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See page 20 for details

Building the future with Qvantum's smart approach to low-carbon homes

The Qvantum QE exhaust air heat pump has produced an average of 44% energy savings on projects where it has replaced existing heat pump systems

As the UK moves towards the Future Homes Standard, developers are under growing pressure to choose technologies that meet low-carbon requirements, cut operating costs and support grid stability. Swedish heat pump manufacturer Qvantum has quickly become known for its forward-thinking approach to domestic heating, offering products that combine flexibility, performance and connectivity in a way that makes life easier for housing developers, installers and residents.

At an apartment installation at Liverpool Road in London, monitored performance is delivering an average energy saving of around 44% compared with the heat pump system it replaced. This gives developers clear evidence that Qvantum's approach can support both compliance and meaningful reductions in running costs. Insights from projects like this continue to shape Qvantum's expanding portfolio, which includes exhaust air heat pumps, heat network and ambient loop solutions and monobloc products, all designed around a thermal store, modularity, efficiency and smart digital control.

We spoke with Phil Ord, managing director of Qvantum UK, about the company's direction, its award-winning technology and how its modular approach is helping shape the next generation of heating systems for British homes.

Phil Ord, Managing Director of Qvantum UK

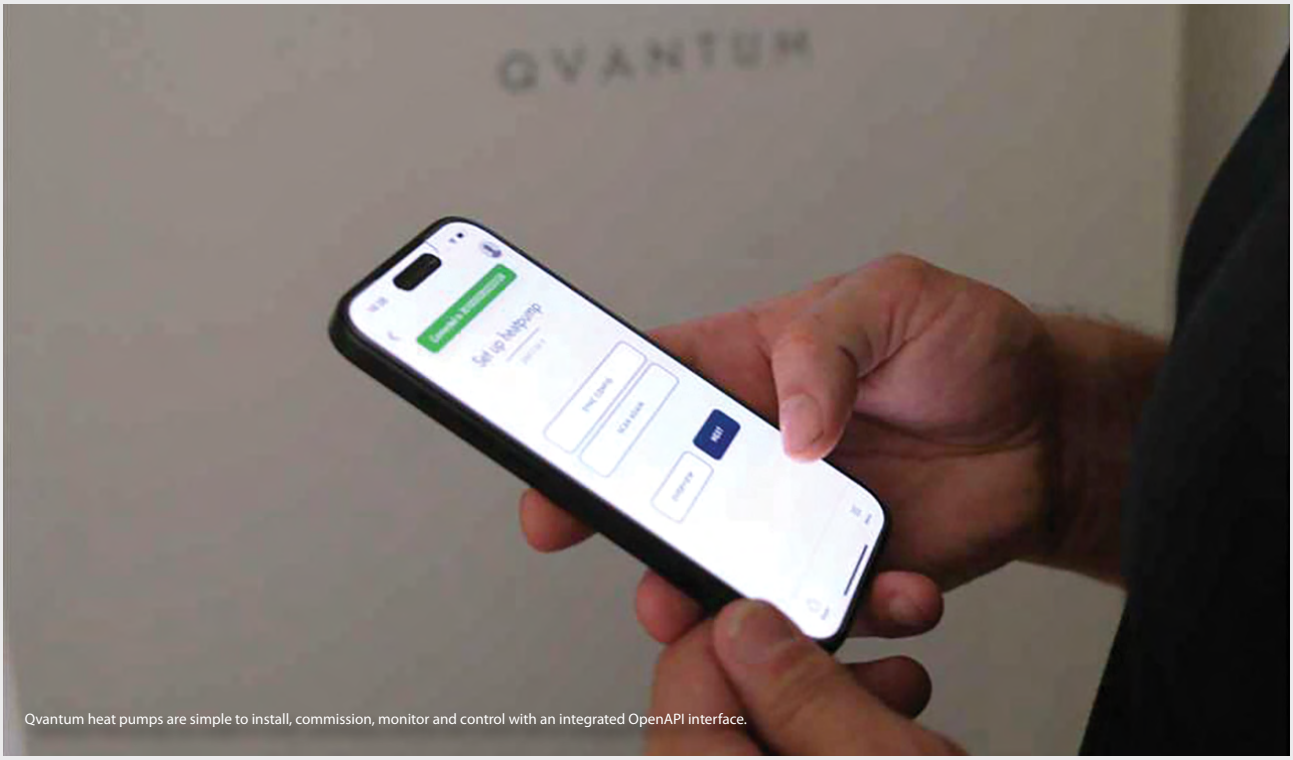
Q: QVANTUM HAS ALREADY MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN THE UK. WHAT IS THE COMPANY'S VISION AND WHAT SETS IT APART FROM OTHER MANUFACTURERS?

Our vision is to change the way we heat our cities and to be part of the solution to society's energy problems. Our products can bring fossil-free heating to every home and by interacting with the grid we can help balance the entire energy system.

These may seem like very ambitious goals, but Qvantum was created to do things differently. We approach energy differently, with thermal batteries in every heat pump, along with technology that maximises existing energy sources such as exhaust air heat pumps and heat pumps for ambient loops. We also manufacture differently with a modular approach that drives down costs and makes installation simpler. And we approach connectivity differently with over- -the-air updates built in from the start of every product.

Q: THE FUTURE HOMES STANDARD (FHS) IS CHANGING THE WAY HOMES ARE DESIGNED AND BUILT. HOW DOES QVANTUM HELP HOUSING DEVELOPERS PREPARE FOR COMPLIANCE?

The FHS will be delivered through updates to existing Building Regulations. In particular:



Qvantum heat pumps are simple to install, commission, monitor and control with an integrated OpenAPI interface.

Part L – Conservation of Fuel and Power, which sets energy efficiency and carbon standards; **Part F – Ventilation**, which governs indoor air quality in increasingly airtight homes; and **Part O – Overheating**, introduced in 2022, requiring new dwellings to be designed for comfort in hotter summers. Qvantum's products have been developed with these regulatory updates in mind, offering technologies that directly support compliance while reducing complexity for developers.

Q: DEVELOPERS FACE THE CHALLENGE OF BALANCING SUSTAINABILITY TARGETS WITH COST AND SPACE LIMITS. HOW DOES QVANTUM'S PRODUCT DESIGN HELP OVERCOME THAT?
We aim to build heat pumps that are affordable and the modular approach we take to manufacturing helps us deliver this. It also makes installation much easier and faster, which reduces the overall cost.

Q: THE QE EXHAUST AIR HEAT PUMP HAS ATTRACTED A LOT OF INTEREST. WHAT ARE ITS MAIN ADVANTAGES FOR HOUSING DEVELOPERS?
Exhaust air heat pumps are an excellent choice for new build housing and are a proven technology across Scandinavia.
The QE exhaust air heat pump is purpose-built for situations where heating and ventilation must be delivered together. By recovering heat from exhaust air, the QE increases efficiency while supplying a constant flow of fresh air, helping projects meet the stricter requirements of Part F. Unlike conventional heat pumps, the QE requires no outdoor unit. Its compact, all-indoor design makes it especially suited to apartments or homes with limited space, eliminating concerns around siting, noise, or defrost cycles.

Q: CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW THE THERMAL BATTERY WORKS AND HOW IT SUPPORTS BOTH HEATING AND HOT WATER?
Every Qvantum heat pump includes a built-in thermal battery that can store up to 12kWh of heat energy and reach temperatures of up to 90°C. This gives households the ability to shift their energy use to times when electricity is cheaper, greener or more plentiful, helping to cut bills and ease pressure on the grid. The system can simply top up the thermal battery during low-cost or low-carbon periods and then draw on that stored heat whenever it is needed. All Qvantum products are flexready®, meaning they are designed to connect seamlessly to automated energy grid systems as they roll out in the coming years.

Q: MANY DEVELOPERS ARE WORKING ON APARTMENT AND OTHER MULTI-RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS. HOW DOES THE QVANTUM MODULAR CONCEPT SUPPORT THESE DESIGNS?
Qvantum also takes a modular design approach, with products sharing around 80% of common components. This makes installation and servicing far simpler. For developers this means quicker, easier installations, while homeowners benefit from faster repairs and greater reliability.

Q: OPEN CONNECTIVITY AND SMART CONTROL SEEM TO BE A BIG PART OF QVANTUM'S RANGE. HOW IMPORTANT IS DIGITAL INTEGRATION FOR YOU AND YOUR PARTNERS?
All Qvantum heat pumps are OpenAPI-enabled, making it possible to connect for remote monitoring, diagnostics and control. It also enables system upgrades and software updates to be delivered without a site visit, ensuring that every system always operates with the latest software available, helping with any adaptations needed in the future. For example, in the last month we've rolled out web-based weather reporting to all units, which means separate weather sensors are no longer needed.

Q: HOW ARE YOU HELPING INSTALLERS TO WORK WITH THE QVANTUM RANGE?
The first way we are supporting installers is by making our products as easy as possible. They are designed to be plug-and-play, using industry standard components, and a competent professional can be trained to install our products in less than half a day. Our commissioning app is incredibly straightforward too.

Q: LOOKING AHEAD, WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE QVANTUM PLAYING IN HELPING THE UK HOUSING SECTOR MOVE TOWARDS NET ZERO?
Currently, heating our homes contributes 18% to the total carbon emissions of this country. We know we need low carbon solutions for all homes, and we are committed to supporting the UK housing sector to make this a reality.

Qvantum's approach combines proven Scandinavian know-how with practical UK application, tackling the twin challenges of compliance and cost while introducing intelligent, flexible heating that is ready for the homes of tomorrow.

For more information on Qvantum products or to arrange CPD training, contact the team at Qvantum UK.

QVANTUM

0330 822 6643 www.qvantum.com/uk

Aico leads national action to tackle damp and mould in UK homes

From October 20-26, home life safety leaders Aico supported the return of Damp & Mould Action and Awareness Week, to unite the housing industry to tackle one of the UK's most pressing housing and health issues.

With the UK Government in 2024 reporting over seven million households affected by damp and mould across the UK, there is a clear need to act against the issue, which costs the NHS an estimated £1.4 billion annually and contributes to a wider £15.4 billion in societal costs.

To raise awareness and drive action, Aico has led the second Damp & Mould Action and Awareness Week, providing support with free resources and guidance. Over 200 individuals signed up to the event, supported by organisations such as AllergyUK, Chartered Institute of Housing, and Trowers & Hamlins.

The first webinar, hosted by Professor John Edwards, director of Edwards Hart, offered a deep dive into the issues of damp, mould, and condensation in housing. Edwards shared practical insights from decades of experience in construction and building pathology, focussing on best practice for surveyors, contractors, and housing providers to reduce risks of these hazards and implement lasting solutions.

"We have got to understand the causes of problems and deal with the causes," said Edwards. "We need to be proactive and undertake preventative actions."

International legal experts from Ashfords provided an overview of the current legal framework, recent case law, and the implications for landlords and housing providers in the second webinar. The session equipped attendees with practical guidance to remain compliant, avoid claims, and safeguard tenant health and safety. With a focus on Awaab's Law, Ashfords shed light on the new statutory requirements and timelines for investigating and remedying health hazards.

In the third webinar, Dave Batsford, regional surveying manager at whg provided a first-hand social landlord perspective. Covering the steps they have taken to improve housing conditions across their portfolio and discuss how they balance tenant wellbeing, legal responsibilities, and financial constraints when addressing damp and mould.

Tony Boyle, regional dsirector at Aico, said: "The response to the first Damp & Mould Action and Awareness Week was fantastic, with huge engagement from housing associations, tenants and policymakers.

"But that was just the beginning. This year, we're aiming to reach even more people, spark more action, and continue making progress towards healthier homes for all.

"With the introduction of Awaab's Law, there will now be a legal mandate to tackle damp and mould with urgency. We want to ensure landlords, tenants and housing professionals have the resources they need to understand their responsibilities and take meaningful action."

Aico's Damp & Mould Action and Awareness Week underscores the company's commitment to improving home life safety and supporting the housing sector in creating healthier living environments. For more information, please visit aico.co.uk/damp-mould-action-and-awareness-week

01691664100 www.aico.co.uk

Hermetic door systems: Key benefits and where they matter most

What are hermetic door systems?

Hermetic door systems, also known as airtight or sealed doors, are precision-engineered to provide an airtight seal when closed. Unlike traditional doors, which may allow the passage of air, dust, and contaminants, hermetic doors are designed to block all external elements from entering or exiting a controlled space. These systems are commonly used in industries and environments where hygiene, safety, or environmental control are critical.

Key benefits of Hermetic door systems

Superior Contamination Control

Hermetic doors are essential in maintaining sterile environments. Their airtight seal helps prevent the ingress of dust, pathogens, and airborne particles. This is particularly vital in cleanrooms, hospitals, and pharmaceutical labs where contamination could compromise safety or product integrity.

Energy Efficiency

These doors improve energy efficiency by minimising air exchange between rooms with differing temperatures or humidity levels. In climate-controlled environments such as cold storage units or laboratories, hermetic doors help maintain stable conditions, reducing the load on HVAC systems.

Improved Sound Insulation

Hermetic sealing significantly reduces sound transmission, making them ideal for areas where noise isolation is important. This feature is especially useful in medical imaging rooms (like MRI suites), broadcasting studios, and testing labs.

Enhanced Fire & Smoke Containment

Many hermetic door systems are designed to be fire-rated, providing an additional layer of protection in the event of a fire. Their ability to contain smoke and flames can help buy time for evacuation and limit damage.

Automatic Operation & Hygiene

Most hermetic door systems are automatic and touch-free, reducing the risk of germ transmission – an increasingly important feature in healthcare and food processing sectors. The smooth, seamless surfaces also make cleaning easy and effective.

Where Hermetic doors are most needed

Hermetic door systems are not just a technical upgrade - they are a necessity in the following sectors:

Healthcare Facilities

Isolation rooms, ICUs, operating theatres, and imaging departments benefit from infection control and pressure management.

Pharmaceutical and Biotechnology Labs

Cleanrooms, production lines, and containment zones require strict control over airborne particles and contamination.

Food and Beverage Industry

Areas such as packaging, refrigerated storage, and processing units benefit from hygienic, climate-controlled separation.

Electronics & Semiconductor Manufacturing

In dust-sensitive environments, hermetic doors help maintain ultra-clean standards and prevent electrostatic interference.

Cold Storage and Logistics

Warehouses and cold rooms rely on efficient sealing to preserve temperature-sensitive goods and reduce energy loss.

GEZE MCRdrive: Precision in Motion

The GEZE MCRdrive is a modular sliding door system for areas of buildings where hermetic air tightness is required.

What makes it special?

GEZE MCRdrive offers a standard-compliant and certified overall system and fulfils the requirements of building projects with modern and appealing design concepts. In addition, thanks to its modular design and uniform profile and sealing system, the GEZE MCRdrive provides configuration options for maximum customisation to customer needs.

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GEZE Wins 'Fire Door Product of the Year' at the National Fenestration Awards

GEZE UK is delighted to announce we have been recognised at the National Fenestration Awards 2025, winning the 'Fire Door Product of the Year' category for our 'Slimdrive EMD-F Powered Swing Door Drive System'.

The awards took place at Doncaster Racecourse on the 25th October 2025 and welcomed the fenestration industries leading companies from across the UK. Founded in 2013 in response to extensive support for an independent and all-inclusive event, the National Fenestration Awards aims to recognise all facets of the UK fenestration industry by inviting everyone to nominate and vote on who they think deserves recognition for a range of categories.

This award highlights GEZE's commitment to delivering innovative, compliant, and intelligent solutions to the door and access control industry.

Kaz Spiewakowski, Managing Director at GEZE UK, said: "I have to say I'm proud that GEZE has achieved success at the National Fenestration Awards 2025, winning the Fire Door Product of the Year Award for our EMD-F Powered Swing Door Drive. We take great pride in this recognition, as it highlights the EMD-F as an industry-leading fire door product."

The GEZE EMD-F is one of our most established powered swing door drives, designed for safety, accessibility, and smart building integration. It has undergone extensive and rigorous testing, including fire testing, to ensure compliance and reliability in a variety of individual fire door applications. Paul Carroll, GEZE UK's Technical Manager, added: "Our commitment to stringent testing provides both GEZE and our customers with confidence in the EMD-F's ability to meet demanding application requirements. It's a testament to the quality, performance, and innovation that underpin all GEZE products."

At GEZE, continuous product development remains at the core of the company's philosophy. The market-leading EMD-F, along with its more powerful family member, the Powerturn F, is multifunctional, intelligent, and networked - designed to meet the evolving needs of modern buildings. These products not only ensure accessibility but also open escape and rescue routes during fire or panic events, allowing controlled access, and robust fire protection.

GEZE's commitment to integration is further strengthened by the availability of KNX and BACnet interface modules and our own building automation system, enabling seamless networking of GEZE products. This ensures precise monitoring and reliable operation of automated doors, windows, and safety technology across the building network.

Andy Howland, Sales & Marketing Director, at GEZE UK concluded: "Once again, GEZE is very proud of this award for the EMD-F Powered Swing Door Drive. It's an acknowledgment of our ongoing drive to exceed industry standards and deliver safe, intelligent, and connected solutions."

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Sprucing-up Offsite

Data shows that timber and timber-based panels have become the fastest-growing categories in contemporary construction, particularly in the offsite and modular niche. Whether it's walls, floors or ceilings, recent, proprietary research we conducted showed these products are predicted to make up a massive proportion of the materials used in a market forecast to grow to £1.2bn by 2028. European-sourced plywood is particularly popular, and demand is only set to increase as the use of MMC for residential becomes more prolific.

However, as the last three years have shown, not all plywood is manufactured equal, with counterfeit, poor-quality or embargoed panel products flooding the market in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war and other geopolitical issues. Indeed, accusations of sub-standard units have also been a recent sore point within the modular sector with a number of high-profile developments called out over their structural integrity. Both situations have seriously dented investor, trade, and customer confidence.

Fortunately, these twin issues can be addressed by working with responsible, ethical supply chain partners dedicated to the combined values of safety, security, and sustainability. UPM WISA is one such brand, and its WISA-Spruce Special, a catalyst for a global renaissance in plywood is set to support another for offsite construction.

Sourced and made from responsibly managed, sustainable forests in Finland, WISA-Spruce Special is on a mission to set a new standard within the timber panels market. Its reputation as a high-spec, yet competitively priced product, is an instant mark of quality in any build in which it's used.

It's looking to develop this further for the Offsite sector, working in collaboration with James Latham to showcase its unique attributes and why we're one of their key distributors in the UK and Ireland.

So what makes WISA-Spruce Special so well-suited to offsite construction? Let's take a look…

- Structurally robust, suitable for load-bearing applications
- Dimensionally consistent, providing all-important repeatability in an offsite manufacturing process
- Possesses up-to-date EPDs and certification from globally recognised sustainable and responsible forest management certification schemes, supporting developers looking to achieve much-coveted certifications like LEED and BREEAM for projects.
- Ultra-sustainable through use of WISA® BioBond adhesive; replacing 50% of standard glue's fossil-based phenol with lignin, timber's inherent bonding agent reduces the overall carbon footprint by approximately 10%, without compromising technical performance or visual appeal.

Housebuilders and developers also need to know they can rely on there being healthy stock levels, especially for large-scale developments.

Well, we've got you covered, with WISA-Spruce Special available nationwide throughout our 12 strategically-located depot, plus a direct-from-port option for bulk loads, and dedicated technical experts to advise on almost any requirement, regardless of scale and scope.

And, with the ability to call off large quantities at short notice, you'll achieve the all-important peace of mind you can keep your lines running to deliver on short-lead demand increases.

That's not all, it's also available from James Latham in a Euroclass B FR variant, Wisa Spruce FR.

As you can see, when you order WISA-Spruce Special through James Latham, you get the full package, from great product through to great customer service, wherever, whenever.

At a time when the modular housebuilding sector is still facing scrutiny regarding quality control issues, knowing you're working with a panel that ticks all the compliance boxes provides essential peace of mind. Not only that, it will give clients, investors, shareholders, and occupants assurance you are dedicated to delivering safe, secure, and sustainable buildings.

Ultimately, WISA-Spruce Special is a product that adds value at every level, setting a new standard for sustainable plywood and supporting a new golden age of MMC for residential projects.

To find out more about purchasing WISA-Spruce Special through James Latham, please visit the website.

marketing@lathams.co.uk
www.lathamtimber.co.uk/products/panels/plywood/softwood-plywood/wisa-spruce-special

The Critical Role of Professional Indemnity Insurance in Below-Ground Waterproofing

With the Building Safety Act fundamentally transforming professional accountability, Professional Indemnity insurance in waterproofing has become even more essential, given the emphasis on the responsibilities of the dutyholders involved.

For specifiers navigating increasingly complex regulatory requirements, understanding the critical intersection between PI cover, professional competence, and waterproofing design has never been more vital.

The New Professional Liability Landscape

The Building Safety Act represents the most significant regulatory shift in construction since the 1980s, potentially positioning specifiers as the 'principal designer' dutyholders responsible for material compliance throughout a building's lifecycle.

This expanded accountability framework means waterproofing failures can expose specifiers to substantial financial risk.

The Act's competence requirements demand that specifiers either demonstrate specialist expertise or appoint suitably qualified organisations. Where waterproofing falls outside proven competence or PI cover scope, professional responsibility mandates the engagement of a specialist.

The emphasis on the 'Golden Thread of Information' – comprehensive digital records maintained throughout a building's lifecycle – further underscores the importance of documented competence and appropriate insurance coverage.

Understanding Financial Exposure

Waterproofing failures represent one of the highest-risk scenarios in construction. Unlike many building defects that present primarily aesthetic issues, water ingress can compromise structural integrity, create health hazards, and necessitate extensive and expensive remedial work, often requiring temporary relocation of occupants.

The financial implications extend far beyond immediate repair costs. Business interruption claims, consequential losses, and potential litigation can accumulate rapidly, with some waterproofing failures generating claims running into hundreds of thousands of pounds.

The Building Safety Act's lifecycle approach means even defects that emerge years after initial construction can potentially trigger claims, long after project completion.

Compliance with British Standards

Compliance with British Standards represents another critical dimension of professional liability in waterproofing. The Building Safety Act reinforces the importance of adherence to established standards, creating clear accountability for specifiers who deviate from recognised best practice without adequate justification.

Current British Standards for waterproofing, including BS 8102:2022 for protection of below-ground structures against water ingress, provide detailed guidance on design principles, material selection, and installation requirements. Specifiers who fail to adhere to these standards, or who specify non-compliant products, face increased liability exposure.

The Strategic Value of Specialist Partnership

Given these challenges, partnering with specialist waterproofing companies that carry comprehensive PI insurance represents a strategic approach to risk management. Newton Waterproofing, with over two decades of continuous PI cover specifically for waterproofing design, enables specifiers to transfer design responsibility to an organisation with proven competence and appropriate insurance coverage.

Newton's comprehensive approach includes expert support throughout the specification process, from as early as Stage 0 of the RIBA Plan of Work. All relevant products also undergo independent third-party verification to ensure compliance with relevant British Standards and Building Safety Act requirements, providing documented evidence of regulatory adherence.

With over 175 years' of history, and decades of experience between their industry-qualified experts, Newton offers bespoke waterproofing design services backed by comprehensive PI policies.

Ensuring Professional Protection

For specifiers serious about managing professional risk while delivering superior outcomes, the combination of appropriate PI insurance and specialist partnership represents the gold standard in contemporary waterproofing specification. This approach ensures compliance with Building Safety Act requirements and provides robust protection for both the specifier and the client.

01732 496 510 newtonwaterproofing.co.uk

EJOT UK extends specifier support with NBS Source partnership

Leading construction fastening solutions manufacturer EJOT UK has strengthened its support for architects, engineers and specifiers by partnering with NBS Source, further improving online access to the digital information on its core anchoring and flat roofing products.

EJOT's decision to become an NBS Source Partner has been driven by the growing pace of digital transformation within the construction sector, coupled with the strategic and objective evolution of the platform in recent years. These factors support EJOT's broader strategy to integrate digitalisation efficiently throughout the building design and specification process.

It adds a further dimension to how the company provides access to its library of products, many of which are already supported by detailed technical datasheets, installation guidance and third party certification such as European Technical Assessments (ETAs), as well as from internationally recognised bodies including FM Approvals.

Within the EJOT product range now available on NBS Source are the majority of its concrete screws, through-bolts, resin anchors and heavy duty mechanical anchors. These include its LIEBIG Safety Bolt and Superplus BLS anchors, which are renowned globally due to their excellent performance characteristics and modular design that overcomes many of the common challenges associated with post install anchoring in concrete and hard base materials.

Several of EJOT's most specified flat roofing fastening solutions are also listed on the platform. These include the EJOT HTK 2G tube-washer with TKR fastener combination, an FM Approved thermally-broken fixing for roof membranes and insulating materials to steel and timber substructures, and the EJOT JBS-R and EcoTek adjustable tube-washer combination for fixing tapered insulation to concrete roof decks.

EJOT's fastening systems and products are regularly deployed in safety critical applications where accurate information, certification and test data has always been vital to inform and support decisions at the specification stage.

01977 687040
www.ejot.co.uk

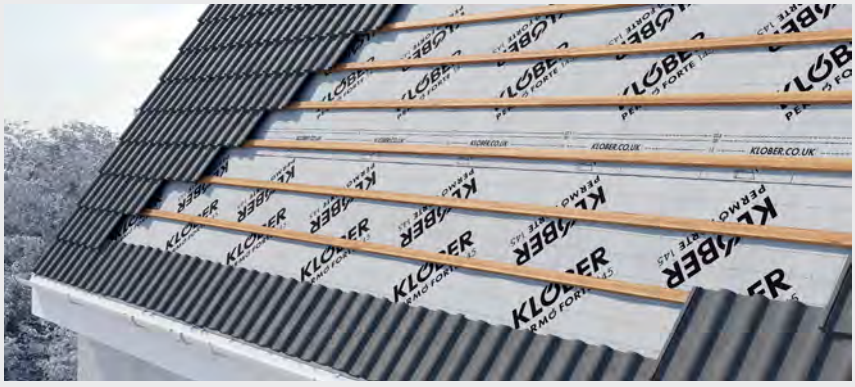
Klober marks 25 years of pioneering vapour permeable membrane

Leading manufacturer of roofing accessories, Klober, is celebrating 25 years of its Permo Forte 145 underlay, one of the first vapour permeable membranes to transform the UK roofing market.

When launched back in the late 1990s, this type of vapour permeable membrane represented a turning point in roofing design. Permo Forte offered a breathable alternative to traditional bitumen felts, helping contractors tackle widespread condensation issues that had long affected roof performance and building longevity.

Permo Forte 145 was BBA certified as a vapour permeable (Low Resistance) membrane as early as 2000. At a time when the market for this new technology was still in its infancy, this was a huge milestone, offering a certified solution designed to help let harmful water vapour escape from the roof.

The pioneering technology includes a grid-reinforced, four-layer vapour permeable membrane, which gives it increased tensile strength to reduce the risk of accidental damage and nail tears. The membrane's Low Resistance (LR) design also aids the ventilation process by allowing moisture to escape from roofspaces while preventing external water ingress.



Its technical strength has underpinned its long-standing success, especially trusted for high-stakes restorations. The Church of All Saints in Winterton was a project of significant importance, with the Grade-1 listed building undergoing extensive, lottery-funded repairs. With a strong industry reputation, Permo Forte was specified for the project to provide a reliable and durable solution.

Nick King, portfolio manager at Klober, said: "A heritage of invention, quality, and reliability has been the foundation of Permo Forte 145's reputation and longevity. Originally designed to help tackle condensation, its strength and breathability also provide increased energy efficiency and strong wind protection, making it an ideal choice for roofing in the UK."

Suitable for cold and warm roofs, the Permo Forte 145 underlay is BBA approved. Additionally, all products supplied by Klober are covered by a 10-year guarantee against manufacturing defects.

01332 813 050
klober.co.uk/membranes/roof-membranes/p/forte-145

Protecting schools, saving budgets: Yeoman Shield keeps learning environments smart and safe

Schools face constant wear and tear—busy corridors, stairwells and breakout areas see hundreds of pupils, staff and equipment moving daily. This can lead to scuffed walls, damaged corners and escalating maintenance costs. Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School in Kingstanding turned to Yeoman Shield to protect their interiors and reduce ongoing repair expenses.

Head Teacher Robert Swanwick selected Yeoman Shield after reviewing product samples and exploring options for a long-term, cost-effective solution. Yeoman Shield's directly employed installation specialists fitted FalmouthEx Wall Protection Panels at 1250 mm high throughout corridors, dining areas and staircases. Where needed, brickwork was professionally boarded-out to create a smooth, high-quality finish. Dusty Grey panels complemented existing artwork while providing durable, impact-resistant protection.

To enhance safety and durability, the project included corner protection, robust 110 mm White PVCu skirting with a solid timber core, and handrails. While the original 50 mm Dia. Guardian Handrail is no longer offered, Yeoman Shield now offers a new, improved version designed for enhanced durability and safety. Together, these elements create a complete interior protection system tailored for busy school environments.

All Yeoman Shield products are manufactured from rigid PVCu, making them easy to clean, resistant to commercial cleaners, and impervious to bacteria or mould—helping schools maintain hygiene and appearance with minimal effort. By eliminating constant repainting and repairs, schools can redirect budgets towards teaching and learning.

In addition to wall, door, corner and skirting protection, Yeoman Shield provides Fire Door Services, including installation, inspection, maintenance and management and fire door protection ensuring compliance with safety regulations while protecting building interiors.

Mr Swanwick praised the results: "The quality is exceptional. Six months on, there's no sign of wear, and the installation teams were professional, efficient and understood the realities of working in a school. I am a very happy customer."

Yeoman Shield delivers complete interior protection and Fire Door solutions, backed by a nationwide installation service trusted by schools across the UK.

0113 279 5854 www.yeomanshield.com

Advanced's fire protection installed in Canterbury Student Village

Fire protection solutions manufacturer, Advanced, has supplied intelligent fire panels to student accommodation in Kent to replace existing panels, as part of a £3.5m project to improve fire safety at Cloud Student Homes' Canterbury Student Village sites.

Cloud Student Homes provides students with comfortable, convenient accommodation, with 17 different types of rooms available at the Canterbury Student Village, which is easily accessible to three universities, Canterbury Christchurch, University of Kent and UCA, as well as Canterbury College. With fire safety a priority, it was vital to replace the existing fire alarm system in Kentish House, Behn Hall and Tallis Court. However, as the buildings were occupied, the challenge for the project was to keep the existing fire system working while the Advanced panels were being installed to ensure occupants were protected at all times. Advanced's high-performance, fault-tolerant

MxPro 5 analogue addressable panels were chosen to provide industry-leading protection to category L 1 for the student accommodation suites, bedrooms, high-risk areas and plant rooms within two blocks of Kentish House, two blocks of Behn Hall, and Tallis Court.

Fire engineering consultants, Endeavour Group selected fire safety specialists CSS Ltd as the contractors on the Canterbury Student Village fire alarm replacement project. CSS Ltd was responsible for the design, supply, install and handover of the project. The company installed five MxPro 5 4-loop fire panels which were networked and connected to the ARC for fire and rescue monitoring. All devices are Hochiki with input/output units connected to the existing AOV units throughout. The networked fire system had to integrate with the access control, lift and AOV systems. Endeavour Group reviewed the product design and functionality of the fire system package on the project to ensure it met the client's needs.

The Advanced MxPro 5 has a number of features that CSS Ltd finds particularly useful when it comes to installing the fire panel. These include a built-in multimeter which, measures all voltages and currents across the fire system in real time, to speed up the commissioning process. Meanwhile, the MxPro 5 panels come in four and eight loop formats to suit CSS Ltd's needs and customers' budgets.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

Freefoam Cork plant now powered by 100% renewable energy

Freefoam Building Products is proud to announce that its Cork manufacturing facility is now operating entirely on renewable energy. This milestone marks a significant achievement in Freefoam's five-year Sustainability Plan, launched earlier this year, and reinforces the company's commitment to environmental responsibility.

The Cork plant, which runs 24/7 producing long lasting building products, now sources its electricity from a mix of resources including some solar and wind energy. Kevin Cronin, chief operating officer, commented: "Freefoam has set clear and ambitious sustainability targets. Transitioning to renewable electricity is a major step toward reducing our carbon emissions and building a more sustainable future."

This initiative is part of a broader strategy to embed sustainable business practices across Freefoam's operations. Dedicated energy teams at each site are actively exploring ways to improve efficiency and reduce energy consumption. "This change is something all businesses can take on," Kevin added. "We believe it's the right choice and one that quantifiably reduces our greenhouse gas emissions."

With numerous projects underway, Freefoam is accelerating its circular economy activities. "We're on a journey," Kevin concluded. "Our aim is to put reduce, re-use, and recycle at the heart of everything we do."

This move positions Freefoam as a future-fit organisation and a responsible partner for customers seeking sustainable solutions.

01604 591110
www.freefoam.com

Targeted fire alerts with ESPA paging: A smarter safety solution for Southampton

The University of Southampton, a multi-campus estate with a leading research institution, has recently enhanced its fire safety provision for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals through a pioneering paging system installation.

Advanced's MxPro 5 fire panels, integrated with the ESPA Pager Interface, form the core of the new solution delivered by Premier Fire Security and Scope Communications, providing targeted alerts and improved accessibility across the university.

With over 200 Advanced panels deployed across the site, including two networks of 30–40 nodes and a growing number of extinguishing panels, the university required a solution that could deliver precise, location-specific fire alerts to individuals without relying on traditional audio alarms. The ESPA 4.4.4-compliant Pager Interface from Advanced provided the ideal bridge between the fire detection system and Scope's PageTek Pro Mk2 transmitter and EPOCBLUM pagers. The system is configured so that each building or group of buildings triggers a distinct pager address. This ensures that only relevant alerts reach the end user, reducing confusion and improving response times. Users can manually program their pagers to activate or deactivate specific locations, with password protection for added security. For nighttime safety, Scope's pillow pad and nightstand accessories ensure that alerts are received even while users are asleep.

The installation also includes a dedicated paging group for engineers, janitors, security, and fire marshals, who receive diagnostic and fault messages from the Advanced network. This group can also trigger fire messages for specific locations, enhancing operational control and coordination.

Rob Baker, Head of Technical Support at Scope Communications, said: "This project demonstrates how powerful the ESPA interface can be when paired with our paging technology. The system ensures that alerts are both accurate and accessible, and we're proud to support Premier Fire Security in expanding this solution across the university."

The long-term vision is to roll out the paging system to all student halls, allowing pagers to be reconfigured for use anywhere on campus. This approach not only improves safety but streamlines inventory and reduces costs.

0345 894 7000 www.advancedco.com

NEWS FEATURE

Getting it right when tanking a wetroom

Nick Bratt, national technical sales manager for tile adhesive manufacturer Palace Chemicals, outlines the importance of the correct use of materials and good practice, as defined in the relevant British Standards, when it comes to tanking a bathroom or wetroom.

With the continuing growth in popularity of wetrooms, we are seeing a corresponding increase in incidents where the installation has not been satisfactory, and often this is caused by water or moisture getting into the substrate behind the tiles. These issues are very difficult to solve post-installation but can be easily prevented at the design stage by following the guidance contained within the British Standard relating to tiling.

BS 5385-1 2018 states that for all new or refurbished properties, a proprietary tanking system should be used. BS 5385-3, concerning floor tiling, was updated in 2024. One of the key amendments is for direct tiling on to plywood and other wood-based sheets or boards, an intermediate layer, such as an uncoupling membrane, reinforced tanking system or tile backer board should be used, providing the plywood is rigid and stable enough to carry the expected in service load. The new standard also states that timber is not recommended as a suitable substrate for floor tiling in wet, frequently damp, or high humidity areas. For wetroom floors, they should be laid to falls with gradients of between 180° and 135° to ensure that the water flows towards the drain, taking note that a gradient any greater than 135° is unsuitable and possibly dangerous. This requirement impacts on the design of wetrooms in particular since they are subject to repeated and persistent wetting, and a suitable proprietary tanking system should be used prior to tiling. This should be laid continuously around upstands and points where services pass through the floor, to create a seamless seal, so that there is no risk of water leaking through to the substrate.

If using other intermediate substrates, such as moisture resistant boards, the manufacturer's technical data and/or the manufacturer itself should always be consulted, as these would usually state that a tanking system should be used. The recent updated release from NHBC has sparked some controversy due to the wording around flow rates of a shower and moisture resistant boards, as these contravene the British Standards guidance for tanking.

For walls which surround a bath where a shower is not fitted then the substrate should be suitable for the application and moisture resistant.

It is important to recognise that water resistant adhesives and grouts are designed to allow water to pass through them without them breaking down, hence 'water resistant', but are not a substitute for a waterproof tanking system, as clearly stated in BS 5385 Part 4.

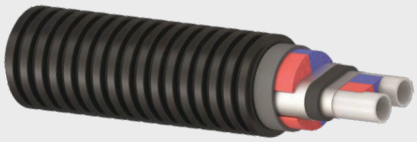
If in doubt, tank it out! That way, any and every project that has wet, frequently damp, or high humidity areas will always have the added insurance policy that there will not be any leaks!

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

New Uponor Ecoflex Thermo VIP pipes

GF have introduced the next generation of Uponor Ecoflex VIP pipes which marks a major step forward for medium-to-large local heat network infrastructure. The launch announces a new range of highly efficient, flexible, pre-insulated heat distribution pipes, specifically engineered for local and district heating networks where a reduced outer pipe diameter is critical – enabling faster installation, improved handling and lower environmental impact.

The new portfolio includes Ecoflex VIP Thermo Twin 2.0 and Single pipes up to 140 mm all with exceptional thermal performance. The VIP Thermo twin 2.0 offers an ultra-compact, flexible outer diameter and this smaller footprint significantly reduces heat loss while also shortening installation times compared to steel pipes and traditional flexible pipes insulated with hard foam.



GF's expanded pre-insulated pipe now includes Ecoflex VIP Thermal up to 140 mm diameter, designed to meet rising demand for medium-to-large scale local heating and cooling networks. Featuring a best-in-class insulation lambda value of 0.004 W/mK, the vacuum-insulated panel (VIP) layer delivers minimal energy loss, helping operators unlock greater long-term efficiency and sustainability.

The Ecoflex VIP system is completed by a comprehensive accessory ecosystem for heating, cooling, and domestic hot water distribution, built to ensure high safety, durability and reliability. Longer coil lengths and fewer required joints further increase network resilience by reducing potential weak points during installation.

To support design and specification, Uponor also provides extensive engineering services, including expert network planning assistance, product training, and on-site technical support. BIM data is readily available through the Uponor BIM platform, streamlining digital workflow integration for contractors and consultants. Key features of the new generation Ecoflex VIP range:

- Uponor Ecoflex VIP Thermo Single from 40 mm to 140 mm diameter
- Uponor Ecoflex VIP Thermo Twin from 2 × 25 mm to 2 × 75 mm
- More compact and flexible design for improved handling
- Outstanding heat loss performance with low U-values
- VIP insulation with a low Lambda value of 0.004 W/mK
- Longer coil lengths and reduced need for joints for more reliable installation
- Durable construction combining high-density polyethylene (HDPE) corrugated outer jacket with cross-linked PE-Xa service pipes with Oxygen barrier
- Versatile application for both local and district heating or cooling networks

01923 381212 www.uponor.com

greenteQ cylinder guarantees peace of mind

Sales of greenteQ Orion 3 Star profile cylinders continue to rise, according to hardware supplier VBH.

As a TS007 Kitemark 3 Star rated cylinder, Orion is the top-level profile cylinder in the greenteQ range, which also includes the entry level 6 pin Gamma, and TS007 1 Star Q-Star products. All greenteQ cylinders are supplied with a full 10-year performance guarantee.

Orion is available in nickel, brass, key/key, and thumb turn variants, all of which can be keyed alike for multi-door installations. As well as its independently verified resistance to attack, Orion includes a number of additional features that VBH says are particularly well received by the general public.

When the homeowner receives their new door or buys an Orion to replace an existing cylinder, they immediately see that each Orion product is supplied with five keys as standard, which should be ample for the average household.

When they read the information card that is provided with the keys, the homeowner will find details of the proteQ10 anti-snap guarantee and this is, perhaps, what really grabs their attention.

Gary Gleeson of VBH advises: "proteQ10 is a simple concept. We guarantee that Orion will not allow a successful break in due to snapping in situ and removal for the course of the 10-year guarantee. If this happens, we will pay the registered homeowner £2,000.

The door manufacturer or installer do not get involved in any registrations, claims, or additional key cutting. Orion's info card tells the homeowner how to register for their guarantees online and even provides a QR code to take them directly to the registration page. Additional keys can be ordered by the end user directly from any of VBH's online approved proteQ10 key partners."

Gary advises that at the time of writing, VBH have received approaching 40,000 registrations. "From the quantity of registrations that we receive we can clearly see that the peace of mind that our 10-year performance and anti-snap guarantees provide are important to end-users."

To find out more about greenteQ Orion 3 Star profile cylinders or any other hardware in the VBH range, call or email VBH.

01634 263263 sales@vbhgb.com

Vortice launches the "Fan For Life" – A game-changing Awaab's Law solution for social housing ventilation

Vortice is proud to announce the launch of the VORTICE F4L, also known as the "Fan For Life", a revolutionary new ventilation system designed not only to improve long-term health but also to serve as a solution to Awaab's Law complaints. The "Fan For Life" prioritises prevention over cure when tackling damp and mould issues in the social housing sector. Vortice firmly believes that it is more important than ever to be proactive rather than reactive when it comes to persistent social housing issues. Awaab's Law – a brand-new piece of social housing legislation – ensures that landlords must respond to health and safety hazards like damp and mould within 24 hours. The "Fan For Life" is designed to prevent those health and safety hazards at the root cause.

The VORTICE F4L boasts an industry-leading 10-year parts warranty, with unrivalled performance and a modular design that makes it flexible for a wide range of housing situations. The "Fan For Life" sets a new benchmark for improving indoor air quality, reducing maintenance costs, and delivering a state-of-the-art, robust ventilation strategy. The aim is not to merely keep damp and mould at bay, it is to eliminate the issue for good, keeping residents healthy while also empowering housing associations and local authorities to futureproof their housing stock.

The modern retrofit market comes with a unique set of new challenges, and the "Fan For Life" has been specifically designed to tackle those problems head-on. Thanks to the VORTICE F4L, housing associations, local authorities, and contractors will no longer have to spend valuable time, money, and resources on full replacement fans. As the name suggests, once the "Fan For Life" is installed, you will never need to fit another fan ever again. All modular components can be swapped in a matter of seconds without the need for an electrician, allowing you to maintain a high level of performance without disrupting occupants or shelling out for repeat labour costs.

"FAN FOR LIFE" LEADS THE FIGHT AGAINST £8.8 BILLION PROBLEM

Social housing providers are facing unprecedented financial pressures, with a record £8.8 billion spent on repairs and maintenance in 2024. This represents a 13% increase from the previous year and 55% higher than pre-pandemic levels in 2020.

At the same time, the UK is grappling with a skills shortage in the housing and construction sector, with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) forecasting a need for an additional 252,000 skilled workers by 2028, making it increasingly difficult for housing providers to find qualified professionals.

Recognising this challenge, Vortice has engineered the "Fan For Life" to negate the need for electricians when replacing the fan or its components. This innovative design not only reduces reliance on skilled trades but also ensures that maintenance can be carried out quickly and cost-effectively, easing the burden on housing providers.

KEY FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF THE VORTICE 4FL

Awaab Law Solution: Social housing landlords must respond to health and safety hazards like damp and mould within 24 hours under new laws. The "Fan For Life" is designed as a proactive,

preventative measure to stop damp and mould from ever appearing.

Modular Design: Simply replace the components instead of the entire fan, all without the need for an electrician. This saves on time, money, and pressure on maintenance departments.

10-Year Parts Warranty: The longest warranty on the market. The "Fan For Life" is specifically designed with reliability in mind. Once installed, you won't ever need a replacement.

Unrivalled Performance: The "Fan For Life" is the highest-performing fan in its category, exceeding Building Regulations Part F and Part L requirements for social housing stock.

Integrated Data Tracking: Built-in smart tracking system allows housing providers to easily retrieve up to 23 data parameters via USB, ensuring compliance and protecting against disrepair claims.

Energy Efficiency: Fully adjustable settings ensure precise airflow, reducing energy consumption and running costs for tenants.

Versatility: Suitable for wall, window, and ceiling applications, with both IPX4 and SELV options available.

Paul Harrington, social housing sales director at Vortice said: "The 'Fan For Life' is more than just a ventilation product; it's a long-term strategy for social housing providers. Awaab's Law is an important piece of new legislation, but we believe some social housing landlords are approaching the issue of damp and mould from the wrong angle. The 'Fan For Life' focuses on proactive prevention rather than reactive cures. Instead of aiming to get rid of damp and mould once it appears, the VORTICE F4L prevents it from appearing in the first place. This not only improves occupant health but also helps avoid costly and time-sensitive complaints for landlords under Awaab's Law.

"We have also designed the 'Fan For Life' to address one of the biggest challenges facing the housing sector today: the skills shortage. There are fewer qualified tradespeople available than ever before, so we wanted to create a product that simplifies maintenance and reduces reliance on electricians. The modular design means components can be swapped in seconds, saving time, money, and resources.

"As someone who has spent over 25 years working in residential ventilation, I've seen first-hand the challenges housing providers face in balancing compliance, cost, and occupant satisfaction. The 'Fan For Life' is our answer to these challenges - a product that's innovative, reliable, and built to last. We back that up with the best warranty on the market."

AWAAB'S LAW: PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

The launch of the "Fan For Life" comes at a critical time for the social housing sector, as Awaab's Law introduces stricter timelines for addressing disrepair cases. The "Fan For Life" supports housing providers and occupants alike in taking a proactive approach to ventilation, preventing damp and mould issues before they arise.

"Damp and mould complaints are not just a compliance issue, they're a health issue," Paul Harrington adds. "The 'Fan For Life' empowers housing providers to futureproof their stock, reduce maintenance costs, and deliver healthier, high-quality living environments for their residents."

Vortice is a leading provider of ventilation solutions, specialising in innovative products that improve air quality, energy efficiency, and occupant wellbeing. With a strong focus on compliance and sustainability, Vortice supports housing providers, contractors, and developers in delivering effective and measurable ventilation strategies.

For more information about the "Fan For Life," visit vortice.ltd.uk/fan-for-life or contact Paul.

07801 661 464 paul.harrington@vortice.ltd.uk

Bridging design and accessibility with Stannah's stairlift at luxury Islay hotel

Ardbeg House, a boutique luxury hotel on the picturesque island of Islay, Scotland, has opened its doors as a truly immersive whisky and hospitality experience, with a newly installed Stannah Stairiser CR2 inclined platform lift providing guests with full accessibility to upper floors.

Featuring twelve individually themed bedrooms, the hotel combines luxury, creativity and storytelling inspired by the island's famous Ardbeg distillery and heritage. The hotel interiors include striking copper wall art, a custom-designed boat chandelier and interactive features including buttons labelled Press for Smoke, which release a smoky whisky scent. Guests can also enjoy tours of the local distillery and a quality food and drink menu with an Ardbeggian twist.

The work

Designed in collaboration with Russell Sage Studio, Ardbeg House honours the heritage of Ardbeg while creating immersive spaces that reflect the island's culture and the distillery's iconic history. Over 20 local and Scottish architects contributed to weaving Ardbeg's story into the hotel's design, which also involved seamlessly integrating the Stannah Stairiser CR2 with customised solutions. Stannah Lifts collaborated closely with Russell Sage Studio and main contractor Thomas Johnstone to supply a custom lift solution that met both the functional and aesthetic requirements.

The Challenge

The hotel required a custom solution to provide disabled access to its upper floors, which presented three main challenges. The first challenge was accessing the island, as transporting equipment involved careful planning and coordination with ferry services to ensure timely delivery and installation without disrupting the renovation schedule.

The second challenge was addressing the space constraints. The hotel had no space to accommodate a passenger lift, so an inclined platform lift was the best option. However, the staircase area was small, requiring a compact design. Following a detailed assessment of the space, a Stannah CR2 inclined platform lift was chosen as the ideal solution. The lift's slimline design further minimised wall projection, and the platform folds neatly when not in use, preserving staircase space. The platform dimensions of 800mm by 1000mm comfortably accommodate a wheelchair and user, while raised ramps and safety barrier arms ensure secure and safe operation.

The goal was to provide safe and reliable access for wheelchair users without disrupting the visual appeal of the hotel interiors. To achieve this, a bespoke colour was selected for the platform lift, ensuring it blended seamlessly with the surrounding walls and décor.

The results

The Stairiser CR2 now provides safe and reliable access to the two upper floors of Ardbeg House, allowing all guests to enjoy the hotel's immersive and unique experience. Equipped with remote call stations, wheelchair users can summon the lift independently from the top or bottom of the stairs, ensuring convenient operation.

Designed for use on a curved rail, the Stairiser CR2 follows the natural flow of the staircase while keeping outward projection to a minimum. This innovative feature makes the Stairiser CR2 equally well suited for installations featuring a single turn, multiple landings or spiral configurations.

To ensure the stairlift complemented the hotel's rich Ardbeggian interiors, the rail and carriage were finished in a custom green paint specifically chosen to match the hotel's décor. This carefully considered design decision allowed the lift to feel like a natural part of the space, making the lift an integral element of the storytelling and design.

With the installation of the Stairiser CR2 completed in just two days, Ardbeg House continues to offer a world-class whisky and hospitality experience that is now fully accessible to every guest.

Dimitri De Juliis, Technical Sales Consultant at Stannah Lifts Scotland, said: "Working on Ardbeg House was an exciting challenge because it required a solution that improved access while seamlessly blending with the interiors. By customising the stairlift with a bespoke green finish, we were able to provide full accessibility without compromising the hotel's luxurious design. Careful logistical planning was also essential, as all equipment had to be transported to the island via ferry. It's incredibly rewarding to see how naturally the lift integrates into such a unique and immersive space."

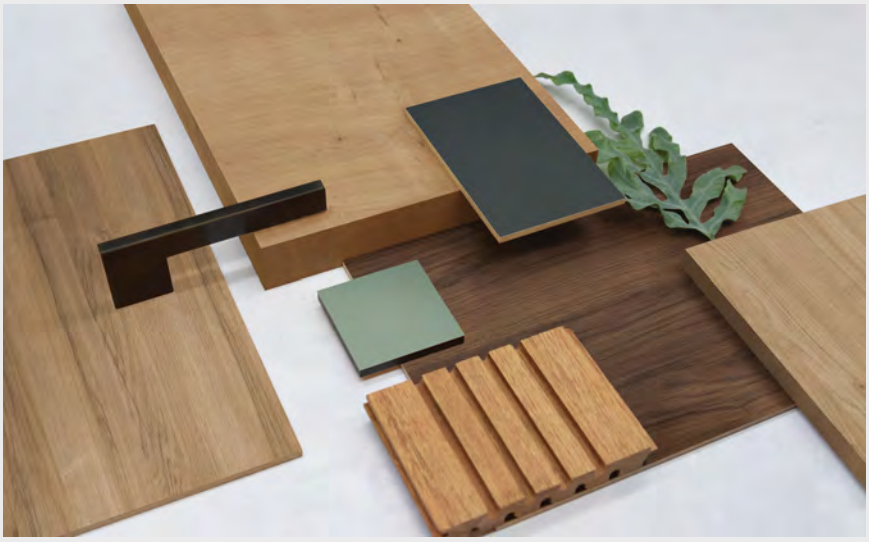
contact@stannah.co.uk
www.stannahlifts.co.uk

Dekordor® HD Expressions: Durable laminate doors with distinctive wood character

Vicaima, a major European player in the design and manufacture of advanced interior door solutions, has announced the launch of Dekordor® HD Expressions, a new collection of durable and versatile finishes. Engineered to fuse the authentic beauty of woodlook with additional resilience, the range offers a flexible solution that meets the dual demands of the modern construction market: providing architects and designers with sophisticated aesthetics, while assuring developers, contractors, and property owners of the enduring, certified performance required for any high-quality project.

The Dekordor® HD Expressions range is a statement of character, celebrating the detailed grains, tones and textures that make wood a timeless choice. The collection presents a curated palette of finishes, ranging from distinct, pronounced textures such as HD Wild Oak and Nova Walnut to the clean, smooth surfaces of HD Oak and Citric Walnut. This versatility empowers contractors and interior designers to craft unique interior narratives, from stark modern minimalism to richly layered, textural schemes.

Beyond its visual appeal, the range is engineered to deliver excellent durability across a wide spectrum of demanding environments. The high-density (HD) surfaces offer reliable resistance to scratches, abrasion, stains, and heat, ensuring long-term surface integrity. This robust performance makes it perfectly suited for a myriad of applications where robust solutions are sought, such as in hospitality, corporate offices, or public buildings, while its distinctive wood character brings a sophisticated aesthetic to discerning residential developments, healthcare facilities, and educational institutions.



A key advantage of the Expressions range is its ability to create fully coordinated interiors. The finishes can be seamlessly applied across Vicaima's extensive product portfolio, including doors, frames, wall panels, and skirting. Furthermore, these finishes are available on Vicaima's certified performance solutions, including Portaro® and Easi-fit fire-rated (up to 90 minutes), acoustic (up to 45 dB), and security door sets (including SBD), enabling an aesthetic continuity that achieves an unexpected harmony between design integrity and technical requirements. All products are FSC® certified, reflecting Vicaima's commitment to sustainable sourcing.

The integration of Dekordor® HD Expressions into Vicaima's portfolio provides a significant advantage for the specification market. It streamlines the design and procurement process by offering a single, reliable source for solutions that are both aesthetically aligned and technically certified. This synergy empowers architects and designers to maintain consistent visual language throughout a project – from residential spaces to high-performance common areas – without the complexity of managing multiple suppliers. Ultimately, it ensures that the specified design intent is perfectly matched with the required fire, acoustic, and security performance, guaranteeing a result that is cohesive, compliant, and built to last.

Visit the website to discover the new Dekordor® HD Expressions range.

01793 532 333 www.vicaima.com

CCF and Knauf get on board to support housebuilders

Constructing wet indoor areas can be a challenge but help is at hand thanks to the Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor, which is available nationwide via interior building products distributor CCF's extensive branch network.

As part of the company's commitment to collaborating with some of the UK's biggest manufacturers and offering customers a wide choice of specialist solutions, CCF stocks a large selection of Knauf products, including the Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor.

Developed specifically for use in wet and humid areas, Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor is manufactured from inorganic materials, offering protection from water damage and resistance to mould. Whether it's bathrooms, kitchens, wet rooms, or even steam saunas, this system is engineered to withstand the most challenging conditions, including exposure to chlorine and salt. Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor meets the requirements of the updated NHBC Technical Guidance 9.2/06, which emphasises the importance of robust substrates for tiling in bath and shower enclosures, wet rooms, and bathroom pods.

The lightweight construction of the Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor at just 11 kg/m^2 also supports ease of handling and installation. The boards are pre drilled to reduce preparation time on site and its score-and-snap cutting method eliminates the need for specialist cutting tools.

Design flexibility has also been prioritised, with a variety of finishing options available. For tiled finishes, the system can support tiles up to 120 kg/m^2 with specific build-up applying for tile weights above 50 kg/m^2. For areas where tiles aren't being applied, housebuilders can choose between Knauf Ready-Mixed Interior Skim, an option that can help reduce water usage and dust creation on site, and Knauf AQUAPANEL Joint Filler and Skim Coating – White, which is a powdered cement-based filling material used in conjunction with AQUAPANEL reinforcing mesh. Both finishing options, alongside a range of accessories designed to work seamlessly with Knauf AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor including screws, adhesives and tape, are also available from CCF's branches nationwide.

Full product information is available at www.aquapanel.com and CCF's technical and local branch teams are also on hand to provide further support.

0161 848 0145
www.ccfltd.co.uk

Gilberts brings Specsavers' ventilation into focus

The UK's biggest opticians Specsavers has focussed on a novel approach to create an "inspiring" workplace at its Nottingham offices. Even its ventilation reflects the brand and company activity.

Independent air movement specialist Gilberts Blackpool came up with the idea, optimising its capability to produce bespoke diffuser face plates for its innovative GA swirl.

Gilberts' technical team drew its inspiration from the iconic letter charts used in eye tests, creating an eye-catching perforated design in the face plate. Using its in-house test laboratory and air movement modelling software, Gilberts was able to validate the diffuser performance to ensure the quality and quantity of air circulation complied with requirements.

The swirls have been installed throughout the refurbished areas at Specsavers' Nottingham support offices. The design ethos for the revamped 44,00 ft^2 premises was to create an inspiring workplace for support office colleagues.

Gilberts' commercial sales manager Martin Malyon, who was instrumental in the project, explained: "Our GA swirl looks completely different to anything else on the market, even before the face plate is personalised. The plate sits in front of a unique radial pattern air distribution impeller core which can be altered to achieve numerous swirl patterns depending on the space layout and occupancy below. It creates real visual impact that's out of the ordinary and unlike anything else available.

"The project team was originally looking at our standard face plate design but loved the concept when we suggested a bespoke option. Our R&D team loved the challenge and quickly spotted how to bring relevance and fun to the design."

Hayley Morgan, Specsavers head of facilities management, added: "The end result is spectacular. The diffusers are already becoming the talking point for visitors to the building."

Gilberts' swirl diffusers are already the 'go to' choice for many major brands; they have been used in, among other projects, Uber's European Centre of Excellence, Primark's biggest UK store, Manchester Airport and Virgin's first UK hotel. The unique GA diffuser and the option for bespoke designs further enhances its desirability and offers clients an even more specialised service.

They are just part of the company's extensive range of grilles, diffusers and louvres for natural and mechanical ventilation.

01253 766911 info@gilbertsblackpool.com

HMG Paints Colours used in Collyhurst Village show homes

As the development of Collyhurst Village ushers in an exciting new chapter for the community, HMG Paints is proud to play a part in shaping this transformation. As Manchester continues to grow through regeneration, the team at HMG Paints is delighted to welcome new neighbours and support a project that reflects the spirit and heritage of the area.

Working collaboratively with FEC UK and Project Furniture Residential, HMG Paints supplied a full range of interior coatings for the Collyhurst Village show home. Drawing inspiration from the company's iconic Manchester Colour Collection, HMG developed bespoke colour palettes designed to complement the village's architecture while capturing the warmth, innovation and character of the region's past.

A key product used throughout the show home was HMG's Vinyl Matt Emulsion, a premium water-based interior coating known for its exceptional coverage, smooth flat finish and long-lasting durability. Manufactured at HMG Paints Manchester, the Vinyl Matt Emulsion provided the perfect foundation for achieving the show home's refined, contemporary aesthetic. Its ease of application and consistent finish ensured a seamless decorating process for the design and installation teams.

To support the bespoke schemes created for this project, each batch of Vinyl Matt Emulsion was tinted to order, allowing for precise colour matching across all interior spaces. The product is also supplied in sustainable packaging, aligning with the broader regeneration project's focus

on responsible.

For Collyhurst Village, HMG developed exclusive colours and utilised tones from its Essentials Colour Range, a curated selection featured within the Manchester Colour Collection Shade Card. With 35 carefully crafted hues, from archival classics to modern, trend-led tones – this range showcases over 95 years of HMG's colour expertise.

Several key shades were selected for the show home. Angel Meadow was used as a lounge accent wall, paired with a warm off-white inspired by HMG's original Mancnolia. This combination brings a soft, inviting atmosphere while offering depth and contrast.

In the bedrooms, the colour story evolves to suit individual personalities while maintaining a cohesive feel. The second bedroom introduces a bolder palette, combining a dark teal velvet bed with a vivid blue feature wall designed for a teenager with a dynamic style. Newton Blue was applied to complement a neon focal point, resulting in a vibrant, modern space that mirrors the forward-thinking development of Collyhurst Village.

HMG also created a brand-new shade exclusively for this project. Grove - a rich, earthy green with warm undertones which brings balance and calm to the interior, enhancing the home's modern yet tranquil atmosphere. The decorator's creative use of this shade further elevated the space, adding depth and natural harmony.

A standout moment within the project is the study, highlighted by bold blocks of colour and warm rust accents.

The feature wall includes an abstract off-centre circle painted in Herbert, one of HMG's most celebrated Manchester Colour Collection shades, paired beautifully with Fitzgeorge to create a distinctive focal point full of character and style. Creating bespoke colours for Collyhurst Village has been an excellent opportunity for HMG Paints to showcase its long-standing colour expertise. The team is proud to have supported this local project - quite literally just up the road - working alongside FEC UK, Project Furniture Residential and all partners involved in bringing the show home to life.

For those inspired by the colours featured in Collyhurst Village, the Manchester Colour Collection and Essentials Shade Card are available to explore and order directly from the HMG Paints Shop (Colour Tools. It's the perfect way to bring a touch of Manchester's heritage, creativity and colour into your own home.

0161 205 7631 shop.hmgpaint.com

Karta named Winner at SBID International Design Awards

For decades, most resilient flooring has relied on plastics and petrochemical, materials that are carbon intensive to produce and difficult to recycle at end of life. As millions of square metres are fitted globally each year, the environmental cost grows. Karta was founded to offer a better way, and, this year, that mission was recognised internationally.

Karta's Recycled Leather Series has been named Winner in the Product Design: Flooring & Floor Coverings category at the SBID International

Design Awards 2025, recognised over long established brands such as Amtico and Polyfor. Judged by industry experts and shaped by a public vote, the award honours products that combine design excellence with meaningful environmental progress.

Each Karta floor begins with circular materials. The Recycled Leather Series diverts leather offcuts from landfill, re-engineering them into a durable, tactile core. A PEFC-certified wood fibre layer makes use of timber offcuts that would otherwise be wasted, while a cork backing, harvested without felling a single tree, provides comfort and removes the need for underlay.

The surface pattern of every plank is created using patented super-HD print technology and an archive of real timber built over three decades by Ted Todd and Woodworks. With no

recolours and no repeats in 20 boards, these floors preserve the authentic tone, variation, and character of real timber. A plastic-free Karta Plated® topcoat delivers AC5 performance for commercial and residential use.

This award recognises that sustainability, performance, and beauty can coexist.

Explore the Recycled Leather Series - request a free sample box online or by phone.

0808 501 7321 kartafloors.com

New urban oasis created at the Natural History Museum

The previously underused five-acre gardens around the Natural History Museum in London have been remarkably transformed in a scheme by architects Feilden Fowles. Working closely with landscape architects J & L Gibbons, and a design team including Gitta Gschwendtner, engineers HRW and Max Fordham, a new urban oasis has been created alongside a Nature Activity Centre supported by AWS and Garden Kitchen cafe. The project rejuvenates the grounds of this well-loved museum and creates an immersive timeline of the evolution of the earth which is now fully accessible for the first time. Geological eras are represented in banded strata of rock and the garden now features a full-size bronze Diplodocus called Fern. The result is a tactile living laboratory called the Urban Nature Project.

The Nature Activity Centre and Garden Kitchen blend in harmony with the green space and have been designed in close association with the museum's scientists with thought and care, using natural materials with low embodied carbon. The frame is created from UK limestone under a Douglas fir roof with cedar shingles. Douglas fir doors, windows and columns adorn the inside. Working with acoustic consultants Max Fordham, Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panels have been utilised through the ceilings to help combat reverberating sound and create a calm and welcoming atmosphere.

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

Available in a wide variety of different structures and colours, they combine optimal sound absorption with an award-winning design. The Troldtekt range has a minimum expected life cycle of 60 years coupled with excellent resistance to humidity and tested to meet ball impact standards. Panels can be supplied as natural wood, unpainted based on FUTURECEM™ offering a reduced carbon footprint or finished in almost any RAL or NCS colour.

Samples, case studies and technical guidance are available from Troldtekt's website or see product listings on NBS (https://bit.ly/3vxoTfq) or Material Bank (www.materialbank.eu).

sales@troldtekt.co.uk www.troldtekt.co.uk

Protecting Healthcare Environments

Healthcare facilities are among the most demanding buildings to maintain. High levels of foot traffic, the constant movement of beds, trolleys and medical equipment, combined with rigorous cleaning routines, place huge pressure on interior walls and doors. Without adequate protection, surfaces quickly become damaged, creating unnecessary repair costs and disruption.

Yeoman Shield provides durable wall and door protection systems specifically developed to meet these challenges. From impact-resistant wall protection, handrails, bed heads and corner guards to robust door protection panels, our products are designed to reduce damage, extend the life cycle of building fabric and support hygiene standards. This not only helps control maintenance budgets but also ensures hospital and care environments remain safe and welcoming.

Fire safety is another critical consideration. Fire doors play a vital role in containing fire and smoke, giving staff and patients the time needed to evacuate safely. Through our accredited Fire Door Services, Yeoman Shield delivers inspection, maintenance and remedial work to keep doors compliant and fully operational, avoiding costly replacements while ensuring legal obligations are met.

To complement our protection and fire safety solutions, Yeoman Shield also offers a complete installation service, delivered by our experienced in-house team. This ensures every project is fitted to the highest standards, with minimal disruption to healthcare operations. Our full turn-key service means clients benefit from a seamless process – from consultation and specification through to installation, inspection and aftercare – providing confidence that every detail is taken care of.

With decades of experience working alongside NHS Trusts and private healthcare providers, Yeoman Shield is trusted to deliver long-lasting, practical solutions that protect both buildings and budgets, allowing healthcare organisations to focus on providing exceptional patient care.

0113 279 5854 www.yeomanshield.com

Templeman retailing

Templeman Retailing, a family-run business with over 30 years of experience, is a leading national wholesaler of soft drinks, crisps, snacks, and confectionary, supplying vending machines and wholesalers across the UK. Supporting a network of over 4,500 vending machines nationwide, the company needed a ceiling solution for its new office in Cramlington.

Challenge

The client wanted to refurbish the entranceway of their office building to create a bold, memorable first impression. Rather than a standard ceiling, they sought a visually striking feature that would set the tone for the space.

To achieve this, the project incorporated the first UK installation of the Nexus ceiling system, a flexible grid design that allows for unique and personalised ceiling solutions by combining various shapes and colours to form distinctive patterns.

This required careful planning and precise coordination of lighting and services, ensuring the feature lights matched the black and grey Prestige tiles chosen and complemented the overall ceiling configuration.

Solution

Zentia worked closely with the architect and client to translate their vision into a practical, high-impact design. The ceiling was installed using Prestige tiles in black and dark grey as well as Zentia's Gridline system, providing both texture and depth. The client drew inspiration from Zentia's own recent head office refurbishment, which helped inform the final concept design.

Due to being specified as a system, the new ceiling and grid come with a 30-year warranty, providing Templeman Retailing additional peace of mind and assuring the durability of the ceiling.

Zentia's Prestige family provides good sound absorption and sound attenuation to create a perfectly balanced acoustical space. It is smooth and finely textured, and is ideal for a wide range of spaces including meeting rooms, waiting areas and libraries.

The refurbished entranceway now features a distinctive Nexus ceiling pattern, complemented by integrated lighting. The design creates a striking visual impact while maintaining a professional and contemporary aesthetic, demonstrating how innovative ceiling solutions can transform workplace environments.

0191 497 1000 www.zentia.com/en-gb

Ultra-Fin UFH assists quest for Net Zero with supporting role in the Actors' Church

St. Paul's Church in Covent Garden

A completed contract for an underfloor heating company has demonstrated how a Grade I listed landmark building can undergo a transformation, without any traces being left on the existing historic internal fabric, while also future-proofing it for a switch to a fully renewable heating source in the coming years. **Ultra-Fin UK Ltd** has a strong presence in the heritage sector and was exhibiting at this year's Listed Property Owner's Club show at Olympia. The team met Westminster Churches Net Zero Forum Officer, Alison Moulden, who made the introduction to the Parish priest, Revd. Simon Grigg, and Parish Administrator, Phil Hunt, who took a keen interest in the potential of the underfloor heating system which is designed for joisted floors. The Parish Administrator for St. Paul's Church, Phil Hunt observed: "The Ultra-Fin system was also ideal for the project because it proved to cause far less harm to the fabric of the building than the alternatives being considered – not requiring the floor height to be built up or screeded, while it remains demountable and – valuably – it was also significantly cheaper than the other systems which would have required far more work."

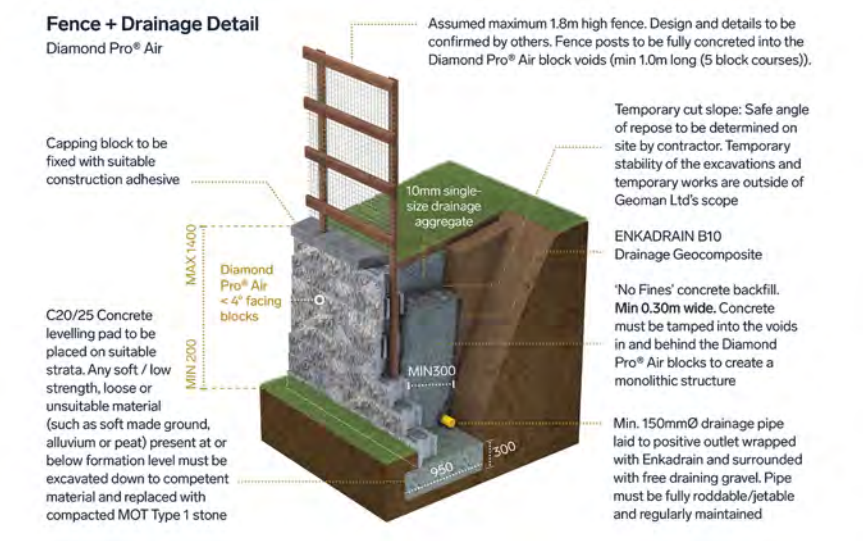
020 7427 6066 www.ultra-fin.co.uk

Keeping Brachytherapy Equipment secure with Obexion

As cancer treatment advances, more hospitals are creating specialized brachytherapy departments, requiring both space for equipment and strong security. Large Linear Accelerators stay fixed and can be powered down, but mobile brachytherapy devices, which use live radioactive isotopes, demand constant protection. As they deliver higher radiation doses, layered security is vital. One Midlands hospital installed both security-rated personnel doors and an Obexion roller shutter from **Charter Global** to safeguard its brachytherapy unit. The Obexion shutter is independently certified by the Loss Prevention Certification Board to LPS 1175 D10 (SR4) standard. This means that even if the outer personnel doors were breached, the shutter gives an additional 10 minutes of resistance to attack by hand tools and power drills. The control keypad allows staff to have individual PIN codes, giving complete traceability of who operated the shutter last and to limit access to only approved team members. The Obexion shutter range has a number of specialist features, including fast deployment in the case of emergency and a unique Lockdown mechanism ensuring that the shutter self-locks at all points of closing, so it cannot be forced open, even when partly closed.

0845 050 8705 enquiries@charter-global.com

AG introduces lightweight retaining wall solution for streamlined design and build



AG, a third-generation, UK manufacturer of low-carbon paving and building products, has launched Diamond Pro® Air, a lightweight retaining wall solution engineered to streamline construction and maximise site efficiency.

Designed with the practical pressures of housebuilders and contractors in mind, Diamond Pro® Air helps optimise labour, build schedules, and land use, while offering versatile solutions for plot divisions, split-level sites, landscaped areas, and boundary walls.

Each block weighs just 24.5 kg, making it AG's lightest 200 mm high segmental retaining wall block. Despite its reduced weight, it supports gravity walls up to 1 metre and engineered walls up to 3.6 metres. The range's mortarless construction allows walls to be built in all weathers, avoiding delays common with traditional mortar-based systems.

Diamond Pro® Air features a split-face design and natural texture in three warm earth-tone shades – Basalt, Cashel, and Canelletto, perfectly complementing AG's wider walling portfolio for cohesive styling across sites. For walls over 3.6 metres or requiring BBA/HAPAS approval, AG's Vertica range is available.

The blocks feature a near-vertical batter of less than 4 degrees, enabling developers to make the most of every plot. Unlike steeper competitor products, this profile preserves garden and building space, maximising flexibility across even the tightest or most complex sites.

Installation is straightforward and efficient. Diamond Pro® Air's built-in handholds and locator lugs enable precise positioning, while its lightweight design allows for one-person lifting. Delivered right side up on pallets, the blocks can be moved directly to the wall, reducing double handling and simplifying on-site assembly.

Large internal voids in the blocks reduce material use, provide drainage, and align during construction to strengthen the wall. Lightweight design allows up to 20 bales per curtain-sided lorry, cutting transport needs and easing site congestion.

From concept to completion, AG provides an end-to-end support system. Clients can use AG's licensed software for self-service planning and estimation, or take advantage of the family-run company's complimentary in-house Retaining Wall Design Service to produce preliminary layouts tailored to each development.

Diamond Pro® Air is produced at AG's Fivemiletown facility using 100% renewable energy and harvested rainwater. The product mix incorporates aggregates from AG's own quarry and secondary sources and, combined with reduced material use, helps reduce embodied carbon while upholding the company's rigorous sustainability benchmarks.

Complementing AG's wider walling, paving, and brick portfolio, Diamond Pro® Air allows multiple high-quality materials to be sourced from a single supplier. With AG's 'good, better, best' range, consistent aesthetics and quality can be maintained across projects, while simplifying procurement and logistics.

Commenting on the company's latest innovation, Stephen Acheson, CEO of AG, said: "Diamond Pro® Air was developed to address the day-to-day pressures faced on construction sites, from limited land and tight schedules to labour constraints. Its near-vertical profile maximises usable space, while the lightweight, mortarless design makes walls quicker and easier to build, even on split-level sites. Large internal voids, pallet-ready right-side-up delivery, and low-carbon production save time, reduce handling, and support both our ambitious sustainability goals and those of the wider industry. Combined with our design service, distinctive finishes, and broader product portfolio, Diamond Pro® Air provides a complete, practical solution that keeps projects on track and maximises value per plot."

028 8952 1275 ag.uk.com

AG.UK.COM

Introducing

Diamond Pro® Air

Lighter by Design

The next generation in Segmental Retaining Wall Solutions

paving blocks | flagstones | retaining walls | facing bricks

T +44 28 8952 1275 | E specifications@ag.uk.com

EJOT CROSSFIX® helps shape the future of sustainable housing

The construction of two apartment buildings within the ground-breaking Climate Innovation District urban regeneration project in Leeds demonstrates how the EJOT CROSSFIX® substructure system can be used to incorporate rainscreen facades into highly sustainable buildings, without the need to vastly increase insulation depth.

Developed by Citu in partnership with one of Scandinavia's leading architectural practices, White Arkitekter, and civil and structural engineers Civic, the development is an entirely new sustainable neighbourhood featuring over 500 low energy homes with integrated amenities, built to a PHPP (Passive House Planning Package) assessed design.

The development's two apartment buildings, Aire Lofts and District Lofts, feature rear ventilated facades (RVFs) finished with two types of Swisspearl products externally.

EJOT CROSSFIX® was chosen for the critically important RVF substructure because it enabled the construction of a highly insulated envelope without compromising aesthetics, with the added benefit of streamlining installation.

Multiple performance goals

The façade of District Lofts was constructed by Hansen Facades using CROSSFIX, in conjunction with main contractor Artium Construction after its successful deployment on Aire Lofts. Here, the system's versatility and effectiveness were first recognised for attaching secret-fix Ivory panels that demarcate duplex apartments at the ground and first floor levels.

CROSSFIX enabled the use of two different types of cladding to be used, including secret-fix panels for the ground and first floors.

District Lofts is one of two apartment buildings at Citu's Climate Innovation District development in central Leeds.

The facade's EWS1 (External Wall System 1) fire safety rating had to be balanced with thermal and ventilation goals. Given the high thermal requirements, designed to a weighted U Value (based on a typical subframe arrangement) of 0.13 W/m²k, the cavity depth had to accommodate insulation with a 250mm thickness and maintain the required ventilation for a system of this type.

A sustainable façade enabler

The CROSSFIX substructure specified consisted of a 220mm Konsole K1 in A2 stainless steel, complete with the Powerkey for enhanced structural stability in the same metal grade, which supported L, Z and T profiles. The EJOT package was completed with five types of stainless steel fasteners to provide secure assembly with consistent performance.

The CROSSFIX Konsole's stainless steel composition and thermal stop contributed to achieving the facade's 0.13 W/m²K U-value.

CROSSFIX's stainless steel composition helped to achieve the façade's target thermal performance due to its very low thermal conductivity, which minimises the potential for thermal bridging. Coupled with a thermal stop on the CROSSFIX Konsole, this meant that the facade's U-value is actually lower than it would have been if other substructures had been used with the same thickness of insulation.

Whole life cycle advantages were also provided by CROSSFIX because of its recyclable stainless steel composition, which requires less energy to manufacture compared with metals used in other RVF substructure systems – confirmed by an Environmental Product Declaration (EPD).

A smart solution for modern construction methods

The multiple sustainability benefits provided by CROSSFIX, enhanced further through the system's 'non-flammable' fire resistance rating and a unique design flexibility that enables it to be used in both horizontal and vertical assembly, means it is well-aligned with the higher efficiency, safety and quality targets demanded in modern construction.

In addition, CROSSFIX does not require special or handed brackets in areas of the façade where space is limited, such as locations between windows and other openings. Versatility of the substructure also means that one subframe can be used for both secret-fix and face-fixed cladding.

01977 687040 www.ejot.co.uk

AIM Wall Cavity Barrier Under Zero Compression

AIM – Acoustic & Insulation Manufacturing has demonstrated that its Wall Cavity Barrier (Red Edition) provides effective fire performance without compression in masonry construction. The new zero compression solution means AIM's Wall Cavity Barrier (Red Edition) can be installed easily with green brickwork, or other forms of masonry cladding, and avoids the problem of "brick push off" which can be associated with barriers installed under compression.

Acting as a fire and smoke barrier for masonry cavity walls, AIM's Wall Cavity Barrier (Red Edition) is used to provide a fully closed cavity fire barrier along compartmentation lines in the external cavity wall in a wide variety of construction types, including masonry and SFS. The different barrier thicknesses of 75 mm, 100 mm and 125 mm provide 30, 60 and 120-minute fire ratings to BS EN 1366-4.

Applicable to masonry construction only, zero compression installation has been tested horizontally and vertically for use within voids up to 400mm. The barrier is installed and then the bricks built up against its edge. Once the mortar has set, AIM Acrylic Intumescent Mastic should be applied between the barrier and both substrates. A DPC separating layer can be included if required.

"Tests have demonstrated that the AIM Wall Cavity Barrier is effective without compression in masonry voids, a significant product enhancement that offers far greater flexibility during construction," explains Ian Exall, AIM's commercial director.

The high-density foil faced stone wool barrier also reduces airborne transmission of sound by a minimum of 21dB RW.

AIM will sell slab versions of the Wall Cavity Barrier (Red Edition) for zero compression applications – not cut barrier. This is so that the installer has total flexibility in sizing of the barrier to exactly suit the cavity void size as required.

Installation details, with a step by step guide, can be found in AIM's Wall Cavity Barrier (Red edition) Technical Guide, which can be downloaded.

01293 582400
aimlimited.co.uk/solutions/wall-cavity-barrier

Pyroguard launches game changing fire-rated balustrade glass range

Pyroguard, the world's leading independent provider of fire safety glass, has developed a thinner, lighter glass specifically for balustrades that achieves A2 fire-rated performance and contains less encapsulated CO_2.

In partnership with Q-railing, a specialist in balustrade systems, the product has been successfully tested and is the first approved balustrade system of its kind to reach the market.

The new Pyroguard Balustrades Evo range has been introduced to meet the growing demand for cost-effective, environmentally responsible glazed balustrade products - without compromising performance or aesthetic appeal. Suitable for both new commercial installations or retrofit projects, the range offers a competitively priced alternative to aluminium railing style solutions.

Pyroguard Balustrades Evo reduces the interlayer thickness from 3 mm to 1.5 mm, matching overall glass thicknesses of standard laminate equivalents – while delivering superior line load capabilities. The range includes streamlined options such as 13.5 mm, 17.5 mm, 21.5 mm and 25.5 mm for 1.5 kN/m line loads – with a weight saving of up to 6%.

The new range also offers a light transmission improvement compared to the existing Pyroguard Balustrades range and an embodied carbon improvement of up to 7.5%. Existing Pyroguard Balustrades glass thicknesses will continue to be available.

Andy Lake, Pyroguard's sales director for UK & Ireland, said: "Our new balustrade glazing options are a game-changing innovation. We developed the range to meet market demand for A2 fire-rated glazing panels at standard laminated glass thicknesses to deliver aesthetically pleasing balustrades at a competitive price."

He added: "The new range means balustrade manufacturers do not have to change their existing systems, making design and installation much easier, while also allowing them to use existing stock materials. Ultimately, our thinner, lighter balustrade glass delivers on cost, performance and sustainability."

Darryl Holloway, architectural sales manager, Q-railing explains: "Over the past four years, we have supplied over 5,000 linear metres of fire-rated balconies for high-rise residential projects over 11 m, in conjunction with Pyroguard. Pyroguard Balustrades Evo is an extension of our collaboration with the company to bring to market a fire-rated glass balustrade system which is a more commercially viable option for specifiers."

By utilising conventional laminated glass thicknesses, Pyroguard's Balustrades Evo range not only helps systems meet a wider range of budget expectations but also enhances environmental credentials by optimising the glass manufacturing process.

With its A2 fire classification, Pyroguard Balustrades Evo complies with the latest industry standards for fire safety on balconies.

For more information about Pyroguard Balustrades Evo please visit the website.

info@pyroguard.eu
www.pyroguard.eu

Ongoing benefits of technical support shown by Wraptite® installation at new high school

Specialist contractors working on a new high school in Dumfries have shown the ongoing benefits of technical and learning support when it comes to delivering low energy construction. Having already used the A. Proctor Group's external air barrier, Wraptite®, on a previous project, they have now applied that experience to another LEIP-funded school project.

As a self-adhesive membrane that is both airtight and vapour permeable, Wraptite is designed to contribute to precisely this kind of building performance and fabric specification. Although Dumfries High School is not targeting Passivhaus certification, Wraptite's credentials are boosted by its status as a Passivhaus-certified component.

Installed to the outside face of external walls, Wraptite helps to achieve higher standards of airtightness by simplifying detailing and reducing the number of penetrations. At the same time, its vapour permeability allows the passage of moisture vapour out of the structure,

avoiding any increase in condensation risk.

The Wraptite membrane at Dumfries High School was the responsibility of specialist contractors Cairnhill Structures, as part of designing, supplying and installing the complete structural framing system and other associated works.

Working with a product like Wraptite for the first time, especially when required to deliver a low energy design target, can be daunting – as our case study about Liberton High describes.

For Cairnhill Structures, they had previously used Wraptite on another school project. "We installed it on the Monifieth Learning Campus project," said Carlos Simoes, Contracts Manager - Framing at Cairnhill Structures. "As part of that project, we arranged an installation and training workshop at our factory in Coatbridge with Linda Kay and Lewis Stanley."

Linda and Lewis are Regional Sales Manager and Business Development Manager at the A. Proctor Group respectively.

Experience is particularly vital when it comes to working with the variable nature of the Scottish climate. "Installation during the Scottish winter can be particularly difficult," noted Carlos. "However, as Wraptite is self-adhesive, installation is a relatively simple and fast process. It also provided excellent weather protection for following trades."

While the A. Proctor Group had delivered training on a previous project, support did not end there, as Carlos described: "Linda visited site on several occasions throughout the installation process to carry out site inspections."

01250 872 261
proctorgroup.com/products/wraptite

AIM wall cavity barrier under zero compression

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Applicable to masonry construction only, zero compression installation has been tested horizontally and vertically for use within voids up to 400 mm. The barrier

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01293 582400
www.aimlimited.co.uk

Warehouses get the One Can treatment

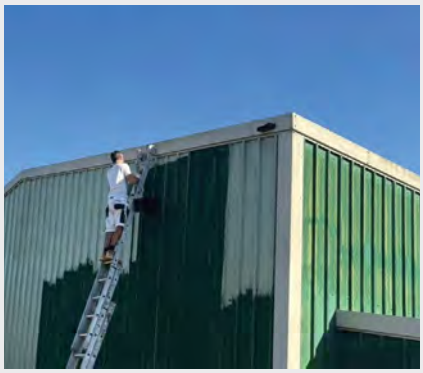
Warehouses on a Dorset industrial estate have received an impressive makeover using Bradite One Can. Half a dozen buildings on the Townsend Business Park at Bere Regis have been thoroughly spruced up by RJ Murphy Decorators Ltd. The all-in-one quality of the coating which is both primer and finisher, plus the quick drying time meant the job could be handled by four to five painters in one week.

"We just had to clear vehicles out the way of one building and could complete that before moving on to the next," says Ray Murphy. The two-tone colour scheme – Moorland Green BS12B21 and with trims painted in Mushroom BS10B19 gives a fresh new look to the estate.

Supplied by Brewers Decorator Centre in nearby Christchurch the choice of One Can was a foregone conclusion for the contractor. "It does what it says on the tin," says Ray, adding; "and its sticky" referring to the formulation's adhesive strength on any substrate.

The water-based, virtually odourless, coating has tough anti-corrosive properties particularly suited to exposed or coastal locations.

One Can – Matt is a primer, stain blocker and matt finish, all in one can. Water-based, this product is virtually odourless and is touch dry in as little as 30 minutes, with recoats possible after just one hour.



Applied by spray, roller or brush, One Can – Matt provides excellent adhesion to many substrates, including interior and exterior joinery, metals, building plastics and cementitious surfaces, whilst also providing powerful stain blocking.

No matter the substrate it is applied to, One Can – Matt delivers a professional finish along with tough anti-corrosive properties.

01248 600315 bradite.com

ARBOSHIELD Pro® range of self-adhesive and pasted Class A and B membrane systems

CARLISLE®, the waterproofing and building envelope specialist, has extended the company's market-leading ARBOSHIELD Pro® fire-rated facade systems range with the launch of two new pasted fire-resistant membrane systems. The new products mean that specifiers can now choose both the fire-rating and installation method best-suited to their project from CARLISLE®'s independently tested EN 13501-1 certified range.

The launch of the ARBOSHIELD® Pro Class A2 Pasted Facade System (ARPS) and ARBOSHIELD Po® BRPS Class B Pasted Facade System means that both A2-s1,d0 and B-s1,d0 reaction to fire classifications are available from CARLISLE® in a choice of self-adhesive or pasted solutions, all providing high performance, durability and buildability.

ARBOSHIELD® Pro ARPS is the non-combustible, pasted EPDM alternative seal and interface sealing membrane system for windows and structural openings that

delivers A2-s1, d0 fire classification for higher risk buildings.

ARBOSHIELD Pro® BRPS is CARLISLE®'s Class B s1,d0 rated pasted facade membrane system, which has been fully tested and certified as Class W1 rated. While many Class B-rated pasted facade membrane systems on the UK market carry only a Class B s3, d0 rating, ARBOSHIELD Pro® BRPS has an industry-leading 's1' certification for risk of smoke in the event of a fire, which means it is more effective at limiting smoke.

Both new additions to the range are designed to seal window and structural openings and provide a high-performance interface sealing membrane. Each has been rigorously tested as a complete system, with both membrane and adhesive designed to work seamlessly together and certified as a cohesive system.

Across the full self-adhesive and pasted range, the membrane systems have been developed to ensure reliable performance and optimal compatibility with various surfaces, delivering a robust barrier against water ingress and air leakage, which supports long-term structural integrity, energy efficiency, fire safety, and compliance.

info.arbo@ccm-europe.com www.arbo.co.uk

Introducing ME007 FR Window & Door Sealing Membrane +

Illbruck is proud to launch the ME007 FR Window & Door Sealing Membrane +, the first product in a new range of + Class B membranes designed to meet the evolving needs of modern construction. Thanks to advanced coating developments and fleece technology, this cutting-edge solution delivers exceptional performance in extreme weather conditions while ensuring durability, airtightness, and fire safety.

With climate change driving increasingly hotter, wetter, and colder conditions throughout the year, building materials must now offer higher resilience than ever before. Illbruck's new + membranes have been engineered to outperform industry standards, ensuring structures remain protected against the elements, even in the most exposed locations.

Exceeding W1 industry standards, ME007 provides superior protection against wind-driven rain and harsh environmental conditions, ensuring building integrity in even the most challenging climates. When tested around a window in a key BBA test, ME007 membrane resisted the passage of water at 2,400 pa. This is equivalent to rain battering the membrane at 130 mph!

Designed with low energy and Passivhaus standards in mind, ME007 achieves excellent airtightness down to <0.01 m^2/m^2.h.50Pa, helping reduce energy loss and improve thermal performance. The membrane conforms to our principles of 'inside tighter than outside' allowing moisture within the building to escape, preventing mould and mildew formation while maintaining an optimal indoor environment and protecting the investment of the Window or door it is sealing. ME007 offers long-lasting UV resistance and can be left exposed on the building site for 12 months.

Tested both in isolation and as a complete system (including overlaps, adhesive, and primer), ME007 is fully complaint with EN 13501-1, ensuring total fire safety assurance for high-rise and "relevant" buildings.

Available in 50 m rolls with pre-cut slit widths from 60 mm to 100 mm, ME007 is versatile and easy to install. When used in conjunction with illbruck FR Membrane adhesive (SP025), it forms a robust, continuous weather and airtight barrier across the building envelope, ensuring long-lasting protection around windows, door, junctions and penetrations.

hello@cpg-europe.com www.illbruck.com

Are pitched roof underlays 'easy to install'?

The marketing of pitched roof underlays should avoid the phrase 'easy to install,' which is subjective and depends on user experience. Pitched roofing is a skilled trade, and suggesting that an underlay is 'easy' to install implies it can be done well even with limited experience.

For that reason, the phrase features in the document Words and Phrases to Avoid Using, published by the Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI). Nevertheless, pitched roof underlays can include features and characteristics that make them as user-friendly as possible for experienced installers.

Essential repairs and renovation are being carried out on a parish church in Oxfordshire, as part of which St Mary's Barton is receiving a new pitched roof covering and underlay. The roofing work has been carried out by contractors Speakman Roofing. The church's pitched roof specification was the responsibility of the roofing contractor, and Speakman Roofing put forward Proctor Air® as their preferred underlay. "We use Proctor Air on nearly every project. The feedback from our installers is that it's good to use. It

gets all the little things right that matter to the people using it" said Andrew Speakman, director of Speakman Roofing.

Feedback on the positive and negative aspects of a construction product, like a pitched roof underlay, can significantly alter how that product (and its manufacturer) is perceived in the marketplace. Feedback from end users is crucial. If a product is difficult to install, even for an experienced contractor, then the manufacturer needs to understand that. Otherwise, contractors will complain to their merchants and suppliers, and simply move on to an alternative they prefer. Or the feedback might reach the architect and the product simply doesn't get specified again. Speaking on this topic on the Proctor Podcast, Will Jones, head of business development at Proctor Group said: "At Proctor Group, we pride ourselves on making products that are fit for purpose. Contractors sometimes speak to us about cheaper alternative products they've had a bad experience with, and we carry that feedback into our product development processes." At St Mary's Barton, Andrew Speakman, explained: "The one product can cover all eventualities so it's cost effective – we don't have to stock different rolls of different membranes."

"The air permeability of Proctor Air makes it very versatile for us," said Andrew Speakman. "St Mary's Church featured a traditional pantile on a mortar-bedded creasing tile eave. Proctor Air gave us a breathable roof without sacrificing the traditional elements, and while maintaining the original appearance of the building."

01250 872 261
proctorgroup.com/products/proctor-air

Wraptite® membrane plays key role in Passivhaus leisure centre

St Sidwell's Point, in the heart of Exeter city centre, is the world's first Passivhaus-certified, multi-zoned leisure centre. The £44 million, world-leading project includes the A. Proctor Group's Wraptite® external air barrier as part of the highly efficient external wall construction.

The building was designed by Space & Place Architects, alongside Passive House designers Gale & Snowden. On site, it was delivered by main contractor Keir.

As well as Passivhaus certification, St Sidwell's Point was designed and constructed to Building Biology IBN best practice in Healthy Building Design, using data from the University of Exeter Climate Scientists to provide resilience against predicted climate change to 2080.

Applying the Passivhaus standard to a complex multi-zone building

Leisure centres are complex buildings with different internal environmental conditions to accommodate. Carefully managing the various requirements – heating for swimming pools, cooling for fitness studios, and a host of other spaces in between – is vital to the overall energy performance strategy.

The starting point is the building fabric performance. For St Sidwell's Point, primary considerations for the specified facade systems were high levels of thermal insulation, minimal thermal bridging, and low levels of unplanned air movement.

The building featured three main types of external wall build-up: steel frame construction, blockwork, and cross-laminated timber (CLT). Common to all three was the placement of the insulation and air barrier to the outside of the structure, contributing to the target U-value of 0.14 W/m²K.

Using Wraptite to achieve a high standard of airtightness

Wraptite is a self-adhered membrane, which is both airtight and vapour permeable

membrane. Positioning it externally moves the airtightness barrier away from the internal services zone, simplifying detailing and reducing the number of penetrations.

It is also a Passivhaus-certified component, reinforcing its credentials as a high-quality product that can help projects to meet the standard. To supportits use, the A. Proctor Group provided a Wraptite toolbox talk on site, and conducted practical training using mock-up panels to demonstrate best practice installation.

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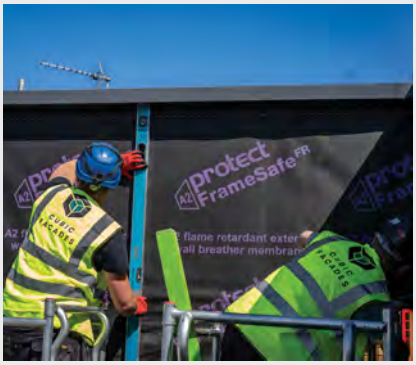
Glidevale Protect supports fire safety at refurbishment of Manchester homes



FrameSafe FR, Glidevale Protect's Class A2, fire rated external wall breather membrane has been installed to help improve safety standards as part of the cladding remediation works being undertaken at a major medium rise residential development in Greater Manchester.

The Life Building in Hulme offers a wide range of living options that allow for flexible and urban living. Working on behalf of Homes England, principal contractor Cubic Facades was appointed to install full cladding remediation works to ensure full compliance with fire safety regulations in alignment with the Building Safety Regulator. Glidevale Protect was a key supply chain partner on the project, supplying fire rated membranes in collaboration with RGB Facades, a specialist within the rainscreen cladding sector.

The mandatory remedial works involved three blocks of cladding being replaced with non-combustible materials on all external walls for the entire building envelope as well as internal courtyards, balconies and public walkways. As part of this, a fit for purpose, independently tested fire rated membrane was required to be used as part of the external wall build up. Glidevale Protect's FrameSafe FR external breather membrane, which exceeds the current requirements set down in Building Regulations Approved Document B in the UK, was supplied by partner RGB Facades for use throughout the scheme.

The Protect FrameSafe FR breather membrane has been installed by Cubic Facades onto the external wall fire boards throughout the development to ensure integrity of fire performance and to reduce the risk of fire spread. Its Protect FR tape has also been used to seal membrane laps which creates a full wall membrane and tape system solution. Protect FrameSafe FR and Protect FR tape products have been independently fire tested both with the membrane free hanging and as a system application fixed over A1 and A2 substrates, achieving a Class A2-s1, d0 reaction to fire.

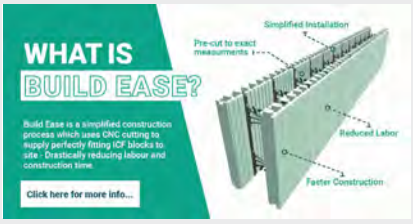
Mike Dickinson, commercial director of Cubic Facades commented: "We are pleased with the overall performance of the external wall membrane for this project. It was critical that the chosen product had independent fire test data as a membrane system with tape to back up its claims and give us the confidence to fit on site. The product is easy to install and my team commented that Protect FrameSafe FR was easier to handle than other fire rated membranes that had previously been used."

James Smith, head of technical for Glidevale Protect said: "Fire rated wall membranes like our own Protect FrameSafe FR product, can help play a crucial role in reducing facade fire risk, as their performance can have a positive impact on the overall fire strategy of a residential development like the Life Building.

"Currently, UK Building Regulations generally class external wall membranes as exemptions to the minimum Class A2 requirements for wall structures in relevant buildings in UK Building Regulations, albeit with the exception of residential buildings above 11 metres in England, where external wall membranes must achieve a minimum of a Class B-s3, d0 rating. But there's a growing industry momentum towards specifying products that future proof against minimum standards, prompting the use of fire rated materials with a higher reaction to fire classification, like Protect FrameSafe FR."

0161 905 5700 www.glidevaleprotect.com

From Design to Delivery – Introducing BuildEase with Nudura



The pressure on UK housing developers and contractors has never been greater. Demand for homes continues to rise, while labour shortages, compliance burdens, and tight delivery schedules make it increasingly difficult to meet targets. The traditional build process – fragmented across multiple suppliers and trades – is showing its limitations. Delays, waste, and inefficiencies have become the norm. Developers need a new way forward and Nudura is here to help.

That's why Nudura launched BuildEase – their new simplified ICF delivery enablement service that addresses the construction industry's call for quicker, more predictable, and lower-waste building systems. Backed by Tremco CPG UK and powered by the Nudura brand, BuildEase leads the shift towards smarter housing delivery.

Designed for housing developers, housing associations and contractors, rather than coordinating multiple parties and different timelines, Nudura's end-to-end service provides a single partner from the earliest design stages through to completion - From Design to Delivery – aligning your design for buildability, supplying Nudura ICF systems tailored to your site layout, ensuring compliance documentation is in place, and even supporting your team on-site.

Here's what BuildEase offers:

NUDURA ICF SYSTEM TAILORED TO YOUR SITE
One of the core features of this service is providing waste-reducing, factory Nudura ICF components. ICF construction available from Nudura, provides end users with an eco-friendly, sustainable development. Everything is prepared off-site based on your approved site layout and delivered ready to install. This reduces on-site material waste dramatically as there is less rework; speeds up installation as blocks arrive in logical order and ready to build - leading to a cleaner, more controlled build environment.

BUILT FOR COMPLIANCE – INCLUDING NHBC
BuildEase solutions are fully compliant with UK building standards and backed by warranty pathways. Nudura's ICF systems are designed to be NHBC ready from day one, with compliance documentation prepared to support your technical submissions and simplify approvals. Rather than rushing to meet requirements at the last minute, they work with your compliance teams early in the project – helping ensure smooth approvals, reducing design risk and minimising surprises down the line.

ON-SITE SUPPORT & DELIVERY SEQUENCING
Nudura provide supervision and training for new crews, to ensure their ICF systems are installed quickly and correctly - minimising errors. Nudura believe in being present and proactive by providing regular site visits and a technical support hotline.

SUSTAINABLE AND SITE-SMART
At the heart of the BuildEase service offering is support for safer builds and smarter outcomes. With ICF components arriving Nudura, BuildEase promotes reduced material waste on site and lower transport emissions. This helps developers meet ESG targets and planning obligations contributing to the builds' sustainability reporting.

SERVICE THAT DELIVERS AT EVERY STAGE
In a market that demands more homes, built faster, and to higher standards BuildEase provides the partner that delivers at every stage. From manufacturing to delivery and beyond, BuildEase is backed by Tremco CPG UK's reputation for reliability service quality and technical care. With timely, phased deliveries, integrated support teams what you get is a reliable partner for repeatable housing delivery.

READY TO BUILD SMARTER?
BuildEase is about giving developers and contractors what they really need: clarity, speed, and confidence in delivery.

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Introducing Nullifire FZ400: The Pioneering ‘Movement-Tested’ Fire Stopping Solution

Nullifire, a leader in passive fire protection innovation, proudly unveils FZ400 – a cutting-edge fire stopping product designed to accommodate movement, while maintaining the integrity of compartmentation.

Powered by patented GXT Technology, FZ400 provides the necessary continual relief of fatigue on fire stopping seals under deflection stress and protects service penetration seals with outstanding fire performance and movement-resilience.

The FZ400 has been rigorously tested to EN 1366-3/4, achieving up to two hours fire rating after undergoing cyclic movement, proving its effectiveness in real-world scenarios where structural movement is inevitable.

Using Nullifire’s pioneering ‘Movement Test,’ developed with the support of Warrington Fire, the FZ400 was subjected to a groundbreaking procedure that replicates ceiling deflection. A wall was moved up and

down by 30 mm more than 50 times over a two hour period, then placed in a furnace to assess performance post-movement.

FZ400 is a graphite impregnated open cell foam with a highly expansive char when exposed to heat. The water resistant film provides a cold smoke seal. This provides both flexibility and excellent fire stopping properties.

The results were outstanding: No ripping, cracking, or fibre migration; Maintained a secure, air-tight fire seal; Up to two hours of fire resistance maintained.

Hannah Eyres, technical manager at Nullifire, explained “Our Movement Test provides a complete framework for testing how GXT Technology adapts to real-life building pressures. We’re proud to share a test that reinforces our drive toward data-driven solutions and gives architects and contractors complete confidence in FZ400. Feedback has been very positive. Architects and Main Contractor clients demand data driven solutions so the development and success of this test will be well received in the Construction Industry.”

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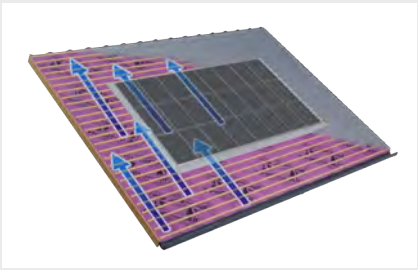
New guidance helps housebuilders combine in-line solar PV and air permeable underlays

New guidance from Proctor Group means housebuilders can now use integrated (or in-line) solar PV together with Proctor Air®, confident that they are meeting all relevant technical requirements – including the NHBC’s 2024 Technical Standards, with an alternative BBA approved solution which negates the requirement for double battening.

Backed by leading moisture experts in the UK and Europe, the guidance is also reflected in an update to Proctor Air’s BBA certificate.

That means designers and specifiers can follow the guidance in the knowledge that it has been assessed by an independent third party.

As an air permeable, low resistance (APLR) membrane, Proctor Air reduces the risk of issues occurring in roof spaces due to poorly installed vapour control layers or ventilation. And because it provides a more uniform flow of air than standard ventilation solutions, it means the roof requires no other



ventilation measures.

Proctor Air has proved a popular solution since its launch. However, an update to the NHBC Technical Standards created confusion around the use of in-line solar PV with APLR membranes. Housebuilders and developers have therefore been reluctant to specify the two together, despite wanting to use APLR products.

With rooftop solar expected to be made compulsory on new-build housing, the adoption of PV panels will only intensify as specifications adapt to the lower carbon emissions required by the Future Homes Standard. And as those same homes become even better insulated and more airtight, they will rely on the performance of air permeable membranes to help reduce condensation risk in loft spaces.

To overcome the confusion, Proctor Group undertook research to investigate the issue, engaging Glenfeulan Consulting to undertake modelling using RoofCond software. The renowned Fraunhofer Institute then validated the reasearch findings and agreed with the conclusions.

Equipped with a more thorough understanding of air and moisture movement through pitched roof coverings, Proctor Group has developed a recommendation for pitched roof specifications featuring in-line solar PV and Proctor Air.

01250 872 261
proctorgroup.com/products/proctor-air

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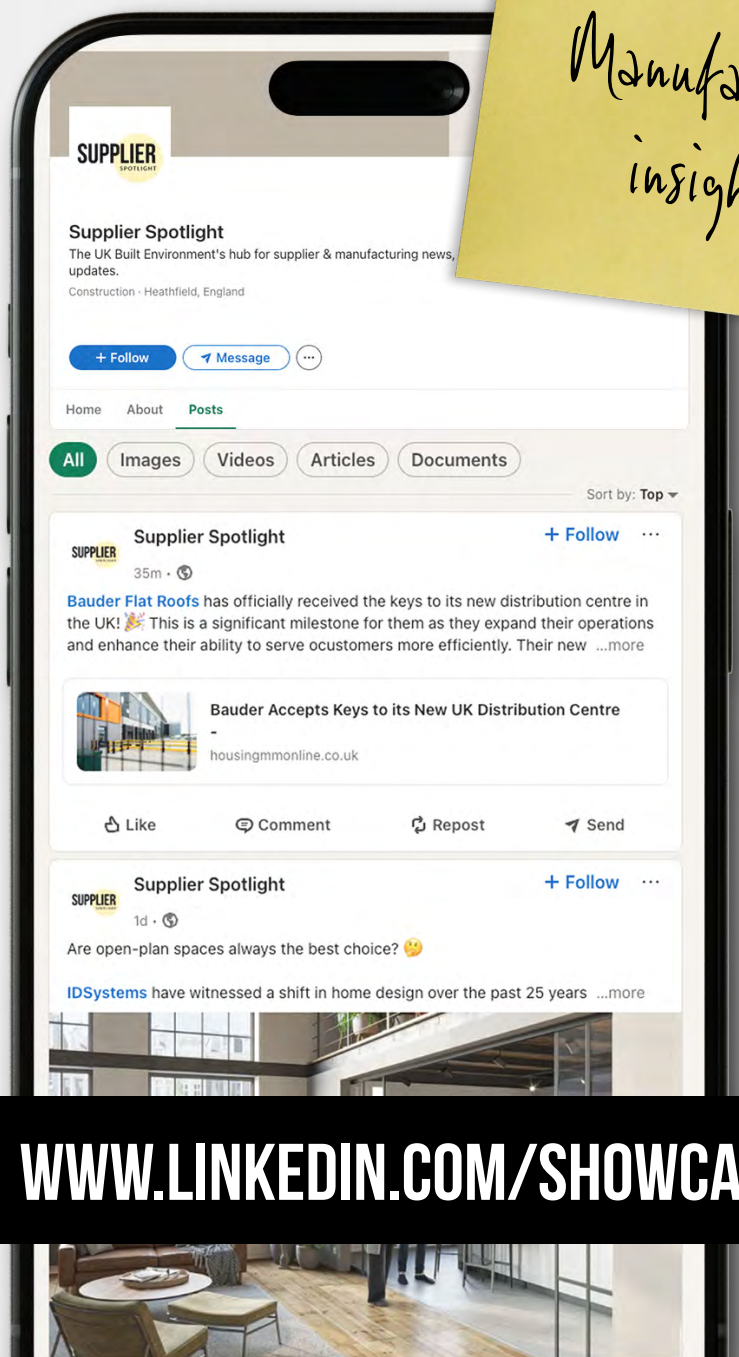
Your new Source of Manufacturing insights!



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See page 20 for details