

The damage to building assets from floods results in heavy financial losses. The Association of British Insurers showed that in 2023, weather related insurance claims were the highest on record, up 36% in 2022, and of the £573m paid out to homeowners for weather related damage, half of this was due to flooding.

As UKGBC's 'The UK Climate Resilience Roadmap' and repeated reports from The Climate Change Committee make clear, adapting our building stock must be a top priority. Decisions made today will define the resilience of the built environment for

**AS UKGBC'S 'UK CLIMATE RESILIENCE ROADMAP' PLUS REPEATED REPORTS FROM THE CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE MAKE CLEAR, ADAPTING OUR BUILDING STOCK MUST BE A TOP PRIORITY**





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decades. By embedding climate resilience into our built environment, we can safeguard people, reduce long term costs, and lead the economy towards a more secure future.

### NEW HOMES ARE NOT READY

To ensure climate readiness becomes standard practice instead of an afterthought, we must integrate resilience across all stages of building design, construction, and operation. This needs to start with a shift to designing for the climate we're entering, not the one we're leaving behind. New homes must use less water, cope with extreme heat, and withstand floods. Yet many new developments continue to fall short.

The draft 2025 Future Homes and Buildings Standard (FHBS), consulted on by the previous government, does too little to address water scarcity, flood risk, wind or wildfire exposure, and makes only modest improvements on overheating through minimal strengthening of Part O of the Building Regulations. The standard as it is will leave homes vulnerable to risks, costly to retrofit, and potentially harmful to occupant health. It is also likely that this will further stress water systems, degrade freshwater and other ecosystems, and put the UK under further wildfire risk.

The Building Safety Regulator can propose amendments to Building Regulations and guidance, including climate resilience measures. This is a good first step, but gaps remain in the enforcement and monitoring of adaptation across both residential and non residential buildings.

Despite growing awareness, the built environment sector lacks the unified direction and shared accountability needed for urgent progress. With too few developments actively considering climate risks, what is needed now is clearer goals, coordinated action, and robust regulation to protect against the full spectrum of hazards. This is what the UK Climate Resilience Roadmap aims to deliver.

### REFORMING BUILDING REGULATIONS

The UK needs a more ambitious and coordinated approach to regulation, planning and delivery of adaptation. This means updating Building Regulations to embed climate resilience as a core principle of development, protecting against overheating, flooding and water scarcity.

The Government should commit to a strengthened standard, with comprehensive updates to current regulation, including:

- Part O (overheating) should be expanded to include future climate data and extend coverage to existing

homes undergoing refurbishment or conversion.

- Part G (water efficiency) moving to a 'fittings-based' approach, backed by mandatory water labels linked to minimum performance standards, with a national target of 95 litres per person per day.
- Part C (flood resilience) should require all properties at risk of flooding to include resilience measures, prioritising nature-based solutions and aligned with the CIRIA Code of Practice for property flood resilience.
- In the long term, rainwater harvesting should be mandated with reuse systems required for large developments, modelled on San Francisco's planning requirement for water budget calculations, which helps address both water scarcity and surface water flooding risks.

Alongside regulatory reform, a long-term, cross-sector strategy is needed to coordinate adaptation. This must span national and local government, infrastructure providers, developers, insurers, and communities. Public awareness, green skills, and professional training are also essential; a new generation must be equipped to deliver buildings that are not just low carbon, but also climate resilient.

UKGBC's Climate Resilience Roadmap provides a systemic, action oriented framework for the sector, promoting integrated responses and translating risk assessments into practical, place based interventions.

### A FUTUREPROOFED BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Building to higher standards today avoids the greater cost of retrofitting and rebuilding tomorrow. This is not just about avoiding climate damage; it is an opportunity to create healthier, more efficient, safer, and future ready places.

The built environment sector has a vital role to play alongside the comprehensive regulations required to make this happen. By putting climate resilience at the heart of planning, design, and delivery, we can lead the transition to a safer, more sustainable future. We must anticipate the climate risks ahead and start building to withstand them.

The final takeaway for housebuilders and wider society to take account of is that there is no climate resilience without a resilient built environment.

Kirsty Girvan is senior policy advisor at the UK Green Building Council

## THE DRAFT 2025 FUTURE HOMES AND BUILDINGS STANDARD DOES LITTLE TO ADDRESS WIND, WATER SCARCITY, FLOOD RISK, OR WILDLIFE EXPOSURE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

To find out more about The UK Green Building Council and its work on climate resilience, please email: [info@ukgbc.org](mailto:info@ukgbc.org)

## National Standards for SuDS – Highest Priority



The latest national standards emphasise that the highest priority for managing runoff should be the collection of rainwater for non-potable uses. This aligns with the principle that drinking water should not be used for purposes such as toilet flushing. The key approach is to divert fast-flowing rainwater from roofs into underground storage tanks.

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## Marmox's silver jubilee party a roaring success

At the big Cat Sanctuary in Headcorn, Kent, around 50 of **Marmox's** staff and family members 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 the founder – Harry Parsons – cut a cake suitably decorated with the Marmox 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 of the long serving employees and as an extra thank you, under each guest's glass on the dining table was a lottery ticket – so at the end of the visit to the Cat Sanctuary, 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 placed to respond.

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## SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECT REPORT

# Curves in the capital

An affordable housing block inspired by Hercule Poirot has distinctive curving brickwork that brings a touch of class to a grey and constrained urban site in London's East End. Stephen Cousins reports on a challenging project.

Fans of the Agatha Christie TV adaptation Poirot will be familiar with the many British modernist and Art Deco buildings that acted as backdrop to the Belgian detective's murder investigations in well-to-do neighbourhoods.

One of the most notable Grade II-listed Florin Court in Charterhouse Square, Clerkenwell, central London served as the location for Hercule Poirot's flat 'Whitehaven Mansions.'

The mansion block's elegant curved brick facade, ornate metalwork, and cleanly-detailed windows perfectly capture the essence of 1930s glamour, and provided the unlikely inspiration for a new affordable housing project on a much less well-appointed former industrial site in a congested part of the capital.

Bulrush Court is the second phase of the major 956-home Leaside Lock residential redevelopment by The Guinness Partnership in Bromley-by-Bow. The 144-home scheme was designed by

Pitman Tozer Architects to provide a mix of one, two and three-bedroom affordable and social-rent units and 213 m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space in a mid-rise mansion block positioned at the centre of a new masterplan for the area.

U-shaped in plan, the building encloses a communal landscaped courtyard and was conceived as a "new city block, defining new streets, squares and courtyards." The intention was to create a human-scale environment in an urban high-density area intersected by numerous transport arteries.

Christie's moustachioed detective would no doubt doff his hat to the building's contemporary take on modernism, characterised by clean horizontal lines, a precise curving brick facade and brick-clad cantilevered balconies that project like diving boards into the central courtyard.

The project encountered bumps of a less satisfying kind during design and delivery, including a post-planning





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## THE PROJECT PROGRAMME ENCOUNTERED BUMPS INCLUDING A REDESIGN POST-PLANNING TO ACCOMMODATE A TENURE CHANGE BY THE CLIENT

redesign to accommodate a tenure change, new fire safety requirements in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, and the shock of main contractor Henry Construction going bankrupt mid-way through the build.

“The biggest challenge was the nature of the design and build process in an environment where legislation was changing and the client was, rightly, very focused on fire safety,” explains Luke Tozer, one of the founding directors of Pitman Tozer Architects. “It’s a success that, despite the uncertainty, we were able to meet requirements and stay ahead of legislation, yet still retaining an architectural quality that will endure for the long term.”

### OLYMPIC REGENERATION

Leaside Lock stands on the site of a former scaffold yard within a regeneration of the wider Bromley-

by-Bow South area, part of the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) zone established by the Mayor of London in 2012 to reinvigorate Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and surrounding areas in east London.

The development was masterplanned by KCA and Pitman Tozer’s involvement dates back almost a decade, having originally worked with architect BPTW to secure planning consent for 450 homes for developer Lindhill.

After the site was sold to Guinness in 2018, the practice was retained to redesign phase two of the development as a single block of 100% affordable housing.

Assael had designed the first phase comprising 500 homes spread over five linked blocks, which vary in height between nine and 28 storeys and define the edges of a new public square.

Bulrush Court encloses the northern side of this square, its accommodation



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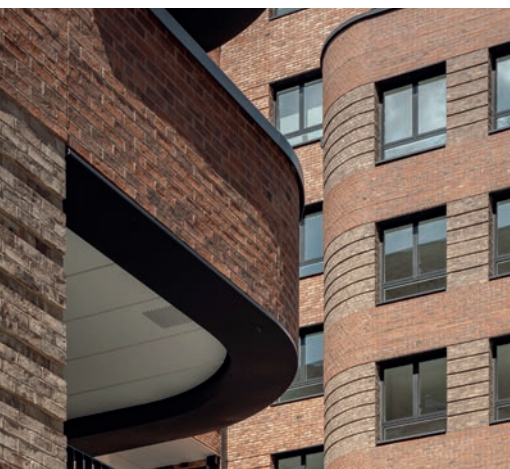
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## SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

Bulrush Court delivers a 44% reduction in regulated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, surpassing Part L 2013 requirements, which applied when the project was designed.

Low carbon heat and power is supplied by integrated photovoltaic panels on the roof and connection to an existing district heat network, powered by a central energy centre.

Key energy-efficient design strategies include upgraded insulation, low U-value double-glazed windows, low-energy lighting, and mechanical ventilation heat recovery systems that help reduce operational carbon.

Embodied carbon was not measured, but the project exploits low-carbon materials such as recycled steel and low-carbon concrete, while modular construction techniques helped minimise waste and transportation emissions.

arranged over a more modestly-proportioned seven to nine storeys.

The original master plan, when Lindhill was developer, proposed the building as three separate blocks of different heights arranged in a C shape, with a north-facing space to the rear. Pitman Tozer challenged this strategy, instead proposing a single block turned on its axis to create a sunny south-facing courtyard.

Pitman Tozer's design pushed the building height up by two storeys, which according to Tozer "needed justification" if the scheme was to gain planning consent from LLDC, the local planning authority at the time. A much greater emphasis was therefore put on design quality to demonstrate an intention "to create good-quality homes and good-quality spaces."

The building's design and massing took shape through collaborative workshops and sessions with LLDC's Quality Review Panel.

When the Guinness Partnership took charge of the project in 2018 it introduced a new set of Employers' Requirements, including the transition from mixed tenure to 100% affordable and social housing. Bulrush Court effectively provides 50% of the overall affordable housing provision at Leaside Lock.

The housing crisis is particularly acute in Tower Hamlets, a recent report by the Big Issue found that 28% of 21,884 people on the council's housing waiting list have been on it for at least a decade.

In addition, the developer wanted the overall number of homes reduced from 152 to 144, and a greater variety of dwelling sizes, including a higher proportion of family units.

Studios and apartments range in size from 50.1 m<sup>2</sup> to 97 m<sup>2</sup> with the larger units positioned on the corners and benefiting from a dual-aspect and cross ventilation. Access corridors run internally north-south through the centre of the wings, meaning smaller studios and one-beds only have a single aspect.

Other design changes were introduced in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017. Although Dame Judith Hackitt's review of Building Regulations and fire safety had not yet been published, triggering major changes to legislation, the developer was keen to upgrade fire safety, particularly with the introduction of a second staircase for evacuation – now a legal requirement in blocks of flats 18 metres or more in height.

"The developer was extremely cautious and rightly concerned about fire safety," said Tozer. After submitting a non material amendment, planning permission was granted and the architect developed the scheme ready to tender, also working on behalf of the client during project delivery to monitor quality.

## FOCAL POINT

The strong architectural character of Bulrush Court was influenced by mansion blocks of the 1930s, which sprang up as London went through a period of densification as the city's geography and the railway network expanded.

Praised for providing high density living at a human scale, the typology is familiar to Pitman Tozer. Mint Street, a 67-unit block in Bethnal Green, as a 21st-century reinterpretation of the traditional mansion block and The Reach, a block of 66 homes in Thamesmead also wraps around a central courtyard with generous balconies overlooking the space.

"The mansion block typology is something we've been sympathetic to for a while in terms of the language of architecture," says Tozer, "Today we're in an era where land, money and carbon are very precious, so the need to build densely and at a high level of quality make this a good model to replicate."

Rather than being an 'object' building, Bulrush Court was conceived to counteract the fragmentation of the local area by hard transport infrastructure.

The site is close to Bromley-by-Bow tube station, bound to the south by the railway line, to the east by the River Lee navigational canal and to the north by Imperial Street and a Tesco supermarket.

"There's lots of infrastructure around it, so this was about trying to use the building to create a higher quality set of urban spaces," said Tozer. These include an open public square to the west, and the courtyard for building residents, the building will also form part a walk between the underground station and the canal, when phase three, currently on site, is finished.

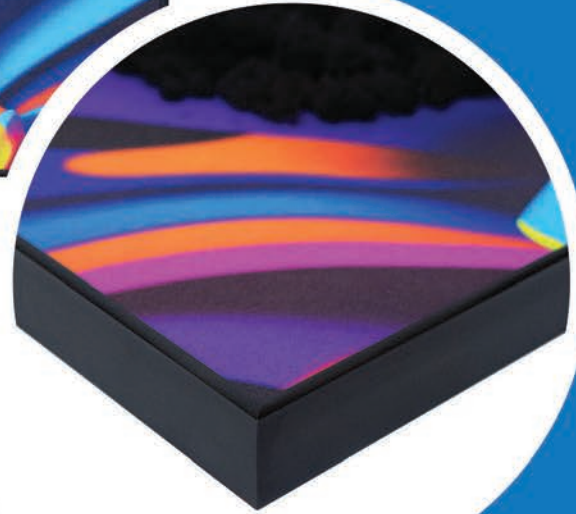
The building's four different edge conditions respond to the adjacent buildings, landscape, and the river, with brick being fundamental to the architectural identity, used to add colour, texture and depth.

A plinth of dark violet/purple engineered bricks wraps around the entire base of the building up to around sill level, disguising level changes and aligning with the tradition of darker bases to brick buildings in London.

The civic face, fronting onto Imperial Street, is the most formal, featuring alternating bands of deep red and brown bricks, resulting in a linear form, intersected vertically by a regular grid of windows and inset balconies. There are two sizes of opening across the facade, and two pier sizes, designed to instil a rational sense of order and rhythm.

This banding partially wraps around onto the courtyard elevation before transitioning, where the entrances to the cores are located on each wing, into a lighter mottled red brickwork designed





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Curved brickwork at the corners of the building, on the internal corners of the courtyard and on cantilevered balconies projecting over the communal area, add to the sense of informality.

“The curved internal corners of the courtyard are resonant of Florin Court, although the proportions are different we were very pleased that that fed through,” said Tozer.

“An economy of means” made the suave 1930s-inspired look possible on a relatively tight budget. The red and brown bricks were more cost effective than using blonde or London stock bricks and all the curves were created by cutting standard bricks rather than paying extra for specials. “It’s good to keep skills alive in the industry by getting good brickies to show off what they can do,” says Tozer.

The architect’s oversight of construction helped ensure build quality was maintained with minimal scope for value engineering. Key to getting it right was providing a fully coordinated set of information when doing to tender for the design and build contract, says Tozer.

Full scale on site mock ups of key details helped ensure the specified bricks were not substituted for inferior

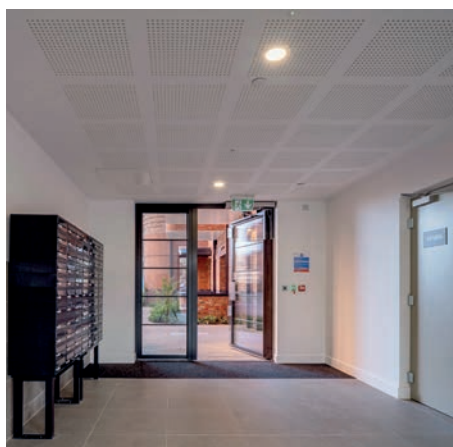
products. “We try to design things that are architecturally robust, avoiding classic errors like punctuating the elevation with vents or running rainwater downpipes in an uncoordinated manner,” says Tozer.

The modernist flourishes were confined to the exterior, with the interiors standardised and prescribed by The Employer’s Requirements. The scheme was ultimately delivered for £34m, equivalent to £2,900 per m<sup>2</sup>.

Not everything went smoothly on site, Tozer recalls some “fairly challenging conversations” with Henry Construction over the contractor’s attempts to change some of the principles the architect had established and ensuring it delivered on the quality standards.

Henry was experiencing financial difficulties and sadly sank into administration three quarters of the way through the build. It was replaced by Lovell who “did a very good job of finishing it off,” says Tozer.

The success of the completed building is testament to the tenacity of the project team, which through diligent attention to detail and budget-friendly design was able to deliver a distinctive building and give residents a taste of 1930s-style mansion block living within the hustle-bustle of 21st century London. ■



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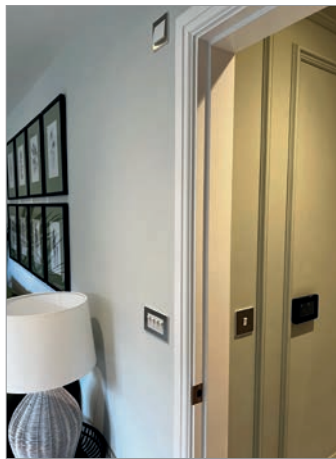
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## Stocksigns helps to raise awareness of mental health on construction sites

**Stocksigns** has launched its new range of mental health construction signs in collaboration with The Lucy Rayner Foundation. The range is designed to encourage workers to seek help on site if needed and provide clear guidance on who to turn to for immediate support. The Lucy Rayner Foundation provides a variety of mental health support services, including support groups around Surrey. To help shine a light on the signs and symptoms of depression and other mental health challenges as well as how to seek help, Stocksigns has partnered with the charity to target construction sites. The industry has one of the highest levels of stress and suicide; an issue that Stocksigns is well-aware of given its close working relationships with construction teams. The new range includes mental health first aider signs, which provide clear direction for workers to contact their mental health first aider. Mental health resource posters can be used to display important information including who to talk to if you are struggling, how to spot the signs of mental health issues and where to find further help. Stocksigns is also offering a Mental Health Starter Pack to help site managers kick-start on-site mental health messaging with six essential signs, including a mental health first aider sign, a mental health resource poster and four general reminder signs.

01737 774072 [www.stocksigns.co.uk](http://www.stocksigns.co.uk)

## Hydro International adds strength options to its Stormbloc® Optimum range of below ground storage

**F**lood prevention and stormwater management solutions specialist, Hydro International has announced a further extension to its popular Stormbloc® Optimum geocellular storage / infiltration system with two new blocks, the Stormbloc® MX and the Stormbloc® HX.

Two new blocks were developed by Hydro International's polymer specialist REHAU and are designed to enable engineers to create more cost-effective and flexible designs, with a choice of strengths and depths to suit different loading applications.

- **Stormbloc® LT** – the lighter, cost-effective option, for landscaped or lighter traffic areas, up to 3 m in depth.
- **Stormbloc® MX** – a new medium strength block for mid-range traffic loading, up to 3 m in depth.
- **Stormbloc® SX** – for heavily loaded and high traffic areas, up to 4 m in depth.
- **Stormbloc® HX** – for very heavily loaded areas, up to 6 m in depth as standard.

All the blocks in the Stormbloc® Optimum range have been designed to deliver customisable, modular below ground storage or infiltration, with the length, width and depth adaptable to most drainage designs. Stackable to save space, and lightweight but robust, the



range is easy to transport and quick to install, helping contractors cut costs and save time on site.

Maintenance of below ground systems is vitally important to ensure that capacity isn't compromised by the build-up of silt and sediments over time. Where pre-treatment upstream of the tank isn't practical, Stormbloc® MX/SX/HX tanks can be configured to include Stormbloc® Inspect chambers to enable CCTV inspection and cleaning. A row of Stormbloc® SX along with Stormbloc® Inspect chambers can also be included in Stormbloc® LT tanks to

facilitate inspection and maintenance.

Ben Puddy, product manager for Hydro International, commented: "This further expansion of the Stormbloc® Optimum range now gives drainage engineers a variety of more cost-effective options to meet different site requirements".

To find out more about the expanded Stormbloc® Optimum range, please visit the website.

[enquiries@hydro-int.com](mailto:enquiries@hydro-int.com)  
[hydro-int.com/stormbloc-optimum](http://hydro-int.com/stormbloc-optimum)



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AND BOOK A FREE CONSULTATION





## Beko recognised as one of TIME Magazine's Most Sustainable Companies in the World 2025

Appliance manufacturer Beko has been named one of TIME Magazine's World's Most Sustainable Companies for the second year running, earning a place in the Top 20 and securing the number one position in the industry.

As a supplier to the housebuilding sector, Beko Appliance Partners, the company's dedicated contract specification division, fully recognise their responsibility to support their housebuilder and developer partners' sustainability objectives, and are proud to offer energy and water-efficient products which not only meet, but exceed government regulations.

The annual ranking, developed in partnership with Statista, evaluates more than 5,000 global companies across data-driven KPIs spanning environmental and social stewardship, reporting and transparency. Beko's ranking at No. 17 marks a leap from its 2024 position at No. 44, a rise achieved despite TIME introducing stricter assessment criteria this year.

"The recognition by TIME and Statista proves that sustainability and scale don't have to be at odds," explained Hakan Bulgurlu, CEO of Beko. "We're proud to be the sector leader, not just by intent, but through verifiable progress, smart design, and industry-leading transparency."

Beko's top-tier ranking is a testament to its sustained investment in energy-efficient



manufacturing, adherence to circular economy principles, and a long-term ESG strategy, manifesting the company's resolve to drive meaningful, measurable impact across its operations.

Bulgurlu concludes, "At Beko, we're embedding environmental responsibility into every layer of our business, from design and

manufacturing to supply chains and the homes we serve. As we continue our journey to net zero by 2050, this milestone affirms the impact of credible data, long-term thinking, and putting sustainability at the centre of how we grow."

[appliancepartners@beko.com](mailto:appliancepartners@beko.com)  
[appliance-partners.bekopl.com](http://appliance-partners.bekopl.com)

## Freefoam unveils ambitious sustainability targets

Freefoam, a leading manufacturer of innovative building products, has announced its Sustainability Targets as part of a comprehensive strategy aimed at creating long-term value for stakeholders while addressing environmental and social challenges.

Freefoam have always been at the forefront of best practice and continuous improvement, holding ISO's 9001, 14001 and 45001 in addition to an Ecovadis rating in the top 6% of companies. These goals are the natural extension to Freefoam's long-standing commitment to quality and sustainability.

The newly unveiled targets are designed to be achieved by the end of 2030, unless otherwise specified, and focus on two key categories: Operations and People. These initiatives underscore Freefoam's commitment to responsible business practices and align with its vision for a more sustainable future.

Under Operations, Freefoam is taking significant steps to reduce its carbon footprint, with goals to cut Direct and Indirect emissions by 15% from a 2022 baseline. Water conservation is another critical focus, with aims to reduce mains water usage by 30% and implement closed-loop water systems in all manufacturing plants by 2027. Additionally, Freefoam is working towards zero waste to landfill by 2030 and a 15% reduction in general waste.

On the energy front, the company plans to transition entirely to renewable electricity and eliminate reliance on non-Bio LPG fuels for



forklift operations.

In the People category, Freefoam is prioritizing employee wellbeing, safety, and development. The company has committed to reducing its Annual Injury Incident Rate (AIIR) by 10% year-on-year and ensuring each employee receives at least 18 hours of training per year by 2027. Furthermore, 5% of the workforce will be placed on structured training pathways, including graduate, apprenticeship, and work experience programs.

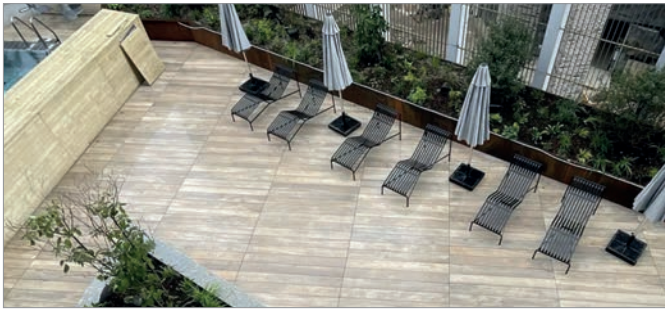
Ethical standards also remain a top priority, with targets to ensure 100% of employees with

company email accounts receive IT security awareness training and to maintain a zero-tolerance policy toward corruption and bribery.

"These targets represent a bold step forward in embedding sustainability into the core of our business," said Aidan Harte, CEO. "The simplicity of our goals gives us transparency and ensures they are relevant and clear to our teams and our customers. By acting today, we are building a stronger, more resilient company for tomorrow."

01604 591110 [www.freefoam.com](http://www.freefoam.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 metres 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?

info@duracomposites.com [www.duracomposites.com](http://www.duracomposites.com)



## Sync Energy unveils 'Flow'

**Sync Energy** has launched 'Flow', a next-generation, fully integrated home energy system that unites hybrid inverters, modular battery storage, solar power diverters, and EV chargers, all intelligently connected via the intuitive Sync Energy app. At the heart of the Sync Energy Flow range is a modular platform built for scalability and simplicity, available as individual components or in pre-bundled all-in-one kits for ease, all brought together in one easy to use app. Key System Components include: Hybrid Inverters available in 3.6 kW or 6 kW, wall-mountable or stackable. These enable real-time solar use, battery integration, and grid import/export; Modular Battery Storage is available in 5.12 kWh battery packs, expandable up to 35.84 kWh, offering 90% depth of discharge using advanced LiFePO4 technology, renowned for safety, long lifespan; Solar Power Diverters intelligently redirect surplus solar generation to prevent wastage; Combined with EV Chargers for the full package, including the ultra-slim, wall-integrated Link Charger for discreet, socketed charging, or the customisable Wall Charger 2, available in socketed or tethered, both offering dynamic 7.4 kW charging with OCPP 1.6J compatibility and no earth rod required. Installers will appreciate Sync Energy's thoughtful, installer-friendly design.

[sync.energy](http://sync.energy) [luceco.com/uk](http://luceco.com/uk)

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A Samsung EHS Mono R290 heat pump is shown in a modern interior setting. The unit is black with a textured front and the Samsung logo on the right side. It is mounted on two small grey blocks. The background features a white wall, a large window showing a cityscape, and a wooden floor. A red vertical slat is visible on the left side of the frame.

**SAMSUNG**

# Discover EHS Mono R290

**A reliable heat pump for homes.**

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The EHS Mono R290 heat pump is equipped with R290, a natural refrigerant with a low global warming potential (GWP). It provides a consistent supply of high hot water temperature, reaching up to 75 °C<sup>[1]</sup> and boasts a reliable heating performance, enabling it to deliver a 100% heating performance in temperatures as low as -10°C. Powered by innovative noise reducing technologies, featuring a double-layered sound insulation system, it operates quietly with noise levels as low as 35 d(BA)<sup>[2]</sup> using a 4-step Quiet Mode.







## SHOW PREVIEW

30 September - 2 October  
NEC, Birmingham

# UKCW CELEBRATES 10TH BIRTHDAY IN BIRMINGHAM



**T**his autumn, UK Construction Week (UKCW) Birmingham marks a major milestone as it returns to the NEC from 30 September to 2 October, celebrating 10 years as the UK's largest and most influential event for the built environment.

With the 2025 theme 'where decisions are made', the show continues to be a vital meeting point for the entire construction supply chain. From tier one and tier two contractors to housebuilders, developers, architects, local authorities, and procurement professionals, UKCW Birmingham will once again provide the platform where major ideas are shared, partnerships are formed, and deals are done.

The organisers have announced the first wave of confirmed guest speakers. Among them are Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands; Oliver Novokovic, group technical & innovation director at Barratt Redrow; and Mike Raven, national sustainability lead at the East Riding of Yorkshire Council. Architect and broadcaster George Clarke returns to officially open the show, and will be joined by other high profile names including Alan Heron from Places for People, Emma Whigham from the New Hospital Programme, Rachael Owens from the National Retrofit Hub, Amanda Long of the Code for Construction Product Information, and Marie Claude Hemming, director of operations at ACE Net.

Face to face networking continues to be at the heart of the UKCW experience, supported by a show app to help visitors book meetings in advance, alongside hosted round tables and the ever-popular Build Connect Networking Lounge.

Neil Gaisford, divisional director for construction, described UKCW as a barometer for the state of the sector and a space where

leadership, collaboration and innovation intersect. He noted that with the rapid pace of change, driven by net zero commitments, technological advancement, and a national push on infrastructure and housing, the show remains essential for anyone shaping the future of the built environment.

This year's edition will feature a truly international showcase, with exhibitors confirmed from across Europe and Asia, including France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Turkey, China and the Czech Republic. Brands already confirmed include Lanes Group, Build Warranty, Reader Cement, Cure It Composites, PlanRadar, Don & Low, Licata and Unibond.

Four specialist show areas will provide focused content and displays. Onsite On Hire returns following its successful debut in 2024, spotlighting sustainable and green hire equipment. Roofing, Cladding and Insulation (RCI), supported by the NFRC, will showcase the latest solutions in energy efficiency and safety. Digital Construction sits at the centre of the event and will explore technologies such as AI, BIM, 3D modelling and automation. Meanwhile, Build X caters directly to the professionals delivering projects on the ground, with a wide range of product demos, services and business solutions.

Over 300 exhibitors and 200 speakers will take part in the event, which includes more than 150 hours of CPD-accredited seminars across five stages. Topics will range from low-carbon construction and housing delivery to skills development, mental health and planning reform - ensuring something for every professional in the sector.

Article submitted by UK Construction Week (UKCW) Birmingham



Registration is free and now open.  
Register by scanning the QR code.



## Delivering interior moisture protection with Knauf and CCF



With increasing pressure on housebuilders to deliver high quality homes quickly and efficiently, reliable access to performance-led interior building products is essential. That's why CCF, one of the UK's leading distributors of insulation and drylining solutions, partners with manufacturers like Knauf to supply systems that support durability, moisture management and ease of installation.

Among these is Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor, which can be used as part of a fully warranted system engineered for use in wet and humid environments.

### PERFORMANCE WHERE IT'S NEEDED MOST

Moisture management is a critical consideration in the design of modern homes and residential developments. From stylish wet rooms to traditional family bathrooms, modern kitchen areas and even communal swimming pool facilities, residential buildings face a number of challenges in this area and all specified building materials must tolerate prolonged humidity, water exposure and cleaning agents. Using unsuitable components can lead to swelling, mould or even long-term structural issues.

Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor is designed to overcome these challenges head on. Manufactured from inorganic compounds, the boards are unaffected by water and prevent mould growth, it gives a stable and durable substrate in moisture-prone areas. It has undergone rigorous testing to validate its resistance, helping to support healthier, longer-lasting interiors.



### SYSTEM-BASED PROTECTION

Knauf's AQUAPANEL® Interior System includes tailored solutions for both partitions and ceilings. AQUAPANEL® Indoor boards can be used as tile backers in wet zones such as kitchens, utility areas and bathrooms. They resist moisture, chlorine and salt, making them suitable for high-humidity conditions and are as much at home in a single residential dwelling as they are in communal leisure spaces.

For overhead applications, Knauf's ceiling system combines AQUAPANEL® Skylite boards with a full range of supporting C5 metal framing, jointing and skimming products. This integrated system provides a lightweight and moisture-resistant solution for demanding environments with each component designed to work together, ensuring consistency across the build.

### EFFICIENT INSTALLATION FOR FASTER RESULTS

Knauf AQUAPANEL® boards also support efficient on-site handling. They can be cut using

a simple score-and-snap method, with no need for power tools or dust extraction. Pre-drilling isn't required, helping to further speed up the installation process.

With a standard thickness of 12.5 mm, AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor aligns with UK plasterboard dimensions for easier integration. Their strength also supports flexibility as by using standard methods, tiles up to 50kg/m<sup>2</sup> can be applied, rising to 120kg/m<sup>2</sup> with closer stud centres. A one-metre bending radius further enables bespoke and creative, curved designs.

### PARTNERSHIP AND PRODUCT SUPPORT

By choosing Knauf AQUAPANEL® from CCF, installers on all project types gain access to a proven moisture-resistant solution which is backed by full technical guidance and a consistent nationwide supply. With dependable nationwide stock availability, local branches that understand your timelines, and a dedicated technical team offering product guidance and installation insight, CCF is an established distribution partner to many of the UK's housebuilders and developers and is here to help keep your projects on track.

For full product details, installation guidance and warranty information, please visit the website.

0161 848 0145  
[www.ccftd.co.uk/blog/product-news/knauf-aquapanel-indoor](http://www.ccftd.co.uk/blog/product-news/knauf-aquapanel-indoor)





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## Manthorpe tile ventilators



The latest government initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions in buildings can have a direct and significant impact on the risk of condensation. For example, tighter building envelopes with enhanced insulation and airtightness are effective in reducing heat loss and energy consumption, but they can also trap moisture inside buildings. Also, the adoption of high-efficiency heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, whilst contributing to energy savings, may alter the temperature and humidity dynamics within buildings, especially if the system is poorly balanced or incorrectly maintained. This all means that good quality ventilation, not just of the living space, but also of the structure, is ever more important to ensure effective moisture control.

Manthorpe roof tile ventilators are a practical and efficient solution to addressing the ventilation needs in roof structures.

The Manthorpe In-line ventilator range includes:

- Non-profiled tile ventilators to suit most large format flat interlocking tiles.
- Mid and large-format profile ventilators to suit most common manufacturer's tile shapes, including the popular 15 x 9 castellated tiles and single concrete pantiles.
- An interlocking plain tile ventilator for use with small format twin plain tiles. This ventilator features a unique sliding mechanism to adjust its width to suit all

three styles of interlocking plain tiles: Redland DuoPlain, Marley Ashmore and Forticrete Gemini.

- A plain tile ventilator to suit traditional double lapped plain tiles.
- A large format 600 x 300 mm slate ventilator, which can also be used for 500 x 250 mm slates by trimming the adjacent slates.
- A small format 500 x 250 mm slate ventilator, which can also be used for slates down to 400 x 200 mm by trimming the adjacent slates.

Manthorpe in-line ventilators are available in a wide range of colours, including textures to suit sand-faced tiles. They are easy to install and provide a quick and simple solution to roof space ventilation, mechanical extraction, and soil stack ventilation.

There are many roof tile and slate ventilators on the market, but not all are what they claim to be. A common example are ventilators where the supplier claims a free ventilation area of 10,000 mm<sup>2</sup>. Yet, they are supplied with an integral 100mm pipe adaptor. Everyone who remembers their school day mathematics will know that the area of a 100mm diameter circle is  $\pi r^2$ , which is approximately  $3.142 \times 502 = 7,855 \text{ mm}^2$ , thus reducing the effective free vent area of the ventilator. Installing ventilators which have a smaller free vent area than specified runs the risk of under-venting the roof

space and consequently increases the risk of harmful condensation.

The entire range of Manthorpe roof tile and slate ventilators has been tested and certified by the British Research Establishment (BRE) for resistance to rain penetration in accordance with CEN Standard FprEN 15601. The test conditions represent typical worse case conditions expected in Northern Europe during a 50-year return period. The testing showed the weathertightness performance of the ventilators to be better than that of the surrounding tiles.

BRE has also measured the aerodynamic characteristics of Manthorpe tile and slate ventilators under various air flow conditions. This means that Manthorpe can provide accurate data designers of mechanical extraction systems.

In summary, excess moisture can wreak havoc on a building's structure and create an environment conducive to mould and mildew growth. Manthorpe roof tile ventilators, when part of an effective moisture control system, effectively manage moisture and prevent harmful condensation. But more than that, Manthorpe's commitment to external testing, as well as their own extensive design and research programmes, means that specifiers and installers can count on their products to do exactly what they are designed and built for.

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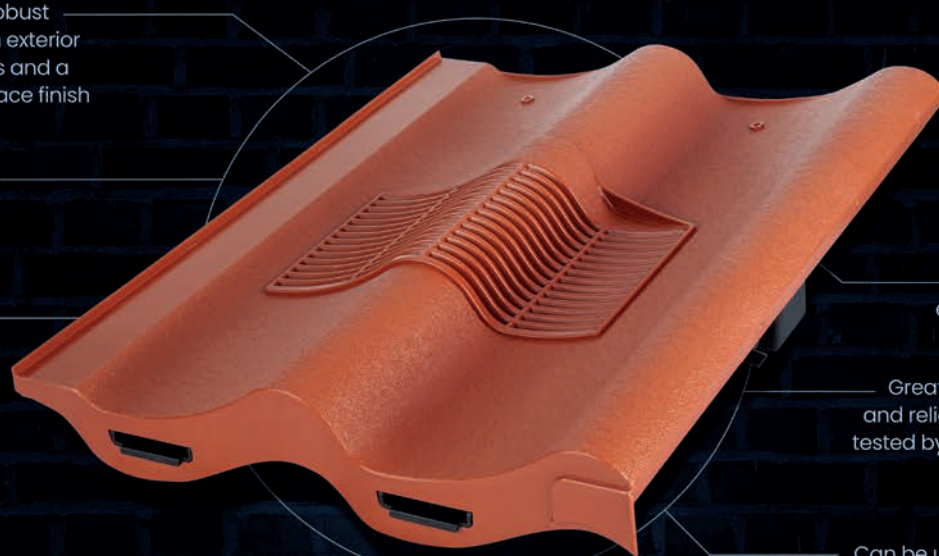
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Can be used for roof ventilation or mechanical extraction



Product shown is the Double Roman Tile Vent in Terracotta GTV-DR-TR

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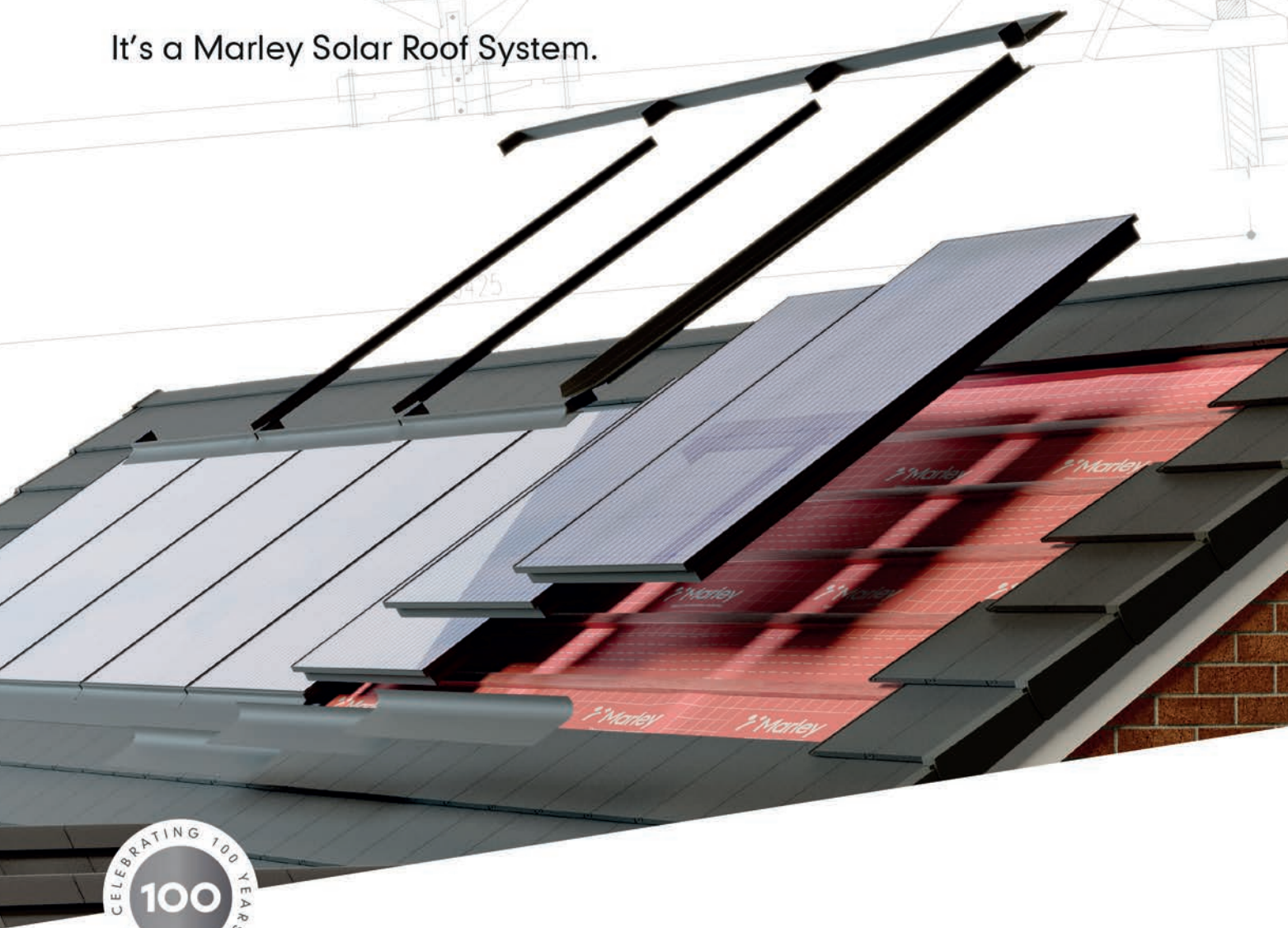


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# DON'T OVERLOOK THERMAL BREAKS

Paul Beech of Armatherm discusses the importance of understanding where thermal bridging can occur in housebuilding projects, such as around balconies, and why the solutions available should not be overlooked.



**W**hen you think of thermal bridging, it's most common that you'd be considering steel framework connections or balconies, but they're much more prevalent than you might think. From the very top to the bottom of any building, there is opportunity for thermal bridges to cause detrimental issues, including structural damage and mould issues; which are widespread in UK homes and need to be addressed. Not only is thermal bridging causing problems within the four walls of a building, but it can also contribute to increasing the carbon footprint of residential homes due to the increase in energy consumption to regulate temperatures and the energy lost via the bridged connection.

In a time where new homes on the market are being built quickly to meet demand, what are the dangers of overlooking issues such as thermal bridging? A solution we're seeing across the board to meet the ever-increasing

housing demand is high rise apartments and flats. To combat issues with indoor air quality and allow homes to have access to fresh air, many of these buildings feature balconies, and these are a prime location for thermal bridging issues.

These thermal bridging issues occur due to the conductivity of the materials often used in balcony projects, such as steel and concrete. If not isolated properly, these can provide the ideal circumstances for thermal bridging and subsequent issues, such as condensation, damp and mould, which can lead to major health problems for residents.

But balconies are just one of the visible culprits. Behind the render and beneath the floors, thermal bridging can cause serious issues with far-reaching effects. Lintels, parapets, roof connections, slab edges, wall penetrations and even within masonry, are all areas that can undermine a home's thermal envelope. Without the correct specification of thermal breaks, these junctions become weak spots,

allowing warmth to escape and cold to creep in, or vice versa.

What's more, the pressure to meet housing targets, especially in areas with high demand, means that some new-build homes are being delivered with speed prioritised over long term performance. According to the UK Green Building Council, around 80% of homes that will be in use in 2050 have already been built. That means improving the performance of both new and existing homes is essential if the UK is to meet its net zero goals. Unfortunately, in the rush to build, thermal bridging is often left as an afterthought. It might not be visible on day one, but over time, it can lead to costly problems, both for homeowners and the wider environment.

It's not just new builds that are at risk, either. The UK's existing housing stock is among the oldest in Europe, and many of these properties are being retrofitted with new cladding, insulation or window systems. While these upgrades are vital





for improving energy performance, they can unintentionally introduce thermal bridging where materials and systems meet. If structural connections or fixings aren't properly thermally isolated, the gains made in one area can be lost through bridging elsewhere. This is especially true in properties with solid wall construction, where remedial works often involve adding external or internal insulation that can clash with existing architectural details.

That's where thermal breaks come into play. These engineered materials are designed to interrupt the flow of heat across junctions where conductive materials, like steel or concrete, would

otherwise create a continuous path. By installing thermal breaks at key connection points, housebuilders and specifiers can improve a building's thermal performance, reduce energy bills and mitigate the risks of condensation and damp, without compromising on structure or design intent.

Thermal breaks also play a valuable role in ensuring compliance. With regulations such as Part L tightening performance requirements and with greater scrutiny of SAP calculations and thermal modelling, failing to address thermal bridging can result in missed targets. Thermal bridging can account for up to 30% of a building's heat loss, so

overlooking it isn't just a small oversight; it can be the reason a property fails to meet key efficiency standards.

And importantly, thermal breaks aren't one size fits all product solutions. With the right approach and early design stage integration, solutions can be tailored to different build types, whether that's new housing or sensitive retrofit projects. As awareness of the issue grows, so too does the need to factor thermal bridging into early stage decisions, alongside insulation, fenestration and ventilation strategies.

In residential settings, whether you're designing a compact block of starter homes, updating a Victorian terrace or planning a net zero neighbourhood, thermal breaks should be seen as an essential part of the toolkit. They help protect indoor air quality, reduce long term maintenance issues and contribute significantly to lowering emissions. In short, they offer a low profile, high impact solution to one of the most persistent issues in building physics. It's time for thermal breaks to be moved up on the agenda. While they may be hidden from view, their effects are anything but invisible.

Paul Beech is commercial director at thermal break specialist Armatherm

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## Civils & Lintels unveils new underground drainage range

Civils & Lintels, part of the Huws Gray group of companies, has launched its own brand of underground drainage products to better support contractors who require open-spec solutions.

Centurion, as the range is known, has been



developed as the ideal 'open specification' solution, suitable for both public and private sector contractors, where quality and value remain paramount. Centurion sits alongside C&L's existing essentials range.

Commenting, Chris Brewster, commercial director at Civils & Lintels, said: "This is an exciting opportunity to fulfil our customer's open-spec requirements, whilst continuing to deliver the quality and value that they've come to expect."

"Importantly, every product in the Centurion range is compliant with necessary industry standards, including BS EN 1401 and BS EN 13598-1 where relevant, and is available 'ex-stock' across Civils & Lintel's nationwide network of depots."

The Centurion underground drainage range is comprised of a full range of 110mm and 160 mm pipes and fittings, plus shallow inspection chambers to suit. Safe and easy to install, Centurion offers optimum drainage performance for an efficient and professional finish.

Concluding, Chris Brewster said: "We had witnessed an increase in the number of open-spec requirements from our customers but could only offer them the same solutions that would be available in a specified order. In parallel with this, an increasingly competitive marketplace left many customers uncertain of which was the best option for them, often opting for the same solution that they would in

## Centurion Underground Drainage



a specified situation.

"By investing in our own range of underground drainage products we're providing those customers with both choice and guidance and feel confident that these products will be positively received by both our existing and future customers."

[marketing@huwsgray.co.uk](mailto:marketing@huwsgray.co.uk)  
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## DAB launches new FXS submersible pump

DAB Pumps has launched the latest addition to its trusted FX range of wastewater pumps: the FXS, a robust, compact submersible pump designed for residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural applications. Built for lifting and transferring wastewater and sewage, the FXS combines the reliability contractors expect from the FX range with a more compact design that makes positioning and servicing straightforward. It features a non-clog screw impeller that delivers excellent hydraulic efficiency, performing reliably even in narrow pipework or systems prone to blockages. The FXS efficiently transfers wastewater containing solids thanks to its 50 mm free passage and meets EN 12050-1 standards for wastewater handling. Durable construction comes as standard, including a double silicon carbide mechanical seal fully enclosed in an oil chamber, an anti-corrosion stainless steel motor shaft and a hard-wearing two-component coating for great protection even in aggressive environments. The FXS joins four other models in the FX range, each built for specific wastewater challenges, from grinder pumps designed for narrow piping to super vortex impeller models that can handle large solids with ease.

0333 777 5010 [www.dabpumps.com](http://www.dabpumps.com)



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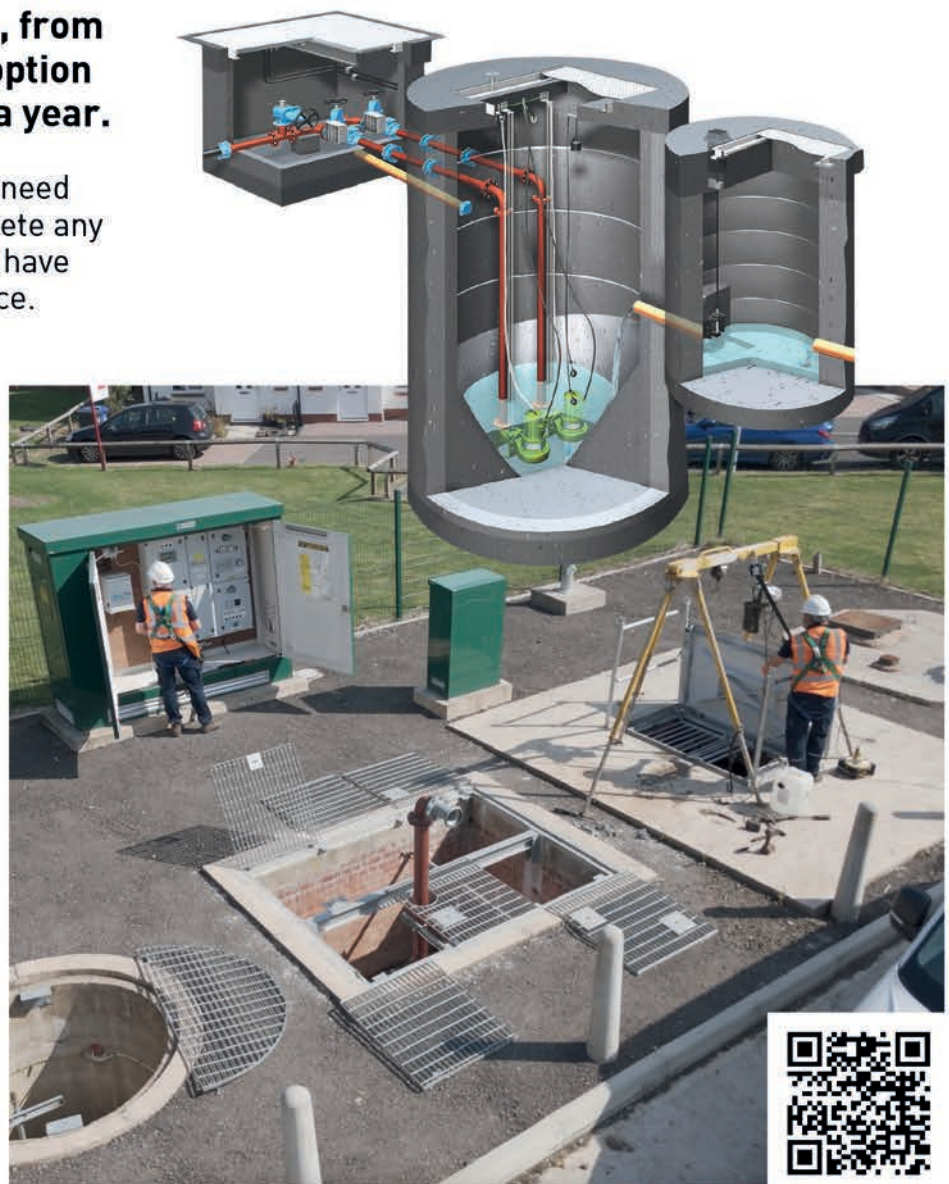
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## Lo-Carbon Sentinel Econiq-Cool (KERS)



Vent-Axia has launched the Lo-Carbon Sentinel Econiq-Cool (KERS) in partnership with KERS, introducing a pioneering two-in-one solution that provides renewable hot water and free cooling. Designed to help housebuilders manage overheating in new build homes, the highly energy-efficient MVHR unit features new integrated controls that enable seamless

communication with the hot water air source heat pump. As a result, the Lo-Carbon Sentinel Econiq-Cool (KERS) improves indoor air quality for households while delivering exceptional levels of comfort, intelligently heating hot water and cooling habitable spaces.

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

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## New identification for press fit fittings



Heating and plumbing distributor **Navigator** continues to offer a range of quality products that offer installers and specifiers ease of installation and peace of mind at competitive prices. The latest introduction is an innovative addition to their press fit fittings range. The Kitemark and

WRAS approved press fit fittings range from Navigator has now been extended to include a number of larger sizes. Sold as part of the popular MB brand, the range has proved to be extremely popular with installers all over the UK. The MB press fit range for water now comes with a blue identification ring. Once pressed, the ring simply drops off, so the installer knows at a glance if the complete assembly has been pressed correctly.

01234 781234 [www.navigatormsl.com](http://www.navigatormsl.com)

## 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. Further improvements and additions will be announced in due course.

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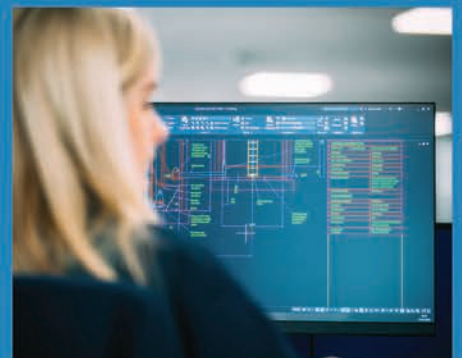




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# WARM WORDS

Jonathan Ducker of Kingspan Insulation explores how warm roof construction combined with advanced insulation materials can help meet our ambitious energy targets without compromising internal space.

In the next few months, the final text for the Future Homes Standard (FHS) will hopefully be confirmed. With all new homes expected to be required to use low carbon heating (typically either a heat pump or district heating), the performance of the building fabric will play an important role in both supporting compliance with the requirements and ensuring homes are affordable to run. For this reason, many developers are looking to maximise the thermal performance of the roof construction.

For properties where the roof space will be used as a liveable space, it is good practice to fit insulation between and above the rafters. Using insulation with a low thermal conductivity can be especially beneficial in this application, helping to ensure there is suitable headroom in the space and simplifying detailing to ensure a compliant new roof.

## FUTURE HOMES STANDARD – WHAT TO EXPECT?

The Government consultation on the Future Homes Standard proposed two different options for the Notional Dwelling specification. This is applied to a theoretical building of the same dimensions as the proposed home within the energy modelling software to generate the performance targets for the building. As with the existing standards, developers are free to depart from this specification provided they meet the performance targets, limiting values (such as worst-case U-values) and any other mandatory requirements (such as using low carbon heating).

Aside from the switch to low carbon heating, one of the proposed options is largely unchanged from the existing requirements in Approved Document L 2021 (ADL 2021). The other includes some enhanced features, limiting air loss to 4 m<sup>3</sup>/m<sup>2</sup>.h @ 50 Pa with ventilation provided via a mechanical ventilation heat recovery system, and using wastewater heat recovery and PV.

Surprisingly, neither of the specifications requires the building fabric to be upgraded beyond the values in ADL 2021. This is despite the U-values in the English Notional Dwelling



An additional layer of breather membrane can be fitted between two layers of roofing board to further minimise draughts and air loss in 'between and over' installations

## WARM ROOF CONSTRUCTION CAN HELP ACHIEVE U-VALUES AS LOW AS 0.09 W/M<sup>2</sup>K

lagging significantly behind the current equivalents in Scotland and Wales in most areas.

With the switch to low carbon heating appliances, which perform most efficiently at lower flow temperatures than conventional boilers, ensuring homes retain heat well will be vital to allow them to be heated affordably. It is therefore worth looking to upgrade roof U-values to the same level as used within the current Notional Building in Scotland – 0.09 W/m<sup>2</sup>K.

### WARM ROOF

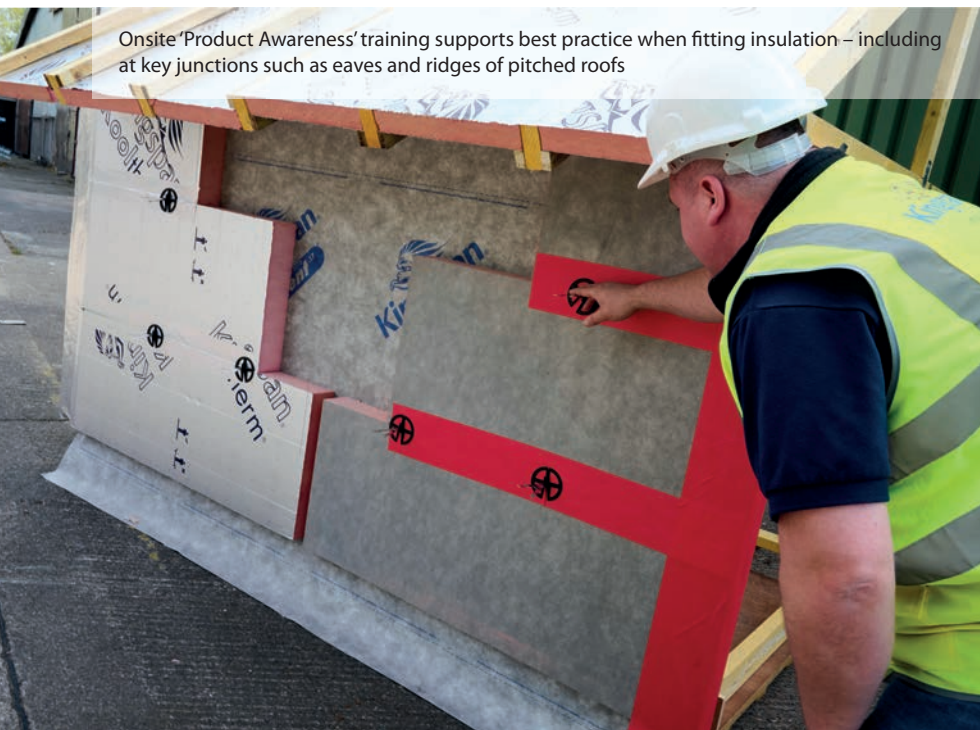
When looking to reach this U-value, the thermal conductivity (lambda value) of the insulation is especially important, as this can significantly impact the depth of the roof construction. The lower the thermal conductivity of the insulation, the more effective it is at slowing heat loss. This can allow the U-value to be met

with a slimmer construction than might be possible with materials with higher thermal conductivities. Rigid phenolic insulation boards are well suited for applications where ambitious U-values are needed, as they tend to have the lowest thermal conductivity of any commonly used insulation board (as low as 0.019 W/mK).

Along with the choice of insulation, it is also important for developers to consider the build-up they want to use, especially for room-in-the-roof constructions. In the past, the typical approach has been to fit insulation between the rafters with a further layer of insulated plasterboard below. However, even when designing the construction to allow phenolic insulation to fill the gap between 150 mm rafters, this can still require a substantial thickness of insulated plasterboard beneath just to reach a U-value of 0.11 W/m<sup>2</sup>K (as in



Onsite 'Product Awareness' training supports best practice when fitting insulation – including at key junctions such as eaves and ridges of pitched roofs



the existing Notional Dwelling in England). This often means ridge heights have to be raised to ensure there is sufficient headroom in the space below.

A more practical approach is often to fit phenolic insulation between the rafters, with a further layer above. This

is often referred to as a “warm roof” as the roof rafters will be kept fully within the insulation envelope. In addition to allowing projects to more easily reach low U-values, fitting a continuous layer of insulation above the rafters can also help to simplify detailing and limit repeating

thermal bridges through the rafters. This can support compliance with carbon and primary energy targets within the expected FHS, and should help to ensure the finished roofs retain heat effectively.

When adopting this approach, it will typically be necessary to install a breathable membrane above the insulation, followed by the cross battens for the roof tiles. A vapour control layer (VCL) applied to the internal face of the insulation behind the plasterboard lining can help provide both vapour control and good levels of airtightness.

#### LEVELLING UP

While the final format of the Future Homes Standard is yet to be confirmed, achieving excellent fabric performance will stand you in good stead to comply with any requirements and help ensure that the low carbon heating technology functions effectively. Pitched roofs offer a good opportunity to deliver ambitious U-values, and by adopting a warm roof approach with insulation with a low thermal conductivity, developers should be able to achieve U-values as low as 0.09 W/m<sup>2</sup>K without compromising on internal headroom.

Jonathan Ducker is head of regulatory affairs at Kingspan Insulation Limited

## Preventing condensation



Condensation control starts with insulation but depends on a joined-up approach. Celotex's David Milner explains how airtightness, moisture management and effective ventilation all play a role. For developers, correct use of PIR insulation, vapour control layers and thermal bridge detailing

can help prevent issues such as mould, reduced performance and hidden fabric damage. With tools like Celotex's U-Value and Condensation Risk calculators, developers can specify with confidence, delivering healthier, more durable homes that exceed regulatory standards.

01473 822093 [www.celotex.co.uk](http://www.celotex.co.uk)

## Designer Contracts latest move all sewn up



Cameo, the specialist blinds and curtain making division of Designer Contracts, has moved to new and upgraded premises near the company's Chesterfield, Derbyshire, headquarters. As one of the UK's largest flooring contractors and a key supplier to the new build sector, Designer

Contract's bespoke blinds and curtain making operation was first started more than 25 years ago. It's established team of specialist machinists produce thousands of made-to-order curtains and roman blinds each year. As well as supplying domestic dwellings, the service is offered to Ministry of Defence housing, Housing Associations and care schemes.

01246 854577 [www.designercontracts.com](http://www.designercontracts.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. With their stylish looks, industry leading acoustic qualities, and enviable sustainability credentials, we believe we have achieved this with our acoustic wall panels."

01827 317 200 [zestwallpanels.co.uk/wall-panels/acoustic-wall-panels](http://zestwallpanels.co.uk/wall-panels/acoustic-wall-panels)



## An innovative concept for modern floor-level showers: wedi Fundo Flex



Addressing the challenges architects and installers regularly face, the newest wedi innovation flexibly adapts to suit a wide range of project requirements.

The Fundo Flex itself is a channel drain solution for wet room floors. It can be installed on its own in screed with membrane or liquid waterproofing applied over the surrounding areas, or it can be installed on both in and on concrete as well as timber floors with complementary sloping boards.

Both the channel element and the channel profile can be cut to required dimensions on site, and thanks to the included eccentric, precise alignment with the wall is guaranteed and it is also possible to shift the position of the channel profile closer or further away from the wall.

However, to bypass the need to create falls in the screed, there are complementary sloping boards perfectly matched to the Fundo Flex – the 100% waterproof and directly tileable, customisable sloping boards turn the linear shower drain into a unique, flexible shower system, allowing for a bespoke design tailored to project requirements.

### UNIQUE SHOWER SYSTEM WITH AN ENTIRELY NEW LEVEL OF ADAPTABILITY

To provide a solution that can be configured to fit any requirement whilst offering the wedi renowned level of safety and waterproofing, a lot of emphasis was placed on product design during development. The components are designed to fit securely together in a layout that is best suited for the available space.

Fully adjustable channel element that can be positioned along the long or short side, close to the wall, centrally, or anywhere in between.



360° rotatable channel profile with the included eccentric facilitates precise alignment allowing the channel to be placed at the required angle and distance from the wall.

Stepped rebates for precise integration of the complementary sloping boards ensuring a fully sealed, level shower floor.

Sloping boards with precise gradient ensure adequate water drainage eliminating the need for meticulous planning and precise execution, as well as for labour intensive priming and sealing.

Flexibly customisable components – the channel element, the slim channel profile as well as the sloping boards can be cut and arranged to form a tailored solution.

The Fundo Flex system delivers a modern, precision-engineered shower floor without compromise, offering both design flexibility and ease of installation while maintaining high performance and reliability.

### EXACTING, MODERN DESIGN AND HIGH STANDARD OF HYGIENE

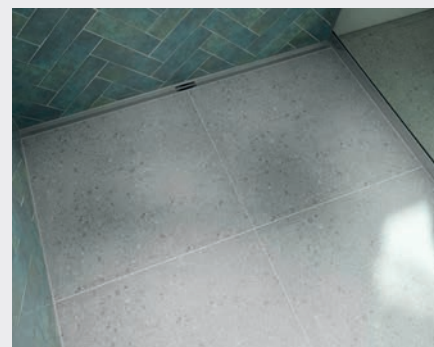
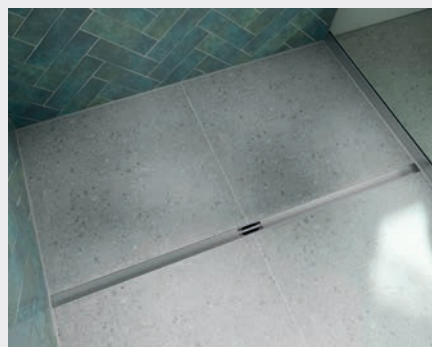
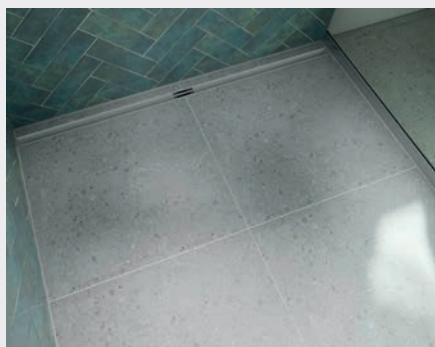
Anyone who decides on a flush-to-floor shower with linear drainage also wants a high-quality look, so purist design was also taken into account. The only visible part of the new shower solution, the channel profile, is incredibly narrow – just 35 mm wide!

**BONUS:** it is entirely up to the client at which position to place the drainage! What's more, whatever the angle the channel profile can be aligned perfectly parallel with the wall.

Hygiene is also ensured: thanks to its special contour without any edges inside, and the integrated odour trap, the drain body is almost self-cleaning. What's more, included with the channel profile, the removable trap catches hair and other debris making the cleaning effortless.

With over 40 years of industry expertise, wedi continues set the standard for waterproofing whilst providing flexibility in design.

0161 864 2336  
[www.wedi.net/uk](http://www.wedi.net/uk)





# Powering the future of city living: How Beko Appliance Partners is supporting Legacie's Central Park vision

As Liverpool continues its transformation into a modern urban hub, some developments stand out, not just for their design, but for how they redefine what home can mean in a thriving city.

One of those projects is Central Park, a landmark £32 million development from Legacie, located in the heart of the city's vibrant Baltic Triangle. And behind the scenes, helping shape everyday life inside these stylish apartments, is Beko Appliance Partners.

## MORE THAN APPLIANCES – A PARTNERSHIP IN PROGRESS

Beko Appliance Partners, the contract supply division of Beko, brings more to the table than high-performance appliances. With a fully integrated approach from specification through to aftercare, they work shoulder-to-shoulder with developers to deliver homes that are not only beautifully finished, but built for the real needs of modern, sustainable living.

"At Beko Appliance Partners, we pride ourselves on working collaboratively with developers like Legacie to deliver appliance solutions that not only look the part but truly enhance modern living," comments John Grimes, specification sales manager at Beko Appliance Partners. "From specification to aftercare, our goal is to support long-term value in every home we help bring to life."

## A LANDMARK DEVELOPMENT, BUILT FOR THE FUTURE

With 174 stylish one, two, and three-bedroom apartments, Central Park offers residents a five-star concierge reception, an outdoor gym, secure underground parking, and a bike store. Residents can also enjoy convenient access to the neighbouring Legacie development, One Baltic Square, with its bold public piazza inspired by Liverpool's Royal Albert Dock.

And while the architecture and amenities draw attention, what truly sets these homes apart is how seamlessly they blend style with



everyday function.

Each apartment is fitted with a complete suite of Beko appliances, including the brand's Which? Best Buy AeroPerfect™ oven. Designed with energy-efficiency and durability in mind, these appliances complement the building's aesthetic while giving residents the confidence of long-term performance and a 10-year parts guarantee.

## ADDING VALUE BEYOND THE SALE

For Legacie, working with Beko is about forming a genuine collaboration with a partner who shares their commitment to quality, efficiency, and resident satisfaction.

Gavin Currie, chief operating officer at Legacie comments: "Beko Appliance Partners offer a reliable and cost-effective solution with a focus on energy efficiency, quality and practical design. Legacie installs Beko appliances throughout all of its developments. The Beko Appliance Partners team were efficient and professional throughout the build phase, and their post-completion customer service has been excellent – both responsive and supportive for all our residents."

This commitment to support, service, and reliability is what makes Beko Appliance Partners a go-to supplier for developers across the UK, especially in a housing market where expectations are rising and efficiency is essential.

## A SMARTER STANDARD FOR CITY LIVING

As Liverpool's skyline evolves and the demand for well-designed urban homes grows, partnerships like this one are showing the way forward. With its hands-on approach and focus on value, Beko Appliance Partners isn't just supplying products, it's helping shape the future of modern living.

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## Marmox holding the line on NHBC wetroom requirements



Not only does 2025 mark the 25th anniversary of Harry Parsons setting up Marmox UK Ltd, but it will also remind many longer-serving bathroom and wetroom specialists of when the manufacturer's remarkable Multiboard product first became available to the home market—providing them with a totally waterproof, insulating tilebacker board that completely eclipsed the performance of conventional plasterboard.

The fact that it took almost a quarter-century for the NHBC to tighten its regulations on the unsuitability of certain substrates in these settings will also be a matter of frustration for the countless homebuyers who have suffered the inconvenience and expense of needing to have the walls and often the floor structure around baths and showers reinstated due to water penetration and consequential damage. In addition to gypsum plasterboard, the guidance also effectively discourages specifiers from utilising magnesium oxide boards, which have shown a tendency to suffer moisture-related failures.

For those who have yet to hear about the country's leading warranty provider's introduction of tough new guidelines to prevent such water damage, we should outline the main content of NHBC 9.2/06, which came into force on 1 January this year. The document applies to all new homes registered with the NHBC, focusing on waterproofing details in bathrooms and other wetrooms. It stresses the need for structural integrity in waterproofing solutions,

with particular attention paid to areas around baths and shower enclosures. In wetrooms where the entire floor and surrounding walls are expected to be regularly wetted and where power showers are installed full tanking is required. In less arduous situations, such as with low-flow showers, waterproof adhesive and grout may be considered adequate, though specifiers should be mindful that fittings and flow rates may be increased by future occupants.

From the perspective of manufacturers such as Marmox whose waterproof panels, shower formers, tapes and adhesives are now under renewed scrutiny the onus is on them to prove that all system components perform together so water cannot penetrate beyond the line of defence. Supportive of the NHBC initiative, Marmox has now had further BBA testing, which confirms the modified concrete cement-coated XPS boards not only offer a stable background for direct tiling, but also fulfil the enhanced technical objectives of 9.2/06.

In relation to the NHBC Standards 2025, the certificate states: "In the opinion of the BBA, Marmox Tilebacker Boards (referring to Multiboards), if installed, used and maintained in accordance with this certificate, can satisfy or contribute to satisfying the relevant requirements in relation to NHBC Standards Part 9 Finishes; Chapters 9.2 Wall and Ceiling Finishes and 9.3 Floor Finishes."

The Technical Manager for Marmox, Mark Bowman, comments: "Essentially, the new

guidance means you have to prove your system is waterproof not just the boards themselves which, as Multiboard is a modified cement-faced extruded polystyrene, is a given. So, you have to offer a viable solution for the joints between them, which we do with Marmox Self-Adhesive Waterproof Tape and MSP 360 Sealant & Adhesive. The actual test conducted by the BBA saw a box somewhat reminiscent of a Belfast sink being built, and the prescribed volume of water poured into it to ensure it didn't leak. That testing was completed on the 27 February this year."

"The BBA is the only test house authorised to carry out this testing in relation to the new NHBC guidance, and the fact that the joints were treated in the same way as any sheet of Multiboard installed when tanking a wetroom should give real confidence to specifiers, installers, and end users."

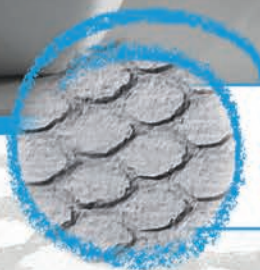
Marmox is currently in the process of updating its selection of shower formers rationalising the range of sizes, attaching a slightly different model of drain outlet, and featuring a section of membrane bonded onto the back to overlap with the rest of the boarding. The Marmox stand at this year's Installer Live exhibition also saw the company showcasing new versions of its popular shower niches and other products that help contribute to a consistently constructed wetroom shell.

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



# marmox multiboard

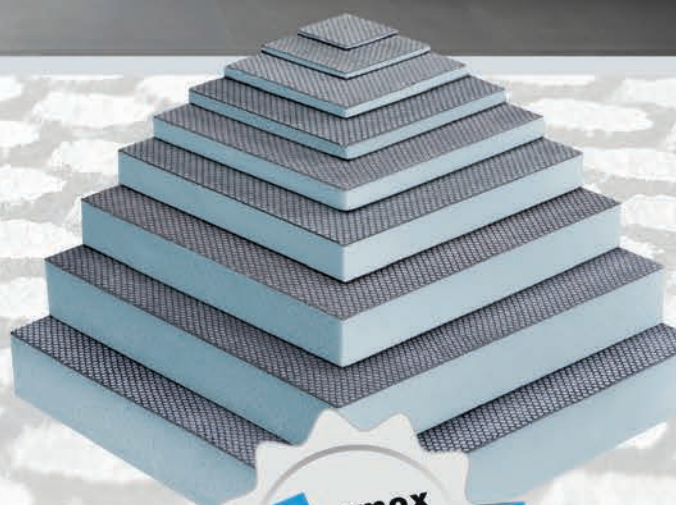
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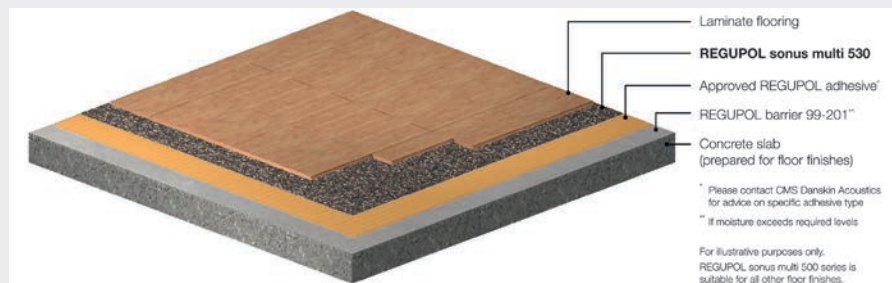
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## CMS Danskin acoustics launches improved acoustic underlay



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 in the UK from CMS Danskin Acoustics, and its merchants and distributors, 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.

"We have basically improved what was already a high performing acoustic underlayment in REGUPOL sonus multi taking into account the needs of the market," explains UK REGUPOL consultant Jamie Symons. "The investment means the new REGUPOL sonus multi 500 series gives improved performance, dependent upon floor finish and system build-up, gives a commercial advantage over previous REGUPOL variants and has a greater recycled material content."

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 while 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.

01925 577711 [www.cmsdanskin.co.uk](http://www.cmsdanskin.co.uk)



## The Elegance of Wet Rooms with Tile of Spain

Whether creating a spa-like retreat or a contemporary aesthetic, **Tile of Spain's** manufacturers offer a diverse range of versatile, durable and luxurious tiles to enhance any wetroom.

From high gloss to rustic natural stone-effect finishes, tiles remain the preferred choice for wetrooms due to their durability, easy maintenance, slip-resistant properties and ability to create stylish interiors. With a vast selection of finishes, sizes, colours and patterns, Tile of Spain's manufacturers can transform any wetroom into a polished and inviting sanctuary.

For a seamless wetroom design, a continuous tiling aesthetic called 'tile drenching' is a great way to enhance connectivity and cohesivity whilst amplifying the sense of immersion. Large-format tiles create the illusion of space in smaller bathrooms, while mixing and matching different tile designs allows for creative zoning – separating shower areas from open floor spaces and adding visual interest.

Representing 125 ceramic tile manufacturers across Spain, Tile of Spain promotes the incredible quality and values worldwide of the Spanish tile industry.

[global@ascer.es](mailto:global@ascer.es) [www.tileofspain.com](http://www.tileofspain.com)



## Choose the performance you need with new BAL Level Plus

Introducing **BAL Level Plus** – a unique 1-part or 2-part rapid-setting smoothing and levelling compound, allowing you to use it however you need it for super smooth floors prior to tiling. BAL Level Plus can be used as a 1-part mix with water for standard installations or as a 2-part mix with BAL Level Plus Liquid latex for a moisture tolerant levelling compound for more difficult substrates. Use with water for good all-round performance on a number of common subbases including concrete, sand:cement screeds, anhydrite screeds, cementitious flowing screeds, unglazed tiles or stone, and old tile adhesive residues. As a one-part mix, you can build BAL Level Plus up from 2 mm to 12 mm in bed depth – build-up to 30 mm with the addition of aggregate. For a superior enhanced performance, use BAL Level Plus as a 2-part mix with BAL Level Plus Liquid latex. Use with BAL Level Plus Liquid over problematic substrates such as flooring grade bitumen, flooring grade asphalt, under-floor heating and heated screeds, direct onto glazed tiles, existing vinyl tiles (excluding LVT), and under DPMs – as part of an ARDEX Group moisture control system. BAL Level Plus gives you a long pot life of 25 minutes and you can be tiling in as little as 2 hours for fast-track project completion.

01782 591100 [www.bal-adhesives.com](http://www.bal-adhesives.com)



# BATHROOM INNOVATION FOR MODERN LIVING

Tom Farrent of Lecico Bathrooms discusses the latest innovations in bathroom design and technology for modern homes, which put the focus on sustainability, performance, and future-proofing.

**A**sk developers what challenges they have, and you'll get familiar answers: legislation, buyer expectations, and rising costs. A major challenge in sustainable design, therefore, is to find the right balance between sustainable procurement decision-making, performance, aesthetics, and spend.

It is also important to ensure that sustainable product and material sourcing is considered in the wider context of sustainability. Sustainable sourcing considers manufacturing location, transportation, quality processes, the environmental impact of production, and product lifecycle. Prioritising sustainably sourced products and materials, produced in world class manufacturing environments, to the highest quality standards, ensures bathroom designs that are built for the long term. Sourcing high quality products, crafted to withstand the test of time, reduces the necessity for frequent replacements – ultimately conserving resources.

## WATER CONSERVATION IN BATHROOMS

Bathrooms are among the most resource-intensive areas in a home, consuming significant volumes of water and energy daily. Part G of the Building Regulations currently limits water usage to 125 litres per person per day in residential buildings, but this is set to change. Proposed revisions aim to lower this to 105 and then 100 litres, with a long-term target of 90 litres over the next 10 years.

This has led to a wide range of technology innovations that help to reduce environmental impacts and appeal to a growing market of eco-conscious and financially constrained buyers.

For developers, meeting future water standards means specifying products that are both efficient and high performing, which is a balance that needs careful consideration. Taps and showers can be fitted with flow restrictors that maintain pressure while cutting water use. Low flow fixtures can be engineered to use less water without compromising performance



too much, resulting in smarter, future-proof choices. Toilets with dual-flush systems now deliver as little as 4 and 2.5 litres per flush (full and reduced flush), a significant reduction in water usage from the old 10 litre models.

Even baths can be engineered to use less, not by diminishing size, but by repositioning the overflow to lower the fill level.

## RECYCLED & RENEWABLE MATERIALS

Sustainability in bathrooms extends much further than water conservation. Material choice plays a critical role in reducing a building's environmental footprint, especially when viewed across the full lifecycle.

Innovations in recycled and renewable materials include shower trays, shower panels, walls and flooring which are manufactured from recycled

plastic bottles, supporting circularity through end-of-life recyclability. These products are backed by Environmental Product Declarations (EPD), which are standardised, third-party verified reports based on a life cycle assessment (LCA), and provide information about resource consumption, emissions, and other environmental considerations.

## SUSTAINABLE SOURCING

Over the last decade, bathroom furniture has become much more common in contemporary design. The practicality of using bathroom furniture for storage is appealing, and modern designs often result in the bathroom furniture becoming a feature point for a luxurious design.

Most bathroom furniture units are manufactured using wood. It's important that specifiers including housebuilders





look for FSC certification, which is provided by the Forest Stewardship Council. FSC is a system that verifies whether forests are managed according to strict environmental, social, and economic standards and ensures that products come from well-managed forests, promoting responsible forestry practices. FSC

certification helps demonstrate responsible sourcing.

#### SOLVING THE DESIGN CHALLENGES

For housebuilders and developers, the challenge lies in crafting bathrooms that combine luxury, functionality, and eco-consciousness, using sustainably

sourced, eco-friendly, high-quality products. With increasing consumer demand for environmentally friendly housing solutions and current and future environmental legislation, embracing sustainability in bathroom design is no longer optional; it's essential.

Bathrooms are a key selling point for buyers, making them an area of strategic importance for developers. A thoughtful and well-designed bathroom elevates the perceived quality of the whole home. When combined with sustainable products and sourcing, the challenge of balancing performance, aesthetics, and spend is comfortably met.

While sustainability still carries a reputation for higher upfront costs, that gap is closing fast. Tax incentives, streamlined specifications, and supplier innovation are shifting the conversation from obstacle to opportunity.

Be sure to spend time researching sustainable product solutions and be careful to check on manufacturers' sustainability credentials. Sustainable product options are available, and good manufacturers and suppliers can greatly assist in the design and specification of sustainable bathrooms.

Tom Farrant is specification director at Lecico Bathrooms

## New acoustic floor systems set to improve residential spaces

**S**aint-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' are set to help meet acoustics targets across both new residential construction and refurbishment schemes.

Aimed at making acoustic floor system specification more straightforward for architects, acousticians, contractors and installers who are designing and delivering residential 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 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.

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](http://www.uk.weber/weberfloor-acoustic-systems)  
[www.cmsdanskin.co.uk/weber](http://www.cmsdanskin.co.uk/weber)



## Latest news, views and more



If you like to be kept informed of all the latest news, views and promotions for the housebuilding community, the **Housebuilder & Developer** newsletters can offer you regular updates straight to your inbox.

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includes top news stories curated by the Housebuilder & Developer editorial team, while the fortnightly Housebuilder & Developer newsletter offers updates on products, services, and events available from a wide variety of manufacturers and suppliers. Accessible via smartphone, tablet or desktop computers, subscribe for free now.

[subscribepage.com/hbd](http://subscribepage.com/hbd)

## Building better homes, with Valspar Trade



For its Loch View development in Glasgow, Nicolson Homes needed a high-quality paint that delivered on coverage, durability and finish. In **Valspar Trade**, the team found a reliable solution that cut down on touch-ups and delivered a standout white in fewer coats. Valspar Trade Tough Matt is specially

formulated for walls and ceilings in high traffic areas, being stain resistant and scrubbable, helping to prevent stains from setting into the surface. Its high opacity and superior covering power ensures excellent application and the perfect finish, while its advanced water-based technology is also quick drying and low spatter.

0344 736 9174 [www.valspartrade.co.uk](http://www.valspartrade.co.uk)

## Elegant Evia from Keller

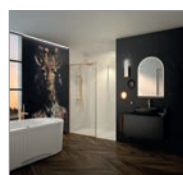


**Keller Kitchens** has expanded the popular Evia Ultra Matt range by adding new colours from the 2025 Master Collection. For the first time, Evia is available in the full palette of Silk, White, Mist, Loam, Clay, Fossil Grey, Graphite, and Carbon. Among these, Fossil Grey is the standout newcomer and

is already a customer favourite. With subtle, nature-inspired undertones, this new-age grey pairs beautifully with a wide spectrum of colours, from soft greige to rich, earthy browns and more. In the Bold Elegance roomset shown, Fossil Grey is paired with bronze full-width handles, complemented by Bronzite fronts on the island and bronze-framed glass cabinets with tinted bronze glass; a stunning mix of modern luxury and warm tones.

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

## New Walk-In Shower Enclosures from Kinedo



**Kinedo** has revamped its range of walk-in showers and added some stunning new options to the range. The Solo range brings together a range of existing products in a variety of sizes with a range of door options, including pivot, bi-fold and sliding, as well as static and kick panels. A stunning new addition to the range is the Solo Design +. A single shower

panel encased in a beautifully slim aluminium thin frame, the Solo Design + is available in five profile colours: white, black, brushed graphite, brushed stainless steel and brushed gold with matching reinforcement bar. The new range of walk-ins are the perfect complement to Kinedo's Kinewall panels and trays – enabling a whole solution to be purchased from Kinedo.

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

## PWS expands the Mornington door family with the new Mornington Beaded Vale

A leading distributor of kitchen and bedroom components, PWS, has announced the expansion of its best-selling Mornington shaker door family to introduce the new Mornington Beaded Vale.



The Mornington Beaded Vale provides a new in-frame effect option for kitchens, ideal for achieving a timeless, traditional look. The Beaded Vale design features an elegant and ornate internal bead, classic for a shaker style, combined with in-frame effect detailing and a distinctive ash grain texture. The result is a high-quality and affordable alternative to an authentic in-frame door.

Available from stock as sanded and in 35 Paint-to-order colours, the Mornington Beaded Vale is also offered in an extended palette of 12 colours from PWS's new Paint Plus Service. Responding to growing demand, PWS announced the expansion of its successful Paint Plus Service – including new colours Copse Green and Fawn – to give customers greater flexibility and value when designing their ideal kitchen.

From the softer tones of Porcelain and Dove Grey to the deeper Regiment and Graphite shades, the service allows customers to order a selection of popular paint colours, for the price of a stocked door family.

Alongside a comprehensive, flexible and extensive choice of stocked products, PWS offers its customers unrivalled commitment to quality, functionality and aesthetic appeal.

01325 505 599  
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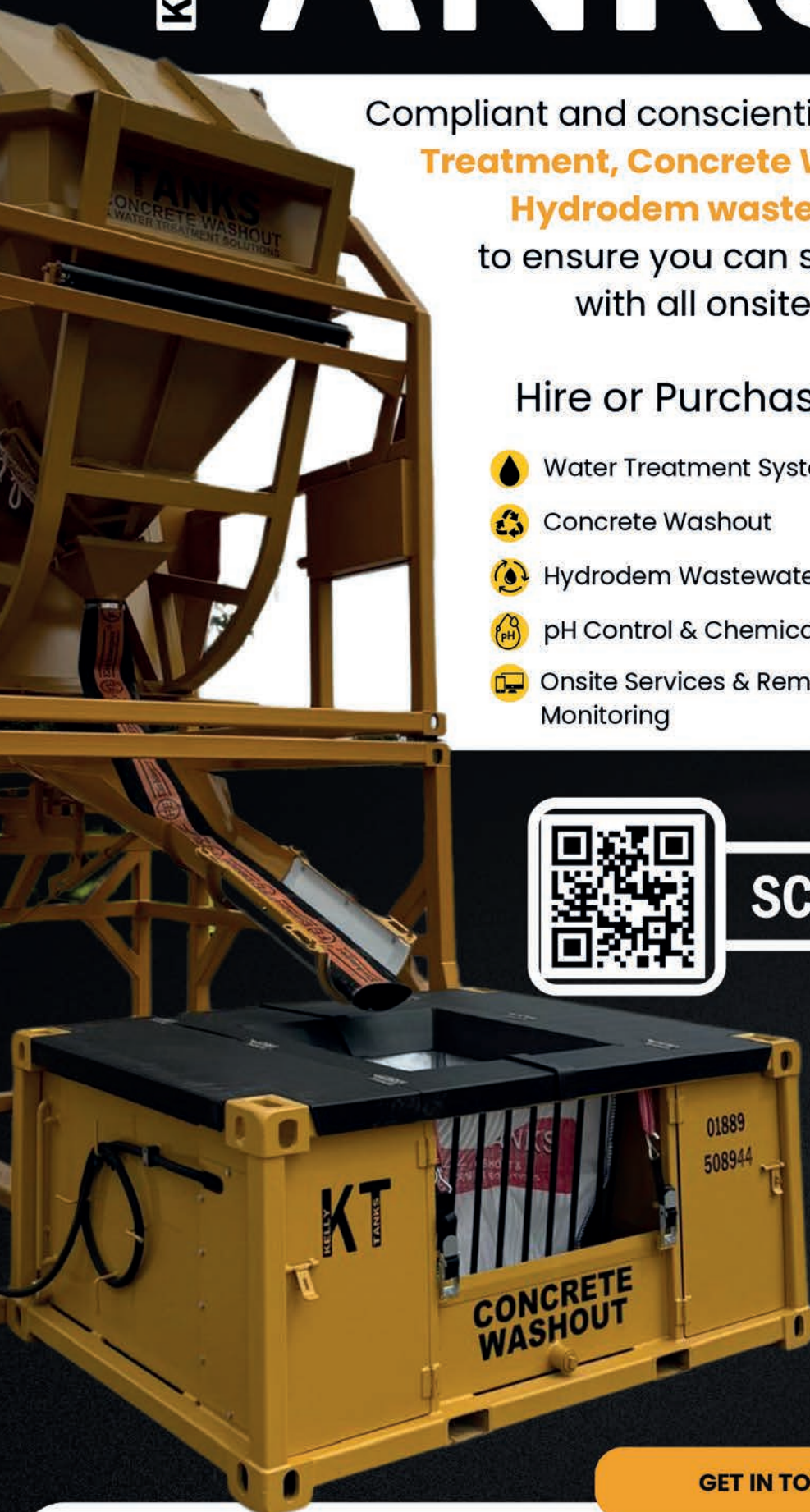
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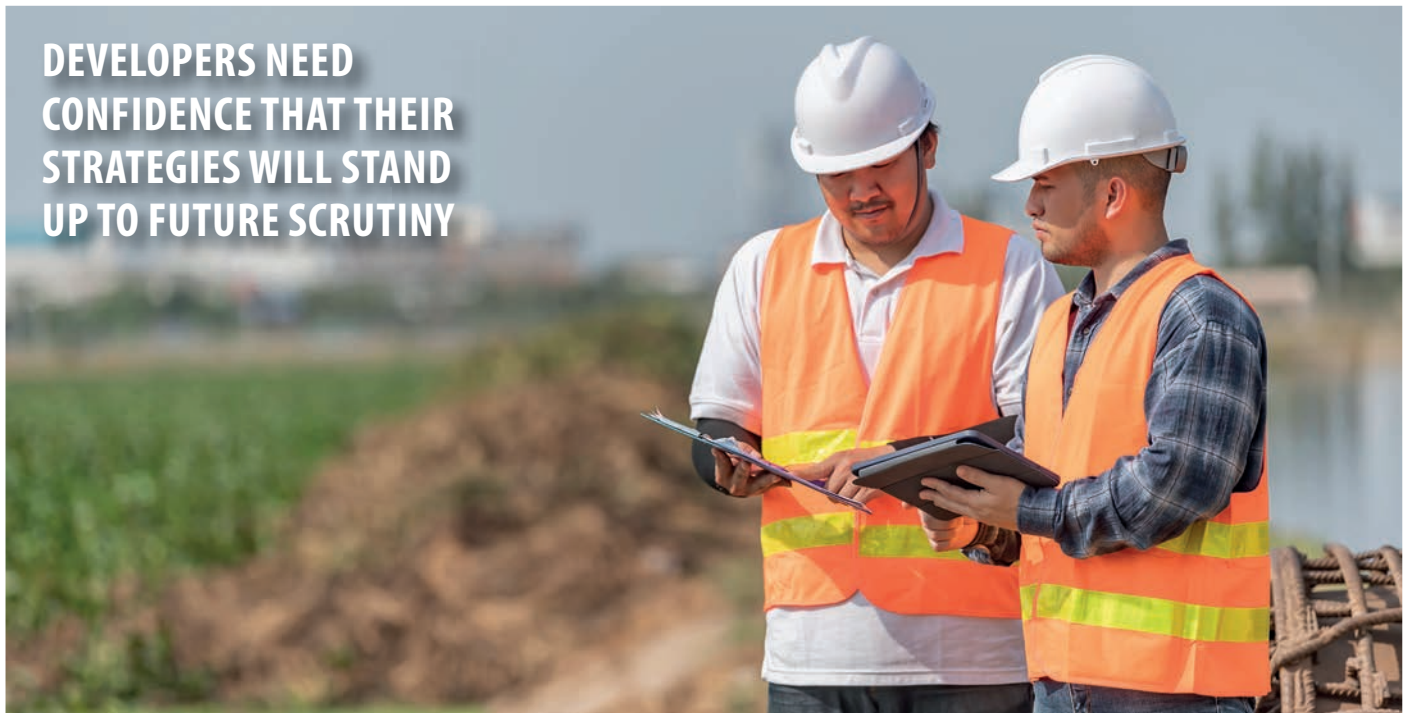
www.kellytanks.co.uk



# SCIENCE & SPATIAL INSIGHT ARE THE KEYS TO LONG-TERM BNG

A data-driven, science-backed approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is helping housebuilders manage regulatory risk and align with long-term sustainability goals, explains Neill Hogg at Fera Science Ltd.

**DEVELOPERS NEED CONFIDENCE THAT THEIR STRATEGIES WILL STAND UP TO FUTURE SCRUTINY**



**A**s the housing sector adapts to the realities of BNG regulation in its first full year of implementation, uncertainty persists.

Concerns remain around the accuracy of biodiversity measurements, the complexity of long-term tracking, and the financial pressures involved in navigating an evolving compliance landscape.

With most new developments currently required to demonstrate at least a 10% improvement in biodiversity, there is growing recognition that scalable, evidence based approaches offer clarity and confidence.

While conceptually aligned with broader sustainability goals, the practical realities of achieving BNG are far from simple.

There's still uncertainty around whether current BNG delivery models will deliver the intended outcomes, especially over a 30-year period.

That uncertainty stems in part from

how the Biodiversity Metric is interpreted, the capacity of local planning authorities to enforce requirements, and decisions around whether to pursue onsite or offsite delivery.

## OFFSITE VS ONSITE

While many developers adopt an onsite first strategy, offsite delivery, such as sourcing biodiversity units externally, offers another route to compliance.

There's a logic to using external providers. These organisations often have more formalised governance and ongoing management practices in place. In areas where planning teams are under-resourced, this external overview may offer greater assurance that BNG obligations will be upheld over time.

That said, onsite schemes remain a core part of many developments, but may face challenges if long-term ecological management is not adequately planned for.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BASELINE DATA

For both delivery approaches, the foundation of any successful BNG plan is an accurate habitat baseline.

Baseline habitat mapping is the first building block in any BNG strategy. Every subsequent decision, from uplift and monitoring to compliance, is derived from that initial assessment.

While traditional field surveys remain essential for ecological due diligence, spatial tools using remote sensing and GIS (geographic information systems) are increasingly being applied at the early land acquisition stage.

These approaches enable developers to conduct rapid, desk-based habitat assessments, often across large or multiple sites, ahead of detailed planning.

One such tool, Fera's LAND360, supports digital habitat mapping that can be integrated into developers' GIS platforms. This doesn't replace traditional methods, but it gives early insight that can



reduce risk, streamline feasibility work, and highlight where further ecological input is needed.

### EARLY PLANNING BENEFITS DESIGN OUTCOMES

For design teams, the implications of BNG extend beyond compliance.

Incorporating biodiversity data into early design workflows enables a more holistic approach to placemaking, helping identify where natural features should be retained, enhanced, or supported through offsite measures.

This supports not just BNG requirements but wider goals, such as community wellbeing, access to nature, and integration with green infrastructure.

These conversations need to happen early in the process. Environmental planning should not be an afterthought; it should be embedded from the outset.

### FUTURE-PROOFING WITH SCIENCE

With the policy environment still evolving, developers and their architectural partners need confidence that their strategies will stand up to future scrutiny.

Using structured baselines and spatial data gives decision makers more certainty. It enables informed trade-offs, supports transparency, and helps demonstrate that biodiversity is being taken seriously.

As tools and metrics develop, the underlying principle remains: BNG must be meaningful and measurable, not just procedural.

We're helping the sector take a practical, scientifically sound approach to delivering environmental value.

### LONG-TERM ASSURANCE THROUGH RESPONSIBLE BODIES

A central pillar of BNG compliance is the requirement to secure biodiversity gains for at least 30 years.

Traditionally achieved through Section 106 agreements, a newer option – conservation covenants – provides a different route. Overseen by designated Responsible Bodies, meaning they can hold and manage legally binding covenants, working with landowners, developers, or conservation groups, to verify and monitor long-term biodiversity outcomes.

This accreditation is about independent oversight, meaning they can sign off management plans, carry out monitoring, and report on compliance. It's an added layer of accountability, and one that helps developers show they are doing things properly.

In practice, this model can help reduce the burden on under-resourced planning authorities while giving

developers greater confidence in their compliance strategy.

### STRATEGIC LAND MAPPING AT SCALE

In 2022, Fera and other partners worked with a leading UK housing developer to pilot a science-led approach to assessing BNG potential across multiple strategic land sites.

The organisation conducted remote, desk-based habitat mapping using GIS and ecological expertise to produce accurate baseline assessments, removing the need for initial onsite surveys at that stage.

These baselines were integrated into the developer's GIS systems, enabling early insight into biodiversity uplift potential across the land portfolio. It helped streamline planning and prioritisation ahead of more detailed site assessments.

The pilot has since informed a wider roll-out across the developer's estate, establishing a scalable model for identifying and managing ecological opportunities.

It's a good example of how early, spatially informed planning can support BNG delivery and reduce uncertainty from the outset.

Neill Hogg is business development manager and natural capital specialist at Fera Science Ltd

## Procheck® A2 membrane delivers speed and performance on Birmingham regeneration project

Occupants of Moda Living's 722-home build-to-rent scheme at Great Charles Street in Birmingham will soon enjoy the thermal comfort benefits of airtight building fabric, thanks to installation of the A. Proctor Group's Procheck® A2 membrane.

As of April 2025, work is well under way by Titan Interior Solutions (part of the Horbury Group) to complete the membrane installation as part of the full internal fit out package on blocks B and C of the project.

### INTERNAL AIRTIGHTNESS LINE PUTS ONUS ON PRODUCT HANDLING AND EASE OF INSTALLATION

The 16-storey block B and the 5/6-storey block C of Great Charles Street both feature a concrete frame with brickwork finish. This is in contrast to the 39-storey block A, which features a facade build-up and is outside the scope of Titan Interior Solutions' work.

The external wall structure of blocks B and C meant the airtightness line was specified internally. That has required the company to install an air and vapour control layer (AVCL) membrane to the internal face of the walls.

The initial specification package included a different AVCL product, which Titan Interior Solutions began to install. However, as Project Manager Matthew Cockayne explained, it quickly became clear that a change needed to

be requested.

"The original product did not provide the best install. We got feedback from the team on site that it wasn't the easiest to cut or handle," said Matthew. "The decision was made to change to the Procheck A2 membrane and the reviews improved immediately. The installers found it better to use and easier to install, which saved us time. From there, we carried on using it."

Procheck A2 is a vapour and airtight membrane. Its composition gives the membrane a high degree of vapour controlling properties, as well as being airtight, which allows its use as an AVCL and helps contribute to the thermal efficiency of the building due to its reflective surface. It is also rated A2-s1,d0 when classified to BS EN 13501-1, meaning it is considered limited combustible with no contribution to fire and can be used in relevant buildings and those over 11 m/18 m.

Better handling and faster installation make a big difference on a large project like Great Charles Street. With an internal airtightness line, installers had to work around a lot of penetrations, including ducts, pipes and brackets. In Matthew's words, that's a "nightmare" because any single penetration could be a source of failure when it comes to airtightness testing. A product that cuts and handles well reduces the potential risks of failure.



### QUALITY CONTROL DELIVERS CONSISTENT PERFORMANCE

Thorough checking of work has also played a significant role in the delivered results.

"We don't want to take finished walls down to address airtightness failures, so the more people who view the completed installation before it is covered up, the better," said Matthew. "Block managers from main contractor Sisk check all the work. We also had a member of the A. Proctor Group technical team visit site, to comment and report on the installation."

The change in product and the approach to quality control has so far paid dividends. Finished apartments that have been airtightness tested have averaged a result of below 2.0 air changes per hour (ACH) at 50 Pascals pressure.

Compare that to the minimum standard of 5.0 ACH required by the Building Regulations, and it gives an indication of the performance and thermal comfort that eventual occupants can expect to enjoy at Great Charles Street.

01250 872 261  
proctorgroup.com/products/procheck-a2





# A LEGACY OF BIODIVERSE GREEN SPACES

In partnership with housebuilders across England and Wales, Meadfleet Open Space Management are protecting the environment and creating a legacy of sustainable developments.

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*All photos taken on Meadfleet managed open spaces.*

  
**Meadfleet**  
OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT



## National Timber Systems launches NTSROOM™ – Integrated floor and roof system for UK housebuilders

National Timber Systems (NTS) has unveiled NTSROOM™ – an integrated floor and roof solution which promises to redefine efficiency, safety, and quality in modern housebuilding.

As the demand for faster, more sustainable construction solutions continues to grow, NTSROOM™ offers developers and housebuilders a comprehensive “Room in Roof” package including the cassette floor, that is factory-built and delivered ready for rapid installation on-site. A pair of semi-detached houses can now be installed in a single day using just one delivery, one crane, and one coordinated install plan.

Part of the NTSROOF® suite alongside NTSROOF® and SUPER-SPAN® NTSROOM™ is backed by BBA third-party certification, providing proven quality, performance, and compliance to developers and specifiers.

Engineered for modern construction challenges, NTSROOM™ replaces high-level steels with a level wall plate start, building up to a fully insulated, weather-tight structure. The system feature pre-drilled holes in the floors for pipes and cables, reducing on-site modifications and installation errors.

Already in use on live sites with regional and national housebuilders, NTSROOM™ supports evolving regulations like Part L and Part O, offering energy-efficient solutions including



cantilevered roofs for shading. Its joist layout ensures exceptional stiffness, shorter spans, and minimal on-site drilling.

Developed around the principles of Simple. Safe. Secure, NTSROOM™ empowers local carpenters to complete installations confidently and quickly. The system includes the ‘Supply with Assist’ support package offering:

- Full installer training
- Detailed RAMS support
- Direct access to NTS experts
- Cost-effective pricing

“NTSROOM is the natural progression for

NTSROOF” said Philip Carney, NTS technical and innovations director.

“NTSROOF has always had a level wallplate with a dwarf wall and a stubbed spandrel, integrating the floor is simple, as it is easily encapsulated in the current solution, growing on our need to do less on site.” As build schedules tighten and sustainability becomes key, NTSROOM™ arrives at the perfect moment for the UK construction industry.

[enquiries@nationaltimbersystems.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nationaltimbersystems.co.uk)  
[www.nationaltimbersystems.co.uk](http://www.nationaltimbersystems.co.uk)



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Target Timber Systems Ltd, 29 High Street, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9PP

## Meadfleet shortlisted in three categories



Meadfleet has been shortlisted in three categories at the 2025 SME National Business Awards:

Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, and Positive Impact. These nominations recognise Meadfleet's dedication to managing open spaces

responsibly, enhancing biodiversity, and engaging communities. For over 30 years, Meadfleet has supported housebuilders by transforming open spaces into safe, attractive, and environmentally rich places to live. From meadow grass planting and pollinator habitats to sustainable drainage, the company places environmental and social responsibility at its core. Managing Director David King credits the team and partners for their ongoing commitment to making a lasting difference across developments nationwide.

[enquiries@meadfleet.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@meadfleet.co.uk) [www.meadfleet.co.uk](http://www.meadfleet.co.uk)

## House Ventilation – Match and Remedy Solutions



Replicating, replacing or continuing a ventilation method or style? Breathable underlays cannot fulfil all construction requirements, and Yeovil-based Cavity Trays Ltd has identified an ongoing need for numerous traditionally-design based ventilators for the building envelope. Cavity Trays can supply ventilation solutions to replicate or continue aesthetically, alterations or extensions to existing buildings. Whether

increasing soffit, fascia or corbel airflow because insulation levels are being upgraded or eliminating substandard levels around complicated roof, dormer and attachment areas. There are over 200 design/colour solutions.

[enquiries@cavitytrays.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cavitytrays.co.uk) [cavitytrays.com](http://cavitytrays.com)

# CRACKING THE CARBON CODE

Stephen Callow of MPA Masonry unpacks a report from the Future Homes Hub which challenges assumptions about timber and masonry's carbon impact and highlights the need for balanced, evidence-led solutions.

**T**he Future Homes Hub (FHH) recently published its report focused on Embodied and Whole-Life-Carbon for new homes. 'Embodied and Whole Life Carbon of Future Homes Standard Options' paints a comprehensive picture of the two most common building materials and their relative carbon impact on dwellings, both up-front and operational.

The report is very fair in its reflection of the data studied, with some reassuring and positive news for the industry as a whole. Comparisons on timber vs. masonry options give a broadly similar outcome, with two significant headlines of: "There is no silver bullet when it comes to reducing embodied carbon of new homes" and materials "having broadly similar upfront and whole-life embodied carbon impacts."

This dispels the long-held perception that timber homes are the low carbon option when looking at fabric choices. This new analysis of the data shows that previous claims of a 20% carbon reduction from building in timber made by the Climate Change Committee can be dispelled. It makes clear that there's no 'timber' bullet for low carbon housing.

## OFFERING GREATER CLARITY

As always, the devil is in the details, and the FHH is keen to point out that the data can always be improved upon, and industry will continue to support this. The MPA is committed to publishing a comprehensive set of EPDs for masonry products, further improving the accuracy of their data.

Much of the modelling done by the FHH is pulled directly from their own LCA tool. Launched in 2024, and updated many times over the last 18 months. The tool has had significant industry support since its inception. The ability to look at any dwelling type and model homes within the conventions of the tool gives the industry a head start in understanding the carbon make up of the properties we build.



Also, as the report makes clear, there are 'low hanging fruit' that the industry can focus on to bring down the embodied carbon of dwellings. Work continues at pace in both the Future Homes Hub and through market suppliers to reduce the carbon impact of materials.

It's important to recognise that this isn't the end of the task. The road to net zero is a long one, and one which all parts of the housebuilding industry will need to focus on for many years to come.

## STEPPING UP THE CHALLENGE

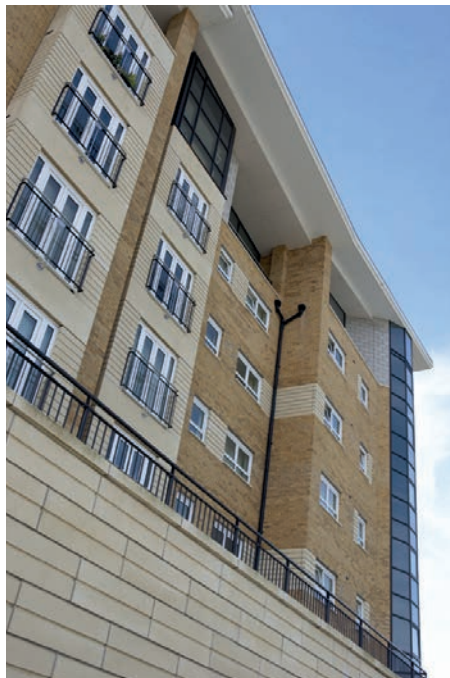
The masonry industry is making significant efforts to reduce the up-front embodied carbon of its products. With renewed interest in Building Regulations

Part Z, up-front carbon is set to become a key metric in the future.

The 'measure first, regulate later' mantra from industry peers such as FeildenCleggBradley Studios' Tim den Dekker (who is, in fact, the co-author of Part Z) is one embraced by the mineral products sector. This is reflected in the sector level EPDs available for other materials within the housing sector, not just masonry products.

The UK concrete industry isn't just measuring, it is acting, achieving a reduction of its direct and indirect carbon emissions by 53% since 1990. This decarbonisation rate, faster than the UK economy as a whole, shows that concrete is playing a vital role in the





UK's energy transition.

Never standing still, we have a robust roadmap that sets out a credible pathway to delivering beyond net zero concrete and cement by 2050. In the masonry vertical specifically, emissions reductions of nearly 50% have been achieved since the early 2010s.

### REAL PRIORITIES

Commentary on housing can be fixated on volume and carbon footprint, but a recent survey carried out by research agency Opinium, and drawn into a comprehensive report by UK Concrete, 'Homes 2025: A National Conversation', showed that the public had other priorities. For example, UK homeowners and renters indicate that fire resilience is a key issue for the public, with 87% saying that having their home constructed from fire-resistant materials is important. While people place a high value on the building materials that make up their homes, only 14% of people received information about the materials their home is made from when they moved in.

Elaine Toogood, senior director at UK Concrete & The Concrete Centre, offers this perspective: "This report underlines the value that people put on the fabric quality and performance of their home to deliver energy efficiency, but also to protect against damp, mould, flooding and fire."

Prospective buyers want to make informed purchasing decisions, and so educating people about the fire safety and climate resilience of the materials used to construct their home should be a requirement for the next generation of housing.

The UK minerals industry is vital to the UK Government's growth missions. Without it, the goal of 1.5 million new homes is unachievable. Concrete is an economically significant and major part of the wider UK mineral products industry, which contributes approximately £8bn GVA to the UK economy. The minerals industry directly employs 80,000 people nationally and underpins a further 3.2m jobs.

Stephen Callow is manager of masonry & concrete products at MPA Masonry

To download the full 'Homes 2025: A National Conversation' report by UK Concrete, scan the QR code below



## What's Smart about burying a Smart Meter?

Smart meters are seen as a significant part of the solution to reducing domestic water usage – showing savings of 12-17%. However, existing infrastructure does not provide the best environment for this new technology.

Experience has shown that the most effective method of installing the advanced metering infrastructure is to locate the meter above ground. The Groundbreaker water management system locates the water meter on the exterior wall of the dwelling, providing a perfect location for high technology meters.

In addition to providing a better environment for the meter, locating the meter above ground has the additional benefits of readability for the consumer, extended signal transmission and easy meter exchange.

Would you put a smartphone in here and expect it to work?



### FUTURE PROOFING THE NETWORK

Developers see the short-term advantage of lower unit costs for traditional boundary boxes, but factoring in installation costs the differential is under £15 per unit.

Then consider the long-term reliability of boundary boxes. The House Builders Federation have determined that 53% of underground installations require re-work, giving an average re-work cost per installed boundary box of approaching £150, and an estimated water loss of 36 m<sup>3</sup>.

By comparison the Groundbreaker System has no recorded re-work costs, where the unit was correctly installed - future proofing the network and minimising the risk of re-work and developing future leaks.

### DESIGNING OUT LEAK PATHS

A leak on a pipe joint upstream of the water meter results unseen water loss.

The unique location of Groundbreaker has the additional benefit of allowing for an unjointed water supply, hence maintaining the integrity of the supply. Recognised as best practice by Water UK and the Home Builders Federation, this minimises the risk of future leakage on the service pipe. So, for future proofing water supply and reducing management costs of water supply, working with developers to install above ground meters is the long-term solution.

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