

PANEL, WOOD & *Solid Surface*

Issue No. 199/200

December 2024/January 2025

The latest SCM innovations for panel sizing

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Nine Zero: timber is a powerful solution for low-carbon projects



WORLD Sustainability Day fell on 30th October 2024, and as we see a peak in the global message to go green, Nine Zero Timber Windows and Doors is

highlighting the need for the glazing industry to treat energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions as business critical.

"Sustainability isn't just a buzz-



word, trend or obligation, it's a necessity to comply with Building Regulations," explains Steve WinScott, managing director at Nine Zero. "Sustainable timber is vital in reducing the carbon footprint of construction, but there is still work to be done when it comes to industry understanding of timber as a powerful solution."

As the demand for low-carbon building materials rises — in line with initiatives such as the UK's Timber in Construction Roadmap and Net Zero Strategy — Nine Zero's choice to use FSC certified timber offers developers, architects, installers and builders handcrafted, bespoke and exceptional quality products that align with rigorous sustainability requirements. Timber's natural ability to store CO₂ provides a renewable advantage over materials like concrete, steel, aluminium and uPVC, helping construction

projects meet regulations and contribute to a more sustainable future.

"The climate focus in construction has made sustainability a priority, which is great, but the link now needs to be made to timber — as a clear solution that's both renewable and aligned with today's dynamic building standards," says Steve.

Nine Zero has a core commitment to sustainability that extends far wider than World Sustainability Day. By using FSC certified suppliers, the business supports global forestry conservation efforts. It also recycles timber waste, provides renewable energy to local homes, partners with Pozitive Energy for green electricity and plants a tree for every order taken.

Nine Zero Timber Windows and Doors
www.nine-zero.co.uk

West Fraser launches greenest flooring yet

MANUFACTURER of engineered wood-based panel products, West Fraser, has introduced the new and even more environmentally friendly CaberShield Eco to its extensive range of boards, aimed at providing the construction industry with a sustainable solution for creating high specification, weather-resistant flooring.

With all the inherent benefits of CaberFloor P5, CaberShield Eco is the new greenest choice for permanently protected flooring, with a tough, solvent-free UV-cured, waterproof coating on its upper surface. The panels — and tongue & groove versions — enable a slip resistant, safe working platform to be created that can also withstand high traffic, especially during the exposed construction phase.

In addition the new board has 60 days durability against adverse weather conditions when laid with CaberFix D4 glue, BBA certificate pending, while their specification cuts Scope 3 emissions when compared to melamine protected flooring.

Manufactured in dimensions of 2400 mm long by 600 mm wide, the floor panels are both FSC and CE certified and are ideal for humid environments, in commercial as well as residential applications, for new-build and refurbishment work.

The T&G profile panels, meanwhile, measure 22 mm thick; and West Fraser recommends securing them using its tried and tested CaberFix D4, a solvent-free, one-component polyurethane adhesive. This 'joint & joist' glue, when applied to the edges, has the advantage of eliminating those irritating creaks and squeaks which characterise traditional floorboards.

CaberShield Eco is produced using timber from responsibly managed forest sources, locks in the CO₂ during its lifetime; while architects, builders and other specifiers can further minimise waste through careful planning/specification. The panels are also 100% recyclable at end of life, while another eco-friendly aspect is that the timber used to make the board is grown in the UK: meaning embodied carbon through transportation is reduced as well as offering a more secure supply chain in an increasingly unreliable global market.



West Fraser is expecting the particleboard product will be as successful and as widely specified as its CaberFloor P5 due to its same stability, durability and ease of installation for the user; and the fact that it will easily withstand our unpredictable and increasingly wet climate.

All West Fraser panel products produced in the UK are net carbon negative and manufactured in mills that have obtained the coveted environmental ISO 14001 accreditation. Responsibly sourced, the panels are FSC® certified (C012533) and created from locally grown timber, cutting embodied carbon from transportation.

West Fraser

01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>



Panel, Wood & Solid Surface

is published by

Pawprint Publishing Ltd

121 Warren Drive

Hornchurch

Essex RM12 4QU

Tel 07913 783510

email info@pawprintuk.co.uk

www.pawprintuk.co.uk

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Neolith obtains Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze

NEOLITH, a global leader in sintered stone, has obtained the international Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze certification, the world's most advanced standard for safe, circular and responsible materials and products, for a large range of products.

By obtaining this exigent international certification in its version 4.0, much more demanding than its previous version, Neolith is breaking away from the traditional model of surface production. The company is firmly committed to the circular economy by manufacturing products that have a positive impact on people and the planet.

Neolith sintered stone, which is made from natural raw materials, has unique percentages in the surface industry. Some of its models contain up to 98% recycled materials and all Neolith products are 100% recyclable. In addition, all industrial water is recycled, 100% of the electrical energy used during the production process comes from sources with a guarantee of renewable origin and the company recycles more than 96% of the industrial waste generated.

Jesús Ayarza, CEO of Neolith Group, adds: "It is an honour for the entire Neolith team to have obtained the Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze accreditation, as it represents recognition of our innovation efforts to meet our main objectives, intrinsically linked to sustainability, such as Zero Waste, the use of recycled raw materials and a productive activity with a neutral impact on carbon generation. In short, our efforts to contribute to the circular economy. We are proud that our products allow us to build a better future for everyone."

Neolith promotes the circular economy

Neolith's sustainable nature, recognised internationally by architects and interior designers, has been key to obtaining the Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze certificate, both for its production processes and for the composition of its products:



● **Natural composition:** Made from clays, feldspar, oxides and up to 20 different natural minerals, Neolith does not contain resins or plastics in its formulation.

● **100% recyclable:** Thanks to its natural composition, Neolith can be recycled, extending the life cycle of its products.

● **98R:** To reduce the consumption of materials, Neolith has increased the recycling of raw materials during the production process and has some models that contain up to 98% recycled material in their composition, thus contributing to the recycling of waste and its subsequent reuse.

● **No crystalline silica in its composition:** Neolith promotes taking care of its entire value chain and does not add crystalline silica to the composition of its products, positioning itself as one of the most sustainable surfaces on the market with the lowest range of crystalline silica content in the industry.

About Cradle to Cradle Certified®

Cradle to Cradle Certified® is a registered trademark of the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute, a prestigious and internationally recognised institution

used by designers, brands, retailers and manufacturers to certify the creation of safe, circular and equitable products and materials. This accreditation allows the performance of a product to be verified in five key areas that analyse the circular nature of products, thus generating a global product certification standard:

● **Material Health:** ensures the materials used to manufacture a product are safe for human health and the environment and do not contain toxic substances.

● **Product Circularity:** assesses the life cycle of products at different levels, analysing the origin of their materials, design and future recovery pathways.

● **Clean Air & Climate Protection:** analyses whether the manufacturing processes of products protect air quality, contributing to reduce greenhouse gases emissions, and use renewable and clean energy. In this category, Neolith has obtained the Silver score for the installation of solar panels in its facilities, which supply part of its electricity consumption, as well as for the use of electricity for the production process from sources with a guarantee of renewable origin.

● **Water & Soil Stewardship:** seeks to ensure that water and soil quality and their management are preserved or improved throughout the entire life cycle of the product.

● **Social Fairness:** companies must be committed to defending human rights and promoting fair and equitable practices.

The Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze product certification recognises that most Neolith products meet this global standard. The complete list can be consulted officially on the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute website.

In addition to obtaining the Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze certification, Neolith has improved its positioning of the EcoVadis Gold seal during 2024, increasing its percentile from 97 to 98, and has renewed its Zero Waste certification as excellent. During this period, Neolith has reaffirmed its continuity with the United Nations Compact by supporting its 10 principles for sustainable development to fully incorporate sustainability into its operations, thus contributing to creating safer and more sustainable products for the future.

Neolith
www.neolith.com

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Forestry sector cautious but resilient in 2024 with species diversity key to the future

FORESTRY worth almost £100m was listed for sale last year in a market characterised by tight supply and buyer caution, according to a new industry report.

The UK forestry industry has proved resilient in 2024, despite facing economic challenges. According to The UK Forest Market Report 2024, produced by BSW Group's Tilhill Forestry, and Goldcrest Land & Forestry Group, the market remains strong, driven by demand for high-quality assets, stable timber prices, wider natural capital projects and a positive medium-term outlook for wood being used as a substitute for high carbon materials.

The report, launched in Edinburgh on November 19th and London on November 20th, provides what is believed to be the most comprehensive overview of the UK forestry sector, detailing key financial trends, regional market insights, and emerging investment opportunities.

Market Overview: Resilience Amid Economic Shifts

In 2024, £95.4m of forestry was listed for sale in the UK, a 55% decrease on the previous year. The market numbered 44 properties with a total of 5,400 stocked hectares and an average valuation of £18,600 per stocked hectare. Scotland continued to dominate with a 79% market share.

This year saw a drop in the pricing of agreed deals. However, an unusually high proportion of northern Scotland properties, which are typically lower in value due to the distance from core timber markets, distorted the market. When adjusted for outliers and northward skews, like-for-like valuations were close to flat, reflecting a healthy calibration after many years of steep increases. Strong demand for assets remained, despite challenging headwinds.

Investor sentiment was cautious but steady. With greater political certainty after the budget, the report forecasted plenty of opportunities in 2025, with several high-value properties expected to come to the market. In looking to the future, the report asked: "Might the new government's drive for more construction provide both a demand for timber and have a knock-on effect of reducing the nationwide resistance to land use change?"

Planting land: A Shrinking Supply

In Scotland, the volume of land available for sale dropped by 40% to 1,600 ha, as availability of land suitable for commercial forestry continued to tighten despite sustained demand. Pricing for land has however stabilised at around £10,000 per gross hectare. Planting land listed in England increased 92%, to 1,600 ha, and averaged £14,500 per gross hectare (13% down). In Wales, planting land also increased by 92%, to 1,300ha, with the average at £16,800 per gross hectare (26% up).

The heat has come out of the market but demand for planting land definitely still outstrips supply, which has been greatly reduced over the last 18 months, the report said.

Sustainability: Addressing Environmental Challenges

Good silviculture will be key to the future of the sector, said the report. While Sitka spruce remains dominant, the industry faces increasing environmental pressures, including droughts, pests, and climate change. Experts stressed the need for species diversity and improved silviculture practices to ensure long-term resilience. Effective forest management, with a focus on sustainability, resilience and biodiversity, will be essential to safeguarding the sector as climate change impacts forest health.

Carbon Credits and Natural Capital: A Growing Investment Opportunity

The market for woodland carbon is at an important juncture with the next few years potentially offering "rich opportunities", the report noted. Projects with ecological benefits, such as biodiversity and water quality improvements, achieved 2-3 times higher prices for carbon credits than standard rates, highlighting the demand for sustainable land investments.

In England, properties with natural capital opportunities rose by 16% to £14,500 per gross hectare, potentially driven by the influence of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) regulations. Meanwhile, land with natural capital potential dropped 44% to £3,100 per gross hectare in Scotland (distorted by a couple of highland estates offered at relatively low prices) and rose 7% to £18,100 per gross hectare in Wales.

Timber Market: Stable Demand and Growth

The UK timber market remains stable, underpinned by a healthy appetite for small roundwood and pallet wood. Prices were steady, and timber fibre was in demand at similar rates. This ongoing demand, combined with trees' annual growth of 5-6%, makes forestry land a valuable, inflation-resistant investment.

Expert Insights: Market Sentiment and Investment Outlook

Xander Mahony, Head of Forestry Investment at Tilhill Forestry, commented: "This year's report shows a resilient yet evolving UK forestry sector, where, despite investor caution, there is strong demand for quality assets. Stable timber prices, recovering interest in natural capital projects, and the rise of biodiversity regulations are driving growth".

Jon Lambert, partner at Goldcrest Land & Forestry Group, echoed this sentiment, noting that buyers were "somewhat cautious and selective", similar to last year. Uncertainty around the Labour Government's first Budget created considerable activity immediately beforehand and he pointed to the enduring appeal of land and forestry-based investments.

He added: "We have definitely seen a mature market buying forest assets that is focused on growing timber, a global commodity in short supply, with taxation incentives being less of a driver."

The full Forest Market Report can be found here: <https://www.tilhill.com/resource-hub/publications/the-uk-forest-market-report/>

BSW Group ● www.thebswgroup.co.uk



New facility marks BCU's commitment to net zero homes and the construction workers of the future

A NEW state-of-the-art facility created by Birmingham City University (BCU) will give students unprecedented access to the latest technological advancements in housing to widen their skillset and make them more attractive to future employers.

"We're educating the policy makers, housing experts, and construction consultants of the future," said building expert Mike Leonard, a co-founder of BCU's Centre for Future Homes.

"It's essential our students gain first-hand experience to drive the industry forwards. This facility provides the perfect test bed to immerse themselves in the latest technology — and it will give BCU's students the edge that employers are looking for."

BCU's Centre for Future Homes is behind the new showroom, which is located in Millennium Point and was made possible by funding from the UKRI's Regional Innovation Fund.

It features a range of all-electric heat solutions, including heat pumps, hot water storage, panel radiators, PV, and underfloor heating, as well as ventilation options to help the more air-tight homes breathe, and walling fabric options to increase thermal insulation.

"We're thrilled to have a new research and education hub to showcase technologies that will be used in future homes," said Dr Monica Mateo-Garcia, Centre co-founder and academic lead.

"It's an essential space for research collaborations and professional development training to upskill students and industry," added Dr Mateo-Garcia, BCU built environment expert.

Climate change and building safety are the key drivers for the Centre, which launched in 2021 and is leading the transition to net zero homes.

BCU academics continue to support housing developers in a number of ways.

From helping them to deliver low-carbon new-build homes that adhere to the government's incoming Future Homes Standard to retrofitting 26 million existing homes and developing cost-effective ways to meet the government's target of 1.5million new homes by 2030.

The Centre's new facility will also play a key role in developing a future ready workforce by providing training to upskill students, practitioners, and contractors.

It's a flagship initiative for BCU that encapsulates its newly launched 2030 strategy — to carry out research that solves problems for a more inclusive society and boost regional growth.

Professor Hanifa Shah, Pro Vice-Chancellor STEAM and Executive



Dean of the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment at BCU, said: "The Centre exemplifies the spirit of our new strategy — creating knowledge for good and producing future-ready graduates.

"By collaborating with industry, our staff and students carry out applied research that benefits the region and our communities, and helps us influence policy. Long may this continue."

The Centre for Future Homes puts customers at the heart of the journey, rebuilding the public's trust and confidence in the construction sector by putting quality and safety first.

Professor Harris Beider, Pro Vice-Chancellor Engagement, Enterprise and Innovation at BCU, explained: "As an anchor institution in the city, it's essential that we engage with our local communities whilst providing radical solutions that get traction in terms of changing policy.

"Working with the housing industry, we're finding innovative ways to create safe, affordable, and good quality low-carbon homes that will make huge difference for people in Birmingham."

In partnership with Midland Heart Housing and Keepmoat, the Centre has supported two low-carbon new build sites that meet the government's incoming Future Homes Standard.

"Our top priority is to make sure residents are safe, happy and healthy," said Mike Leonard, who is a visiting professor at BCU and CEO of Building Alliance, a community interest company.

"Once constructed, the way homes are lived in effect their performance," he added. "We're using sensors to measure power used by appliances, temperature, and indoor air quality.

"This data is complemented by interviews with residents to understand how they operate their homes and identify opportunities to achieve optimum efficiency."

These insights will enable policymakers to make evidence based decisions for a safe transition to low-carbon living that avoids tragic consequences in the wake of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Birmingham City University
<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/business/partnerships-and-projects/projects/the-centre-for-future-homes>



TIMCON launches reuse white paper

THE TIMBER Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) has launched a white paper on the status of reuse in the UK wood pallet and packaging business. The document highlights that reuse is high and has been increasing in sectors from fast moving consumer goods, pharmaceuticals, and construction over the last 10 years.

TIMCON is the acknowledged representative body of the UK and Republic of Ireland wooden pallet and packaging industry, encompassing manufacturers, the four major pallet pooling companies and most

sawmills who supply the industry from UK and Ireland and suppliers to the industry such as kiln and composite block manufacturers.

The white paper points to a “change in mindset” among supply chain users of wooden pallets and packaging who are acting on the clear environmental and economic benefits of reuse. This is driving already high levels of reuse in supply chains up further.

“Every wooden pallet, no matter what type, dimension and colour, will continue to be a reusable asset,” says the paper.

“This essential document illustrates how far advanced the UK market is in the reuse of wooden pallets and packaging,” said TIMCON President John Dye.

“The sector and its customers have changed their mind set with regards to reusing in the supply chain, which makes perfect economic and environmental sense.”

The annual UK Wood Pallets & Packaging Market research reports prepared for TIMCON and Forest Research show that between 2015 and 2023 there has been a 40 per cent increase in pallets being repaired and then reused in the marketplace.

There are many thousands of pallets being reused daily throughout the UK, across all sectors. TIMCON estimates there are approximately 250 million pallets currently in circulation in the UK.

In 2023, the volume of repaired pallets, at 54.1 million, was 30 per cent greater than the number of new pallets manufactured.

TIMCON ● www.timcon.org



FINISHES

New self-sealing topcoat for interiors

SIKKENS Wood Coatings, part of AkzoNobel, has enhanced its versatile, accessible interior range with Aqualit T2700, a high-quality 1K waterborne self-sealing clear topcoat that is considered ideal for furniture manufacturers.

Demonstrating the brand's commitment to supporting customers to switch to low VOC waterborne systems, Aqualit T2700 delivers excellent transparency, good hardness and easy sanding. It boasts very good scratch resistance with strong anti-sagging and pore filling properties. Suitable for both horizontal and vertical applications, it is ideal for general furniture like chairs, cabinets, cupboards and tables.

“Aqualit T2700 elevates the organic natural beauty of wood that customers are increasingly demanding for a trend-led finish. With different gloss levels and proven, robust durability, our latest topcoat provides an abundance of opportunities and creative freedom for specifiers and manufacturers,” said Sabrina Garasi, regional product marketing manager AkzoNobel Wood Finishes EMEA.

Aqualit T2700 has been specifically developed to meet the needs of customers for whom stacking properties, hardness and fast drying are key requirements. In around 30 minutes, this new clear topcoat delivers improved hardness compared to regular industrial clear topcoats, according to the company.

Aqualit T2700 is the latest product in the

Sikkens Wood Coatings range, following the brand's refresh and launch of the interior product range in 2023. The brand now boasts a modern, dynamic look, in tune with today's wood coatings market, while its portfolio of wood coatings solutions includes both interior and exterior wood coatings. As a result, Sikkens Wood Coatings can offer a one-stop-shop solution to distributor partners and end-customers alike, with a diverse portfolio to satisfy most industrial wood coatings requirements.

In addition, the brand's European distributor network and comprehensive support system provides added confidence and reassurance for general furniture manufacturers.

“Developed with decades of know-how, our coatings can be trusted to deliver both beauty and durability. Aqualit T2700 enables furniture manufacturers to benefit from seamless and easy application, along with its outstanding mechanical and chemical resistance,” said Sabrina.

She concludes, “We're extremely proud of this latest product introduction, which also offers lower VOC emissions to customers (compared to solventborne coatings). Its non-hazardous formulation means easy training, seamless application and easy handling as it does not require special transport. It may also help customers toward achieving their sustainability goals.”

AkzoNobel
www.akzonobel.com/en



Students excel in Liberon woodworking competitions

STUDENTS at Walsall College have been put through their paces by Liberon as part of a carpentry and joinery competition. The woodcare experts called on learners on the college's Level 2 Bench Joinery course to build and finish a child's Christmas toy train with one engine and one carriage plus a small decoration in the form of a Christmas tree, using Liberon's Palette Wood Dyes, Finishing Oils and Wax Polish Black Bison Paste.

Students were handed guideline images by their lecturer and asked to complete the project over 20 teaching hours in total. A winning student (Anthony Walker) plus two runners-up (Dayzanaia John, Nico Jones) were selected from the class by director of faculty, Neil Sambrook and curriculum delivery manager, Nathan Hartshorne. The project incorporated a variety of hardwoods for the trains and various wood offcuts from previous projects for the trees. A CNC router was programmed by the joinery technician, Colin Wright, using the latest advanced technology additions to the department to create wheels for the trains. The winner and runners-up each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon.



Students from left to right: Dayzanaia John, Anthony Walker (Winner) and Nico Jones.

Richard Bradley, marketing manager at the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "It looks to me like these students have some great skills. It's wonderful to see what they're achieving. We'd like to congratulate the winning student and runners-up, and wish all the students on the course the best of luck in their future carpentry and joinery careers."

The course leader, Paul Underwood, lecturer in carpentry and joinery, added: "All the students should be very proud of what they achieved in this competition. This challenge has showcased and helped to develop their problem-solving abilities, their design ideas, and has seen them utilising a wide range of timber and tools as well as learning how to sand products down through grades of abrasive to get the best finish from the Liberon products. It's been great to see how the students' personality and individuality have been highlighted by this challenge."

It is always advisable to check the suitability of surface finishing products for use on real-world children's wooden toys. The toys featured in this competition are for display purposes only.

● Students at Newark College have taken part in a competition set by Liberon to test their carpentry and joinery skills. The woodcare experts called on learners on the college's Furniture Making courses to design, build and finish a jewellery box in Tulipwood using one or more of Liberon's Palette Wood Dyes, Finishing Oils, Superior Danish Oils or Wax Polish Black Bison Paste. Students were given thirty teaching hours in total to complete the project.

The competition resulted in

one winning student and two runners-up.

Richard Bradley, marketing manager at the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "The students came up with some really lovely designs. They are clearly very talented. We'd like to congratulate the winner and runners up, and wish all the students on the course the best of luck in their future careers."

Course leader, Richard Preece, added: "The students produced some impressive jewellery box designs. They were each given Tulipwood in a particular section size so that they could cut it according to their needs."

"The project has been a good means of testing the students' jointing skills in particular, and we saw several joint formats produced including comb joints, traditional dovetail, modern domino and mitres with feathers. In addition, the competition looked at the students' wood finishing techniques, and using Liberon's range of products gave them insights into what effects they could achieve."

The entries were judged by two of the college's managers including the head of Newark College and the winner and runners up each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon.

Liberon
www.liberon.co.uk



Students from left to right Callum McCann (winner); Julian Davis (runner up with his design which features multiple jewellery item chambers); Cameron Owen-Jones (a runner-up).

Spanish extruder finds new windows of opportunity with Interpon powder coatings

EXTRUGASA, one of Spain's foremost extruders of aluminum products, is celebrating a 40-year partnership with AkzoNobel in which it has benefitted from the complete range of Interpon powder coatings to give manufacturers and designers the greatest choice of colours and durability for architectural and industrial applications.

With four lines — two vertical and two horizontal at its manufacturing facility in Galicia, Spain — Extrugasa serves a global audience with products including windows, doors, facades and railings, as well as specific products within the industrial, automotive and transport sectors.

Among the many Interpon powder coatings it uses are those within the Futura Collection which continues to deliver not only the colours and finishes it needs, but also exceptional superdurability to provide the highest levels of gloss retention and colour stability.

Importantly, the Futura range also comes with the backing of a 25-year warranty and Qualicoat Class 2, GSB Master and AAMA 2604 certifications which are increasingly specified by architects to support LEED and BREEAM

certified green building projects.

Working with AkzoNobel gives Extrugasa access not only to products but also to AkzoNobel's technical expertise.

"Our customers demand the highest quality," says Raquel Garcia Quinta, marketing manager at Extrugasa, "and with Interpon they can choose from the huge range of colours that already exists and are ready to be shipped to us, or we can create colors that are unique to their specific project."

While certain colours such as Interpon Noir 2100 are always popular, creating bespoke colors is much in demand: "AkzoNobel is not just a supplier," says Manuel Miguéns, Extrugasa's production manager.

"We feel like they are actually a part of Extrugasa, always on hand to support us with insight and advice, and in working with us to develop the unique powder coatings that our customers want."

The business values the support that AkzoNobel provides as well as the critical role of its own people in building long-term customer relationships.

"In the region of Galicia in Spain, the competition is strong, which is also why the quality of the product we produce, and



the quality and reliability of the Interpon powder coating, is so important. Customers come to us for the quality of our products and stay with us for the quality of our people and the support of our Interpon partners."

Sustainability is also key. Extrugasa has an established, multi-tiered environmental strategy to

reduce the energy and water it consumes, as well as increasing the amount of scrap aluminum it can recycle and reuse. It is also exploring the latest innovations from AkzoNobel, including its low cure powder coatings.

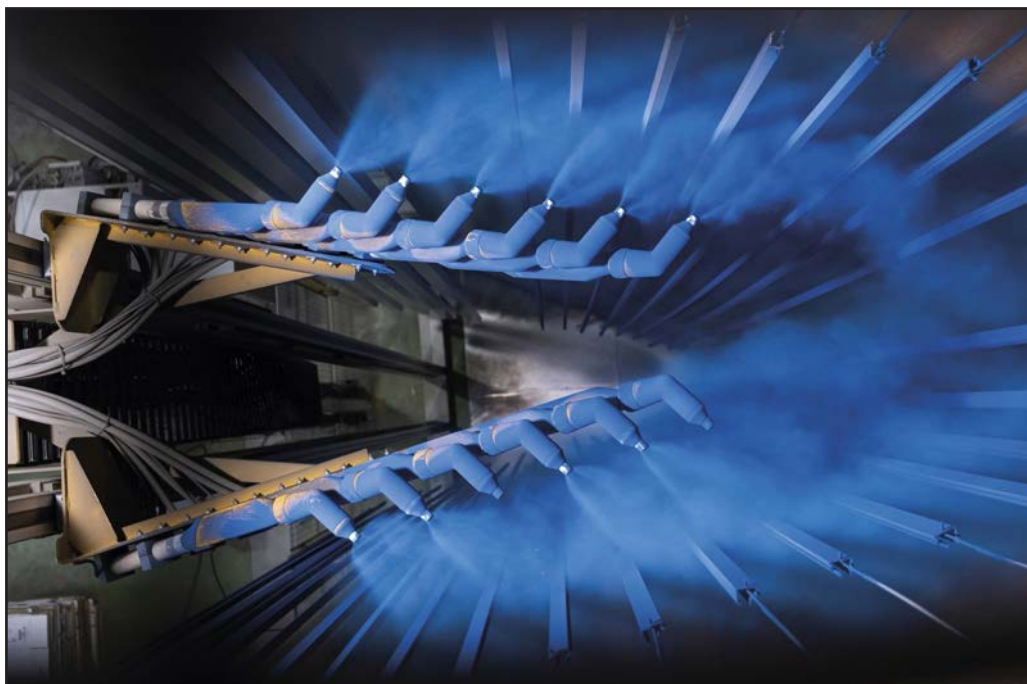
"We are constantly investing in new equipment and processes to drive further efficiencies," Raquel concludes, "and this includes exploring new Interpon powder coatings with the AkzoNobel team where they can support a more sustainable operation."

Sanal Limoncuoglu, commercial director South East Europe, Middle East and Africa at AkzoNobel Powder Coatings adds: "Extrugasa's clients include some of the world's most renowned architects, as well as designers, aluminum carpenters and industrial companies from different sectors and after four decades of support, the company is not resting on its reputation."

"We recognise the value that our close collaboration and working partnership delivers in keeping Extrugasa at the forefront of the aluminium industry."

AkzoNobel

www.akzonobel.com



Delivering the housing revolution through structural timber



THE STRUCTURAL Timber Association (STA) has welcomed the Autumn Budget and the news that the Government is set to provide more than £5 billion of investment to underline its commitment to building 1.5 million homes in the next five years.

In the first budget from the new Labour Government, Chancellor Rachel Reeves has announced a significant boost for the UK's affordable homes programme, increasing this to £3.1 billion, along with £3 billion worth of guarantees to increase the supply of homes and support the country's smaller housebuilders. The move will facilitate the construction of tens of thousands of new homes and will "give more people a safe, secure and affordable place to live".

Andrew Carpenter, CEO of the STA (pictured) commented: "This is welcome news indeed and the structural timber sector is poised to support delivery of these plans. We applaud the focus on social housing, as well as the recognition that planning can be an obstacle in housing growth. The news that the Government will set out to recruit hundreds more planning officers should go a long way to alleviating that issue.

"Overall, this is a good starting point from which the industry can move forwards, but we would urge the Government not to miss the huge opportunity that is presented by aligning house building ambitions with the country's pressing environmental challenges. With such high targets, achieving this rapid upscaling while also meeting net zero obligations will require a fundamental change in how we build, the materials we use, and the way we attract new people into the construction industry.



"Increasing the use of sustainable materials such as timber and adopting efficient offsite construction methods is the best solution to delivering the Government's aspirations. Looking ahead, we would welcome adoption of the proposed Part Z to the Building Regulations to further support reduction in embodied carbon, leading to more low carbon sustainable homes."

Offsite manufacture and low carbon structural timber has an essential role to play in helping the Government deliver its target of 1.5 million homes in the next five years.

Indeed, there is existing capacity in the established structural timber manufacturing sector to achieve 100,000 homes per annum, quickly reaching almost a third of the annual house building target.

Structural timber offers significant savings in time and resources; building a timber frame house can be up to 50% quicker than that of masonry construction, while the time taken to make a house weather-tight, is between 6-10 weeks shorter, according to the STA.

The industry has a remarkable opportunity right now to build more sustainable homes at an accelerated pace.

The structural timber industry has long had the capacity to deliver these homes, and recent investments further strengthen this capability.

With commitment from the UK Government, we can effectively tackle the practical challenges related to housing and sustainability. We have the facilities and the demand, and now we need to build.

Structural Timber Association
www.structuraltimber.co.uk

West Fraser happy to support grassroots community football club

WILBERFOSS Mavericks Junior Football Club is located just outside York in North Yorkshire. The club has been making good use of a new shelter that West Fraser was pleased to sponsor alongside Jewson Major Build Solutions. And it seems the shelter has been a bit of a game-changer for their dedicated coaches and budding players.

Stuart O'Bee, one of the coaches of the U7's team said "Your support has made a big difference for us. We have been using the shelter every weekend and it has been a great asset. I have attached some photos of the shelter in action. You can see how cozy and comfortable we are, even when the weather is horrible...The best part is that the boys have been on a winning streak for four weeks now and I think the shelter has boosted their morale and confidence".

Daniel Andrew, senior key account manager added "At West Fraser, we strive to make a difference — one relationship and one community at a time. We are pleased to support Wilberfoss Mavericks Junior Football Club alongside Jewson Major Build Solutions and Persimmon Homes, as this reflects each business's commitment to supporting local communities. I was particularly impressed to hear about the club's Saturday morning training sessions which maintain a 'one Club' vibe and team spirit, with over 120 players and their families regularly in attendance. It's inspiring to see such dedication and community involvement, and it's always

a pleasure to be able to support and celebrate the power of local sport and community engagement via our customer partners.

"We wish the young Wilberfoss Mavericks the best of luck and hope their winning streak continues!"

West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>



Football club kicks-off facilities facelift

A JUNIOR football club in Leeds is hoping to top the league both on and off the pitch after receiving support from a leading builders merchant.

Beeston Juniors has been a focal point of the grassroots sporting community in the city since 1986 and currently has 10 boys and girls teams between the age groups of under sevens and under 16s.

The clubhouse and pavilion at its Cardinal Square headquarters have

been in need of renovation in recent times and Selco Builders Warehouse has now provided paint and accessories to enable the facility to be freshened up visually.

Lee Horsman, club secretary of Beeston Juniors, said: "We are hugely grateful to Selco for the donation they have provided. Running a grassroots football club is very costly and the facilities at the pitches can often be neglected to ensure the youngsters are out on the pitch playing the sport they love. Selco's donation has allowed us to spruce up our clubhouse and help make it a more welcoming environment for both our players and their families.

"We've been a big part of the local community since 1986 and donations such as this will ensure we are able to continue providing a service to local youngsters who want to be part of a football club."

Around 200 children a week attend football training and games at Beeston Juniors, including a soccer school for children aged between five and six.

Selco has two branches in Leeds, one on Elland Road and one in Roundhay.

Chris Lowry, branch manager of Selco Leeds Roundhay, said: "We were only too happy to support the volunteers, players and parents at Beeston Juniors. We know it's a big part of the local community and provides a real opportunity for youngsters to start out on their footballing experiences from a young age.

"The club does fantastic work and we hope our donation has played a part in helping achieve their mission of renovating their facilities."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



From left, Lee Horsman, secretary of Beeston Juniors, with Chris Lowry, branch manager of Selco Leeds Roundhay.

Football sponsorship with Chandlers Roofing Supplies

CHANDLERS Roofing Supplies, Tonbridge, announces its sponsorship of Deal Town Rangers youth team. The U11 team, that currently plays in the East Kent Youth League, kicked off this season with new waterproof training jackets compliments of Chandlers Roofing Supplies.

Gary Ambrose, branch manager, Chandlers Roofing Supplies said: "As a local Kent roofing supplies business, we like to support our local community, particularly grass roots sports clubs like Deal Town Rangers that provides training for over 400 young people. We wish all the teams lots of success this season and particularly look forward to following the progress of the U11s."

Kieran Harper, a local roofer at Roofing South East and also coach at Deal Town Rangers, said: "It's thanks to sponsors like Chandlers Roofing Supplies that our Deal Town Rangers club can continue to thrive. Our U11s youth team is delighted with the new kit and we hope to do well in this season's league."

Located at Tonbridge Retail Park, Chandlers Roofing Supplies opened its Tonbridge branch five years ago and quickly became a preferred roofing merchant for roofers in the area.

Deal Town Rangers FC, formed 31 years ago, is now one of the biggest youth football clubs in Kent, providing training for over 400 young people at Goodwin Academy in Deal.

Chandlers Roofing Supplies
www.chandlersroofing.co.uk



MKM revamps Hull City's 'best seat in the house'

MKM Building Supplies (MKM) and Hull City have unveiled the newly revamped 'Best Seat in the House' at the MKM Stadium. Positioned directly on the half-way line, the bespoke seating area offers Hull City fans the ultimate VIP experience, combining unmatched comfort with exclusive perks.

The revamped seating transforms a regular matchday. Offering an unrivalled view, guests will also enjoy extra-cushioned seats equipped with private screens and to complete the experience, food, drinks, and refreshments are delivered directly to the seats.

This upgrade replaces the previous branded sofa, and creates a new exclusive environment that reflects both MKM and Hull City's commitment to its supporters.

Nicola Ollett, MKM Marketing Director, said: "The 'Best Seat in the House' reflects the pride we take in our partnership with Hull City. As a Hull-based company, we're passionate about creating unforgettable experiences for the fans, and this is our matchday

experience made for everyone — from the youngest supporters, to lifelong fans who've cheered through decades of highs and lows. It's about giving back to the community and ensuring every game is a chance to cheer on their local team in style."

Joe Clutterbrook, Hull City chief operating officer, added: "We're delighted to re-launch this popular initiative alongside principal partners, MKM. The team at MKM remain huge supporters

of our on-going partnership and their agreement to this upgrade is testament to that.

"Whether it's through 'Best Seat in the House', donation of mascot packages or raising awareness of testicular cancer, MKM's community ethos is at the fore of everything they do at Hull City. Together, we're excited to see the 'Best Seat in the House' evolve and provide more opportunities than ever before for supporters to enjoy a bit of MKM luxury."

Fans are encouraged to keep an eye on MKM's social media channels where the company will be running engaging challenges, giveaways, and creative entries for opportunities to win the 'Best Seat in the House' experience throughout the remainder of the 2024/25 Sky Bet Championship season. In addition to inviting fans, MKM will also be offering this exclusive opportunity to its customers and local charities, reinforcing its commitment to the community.

MKM Building Supplies, founded in Hull, has been a proud partner of Hull City for over two decades. Starting with sponsorship of the South Stand, MKM took on the stadium's full naming rights in 2021, marking a new era in their partnership. This long-standing relationship underscores MKM's dedication to supporting local sports and elevating the MKM Stadium as a premier destination for sporting and entertainment events.

MKM Building Supplies
<https://mkm.com>



Rotpunkt UK appoints area sales manager, Lewis Martin



ROTPUNKT UK, an award-winning designer and manufacturer of climate friendly German furniture for the contemporary home and kitchen, is delighted to welcome Lewis Martin, newly appointed area sales manager for South East England.

Lewis started on Monday 4th November 2024, and is part of the growing UK sales team, which includes Matt Phillips (head of UK sales & operations), Kim Rochester (customer relation manager UK), Dave Humphries (area manager UK South West & Midlands), and John McWhinnie (area manager UK North). Bringing over a decade of industry-specific experience in the design and supply of German kitchen furniture, Lewis has developed an in-depth understanding of the KBB sector following previous design roles and his most recent role with premium appliance brand, Miele.

From design and sales through to key accounts, project management and leadership roles, Lewis understands the importance of building strong, lasting relationships in order to identify new opportunities and develop, manage and drive sales.

Lewis Martin says, "As the UK furniture market continues to serve variety-seeking consumers with a tendency to choose a range of products and services, we need to ensure our suppliers can confidently deliver more specialist requirements to their customers. I am therefore thrilled to represent Rotpunkt in a sales capacity, and put my experience to good use by helping retailers sell our comprehensive range of furniture for the contemporary homeowner."

Matt Phillips says, "We are excited to have Lewis on board, he will be a great addition to our team as customers will get to benefit from his passion and drive. This appointment requires a unique combination of sales acumen, critical thinking and collaboration, and given his previous experience I am confident Lewis will become a tangible link between Rotpunkt and our customers in the South East of England."

From contemporary open-plan kitchens, walk-in wardrobes and multi-purpose living solutions, Lewis and the rest of UK sales team are now primed and ready to present the company's latest innovations to its network of independent retailers.

**Rotpunkt UK ● matt.phillips@rotpunktuk.com
rotpunktkuechen.de/en/ & rotpunkt.co.uk**

West Fraser welcomes two new business development managers



TWO NEW Business Development managers have been appointed by West Fraser bringing the total in the team to an optimum five.

Both Emma Burton (SW England and pictured right) and Demetrios De Frietas (N England) are tasked with managing and growing the company's wide-ranging customer base in their regions, promoting the company's strong technological and environmental innovations, and providing the best service to customers by helping them grow their own businesses.

Emma, who has spent the last 24 years for timber importers selling into both the manufacturing and merchant sectors, says, "I am looking forward to nurturing new and existing relationships both with customers and the West Fraser team."

Demetrios, who hails from Timbmet and Arnold Laver is looking forward to "increasing both volume and profitability for all parties by building strong and positive relationships."

West Fraser ● Tel 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>

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Opportunity knocks with IronmongeryDirect's latest products



IRONMONGERYDIRECT has added a huge selection of door furniture to its range. The new additions from leading brands such as Jedo, Carlisle Brass, Arrone and M Marcus include door knockers, letter plates, bells, door viewers, fire rated door handles and security chains. With over 130 products added in a variety of finishes, trade professionals will be able to find a suitable solution to meet any project specification.

Jedo by Frelan

The new Jedo by Frelan range is ideal for customers looking for high quality solutions in popular designs, at an affordable price. A selection of fire rated door handles on rose are now in stock, with a choice of five different designs and finishes that includes matt black, satin brass and satin nickel. There's also a choice of escutcheons and turn and releases in matching finishes available to achieve a cohesive and complementary look.

Carlisle Brass

Also new to IronmongeryDirect's range are 34 new Carlisle Brass products, including Letter Plates, Victorian Urn Door Knockers, Octagonal Victorian Centre Door Knobs, and Round Bell Pushes. All products are manufactured from solid brass and come in polished chrome and polished brass finishes, making them the ideal choice for customers looking for a more luxurious and elegant appearance.

Arrone

Another addition to the portfolio is a broad range of door hardware from Arrone, available in four striking colours: polished brass, graphite, anthracite grey, and satin chrome. Among the products is the Traditional Urn Door Knocker, designed with a 120° viewer to provide both style and practicality. Tested in accordance with BS EN 1670, the door knocker is grade 5, making it an ideal choice for properties in coastal locations or anywhere there is a high risk of corrosion.

Heritage Brass by M Marcus

IronmongeryDirect has expanded its M Marcus collection, with over 60 new Heritage Brass products available in matt black, unlacquered brass, and satin brass. Ideal for coordinating with a monochrome external colour scheme, or for achieving a more luxurious brass exterior, these traditional-inspired solutions include letter plates, door knobs, handles and more. Offering simple yet elegant designs, all products are manufactured from solid brass for strength and durability that homeowners can be confident in for years to come.

"We have an incredibly diverse range when it comes to door furniture, with our latest additions giving customers even more quality products to choose from to complete their projects," explained Roland Etheridge, category manager from IronmongeryDirect.

IronmongeryDirect is believed to be the UK's leading online ironmongery specialist, with over 50 years of trusted experience and over 18,000 products in stock. Customers can order by 9 pm for next day delivery (4 pm on Saturdays) or choose Click & Collect from over 10,000 DPD parcel shops nationwide.

IronmongeryDirect ● www.IronmongeryDirect.co.uk/browse/new

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Makita provides the soundtrack to your day with its new battery powered bluetooth speaker

MAKITA has launched a new cordless Bluetooth speaker designed for versatility and quality sound. Powered either by Makita's 18 V LXT or 40VMax XGT batteries, or AC mains power, the MR014G XGT/LXT Jobsite Speaker has been built to withstand the toughest work environments, offering professionals a choice of music, podcasts, playlists, or even karaoke whatever the location.

The new, compact MR014G Bluetooth Speaker is packed with a range of notable features that provide crystal clear, high-quality sound with powerful deep bass, making it an ideal sound system companion on a busy jobsite. Offering 1.8x higher sound pressure levels compared to older models plus an equaliser to adjust levels to suit the choice of music, it includes a 140 mm woofer and a 40 mm tweeter to deliver 20 W of high-quality sound and an impressive max volume of 99 dB(A).

With a choice of AUX or Blue-



tooth connection — communicable up to 100 metres and guaranteed to 30 meters, it also includes

True Wireless Stereo function enabling connection to a second MR014G Speaker to deliver stereo

sound. In fact, it can connect with up to ten compatible units to boost the reach of the audio, which is ideal for large scale locations that require a wider coverage of synchronised sound.

Other useful features include a convenient carry handle which doubles as a smartphone stand and a built-in microphone amplifier ideal for making announcements, or even to use for a karaoke session!

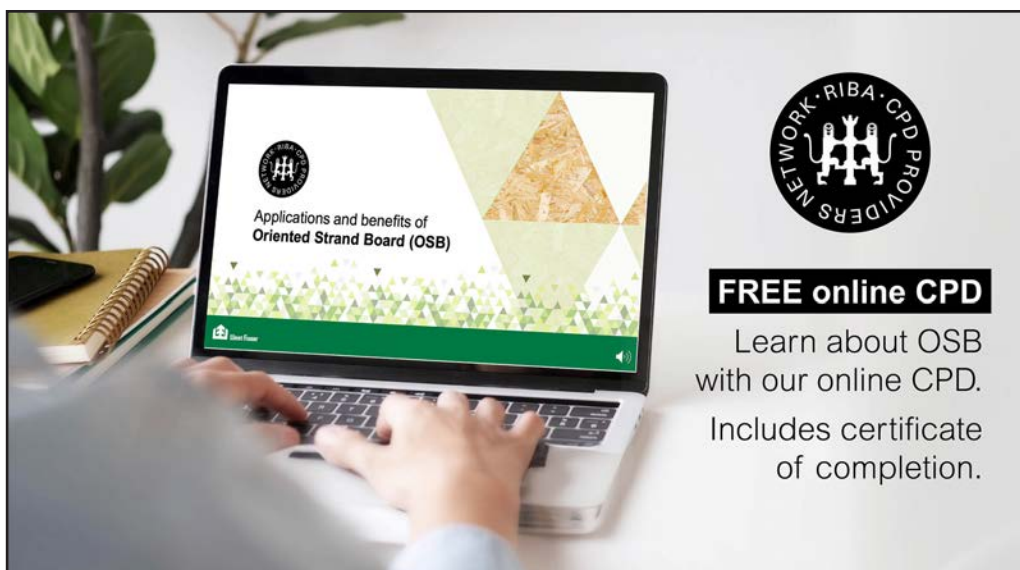
A USB port enables mobile charging for other devices and for added entertainment, a built-in LED decorative light can be set to blink in time to the music.

Kevin Brannigan, marketing manager at Makita UK said: "We are known for our wide range of innovative power tools and cordless technology and we continue to apply this expertise to a wider range of miscellaneous products that offer the same performance, quality, and convenience to jobsites in various ways. With this in mind, we are thrilled to launch our new cordless speaker that joins a growing line up of diverse products that complement our power tool range — spanning site lights, microwaves, kettles, heated jackets and more."

Makita UK
www.makitauk.com



Updated SterlingOSB Zero CPD from West Fraser



WEST FRASER has produced a new CPD presentation which highlights the features and benefits of the ever-popular **SterlingOSB Zero** panel and its variations. Available on RIBA's CPD website, the video, with narration, begins with learning aims and ends with learning outcomes.

The different types of SterlingOSB Zero — OSB3, T&G and PrimedPlus — are clearly described, alongside their benefits and details of how each is made. Applications of SterlingOSB Zero are explained — roofing, flooring, timber frame — while real-life case studies are picture-captioned.

The presentation also highlights West Fraser's certification; CE-

marked, BBA-approved, FSC® (C012533). It also explains how builders and developers can adhere to building regulations, with SterlingOSB Zero, including sound, structural and energy.

David Connacher, Marketing Manager concludes, "We have developed an interesting, easy-to-understand CPD which encompasses all you need to know; we identify what OSB is, understand the performance and credentials against competitive materials, recognise the environmental benefits, and study the recommended applications of each variant."

West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>

SCM Group acquires control of Mecal Machinery

SCM GROUP, a leading multinational in technologies for machining a wide range of materials, signed the closing deal for the purchase of 51% of **Mecal Machinery**, specialising in the production of machinery and systems for processing aluminium, PVC and light alloys.

Mecal Machinery, based in Pavia, is a vertically integrated company with a 100% made in Italy production with 190 employees and a turnover of €45 million.

"The entry of Mecal Machinery into the group," emphasises Marco Mancini, CEO of the SCM Group, 'allows us to enter a new market segment, enhancing the range of technologies and services already offered by the Group. The Partnership with Mecal Machinery, like the one signed in June with Tecno Logica in the highly innovative industrial plant sector, opens up important new business opportunities for us at international level'.

Ennio Cavezzale, owner-partner of Mecal Machinery, adds: "Becoming part of a solid multinational company like SCM Group guarantees Mecal a role as a global leader in its sector, leveraging the SCM Group's capillary sales and service organisation."

Mr Cavezzale remains a shareholder of the Lombard company with the role of Chairman of the Board.

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Introducing Latham Timber Manufacturing

JAMES LATHAM, a leading UK independent distributor of timber, panels and decors, recently announced the rebrand of its Rochdale-based timber mouldings and cladding specialist, Dresser Mouldings (Dresser) to Latham Timber Manufacturing (LTM).

This move is a key milestone in the James Latham Group's strategic objective to bring all its subsidiaries in line with the overall family of brands, creating a holistic package that will straddle the distribution services supply chain.

James Latham acquired Dresser in 2019 to meet the rising market demand for machined mouldings and cladding, a trend that has only continued to grow since. Over the past five years, the business has built on its unrivalled reputation for quality, creativity, and consistency, working with high-profile clients to develop decorative and finishing solutions across a wide variety of sectors. This ranges from intricate bespoke carving and corning to award winning cladding products and through to high performance, ultra-sustainable curtain wall systems.

As LTM, the business will continue to deliver the same best-in-class services customers have come to expect, whilst benefiting from significant investment provided by the James Latham

Group. This has been seen in the major upgrades made to plant equipment, which now possesses the very latest state-of-the-art machinery, increasing capability and efficiency without compromising on finesse.

David Johnson, general manager at LTM says, "Since James Latham acquired Dresser, they've provided incredible support to help enhance the business and broaden both our scope and ambition. Put simply, these experts are deeply rooted in the timber trade, fully understanding the challenges we face and recognising opportunities as they arise. They continue to help us, whether physically or digitally, to evolve our proposition, maintain our appeal, and make serious inroads into existing and emerging markets."

Visualising success

James Latham has long been a leader in digital innovation, and to mark its new brand identity, they have introduced a cutting edge online tool: the James Latham Cladding Visualiser. A powerful new platform, it builds on the success of the distributor's award-winning Digital Showroom, providing architects, designers and contractors with an opportunity to see how its cladding portfolio looks in application, ahead of specification.



Developed with long-time design partner, Cyon Agency, the site empowers James Latham's influencers and purchasers to see a wide array of materials, tones and colours under a variety of lighting conditions on different building types.

Featuring leading brands, including Accoya, Shou Sugi Ban, and James Latham's own multi-award-winning Finish Line collection, users have a near unrivalled scope and freedom to see what the exterior finish of their development will actually look like.

Taking it up a notch

Whilst other cladding visualisers exist, what sets James Latham apart is its use of high-definition photographic renders of the actual materials, resulting in a true-to-life replica of what each product will look like on a building façade.

The authenticity of the in per-

son specification journey is another advantage. Many visualisers already on the market have poor functionality and, as customer experience is at the heart of the James Latham proposition, ensuring that showroom feel, was at the heart of the project. That's why users have wide-ranging freedom to explore different materials, colourways, and lighting conditions.

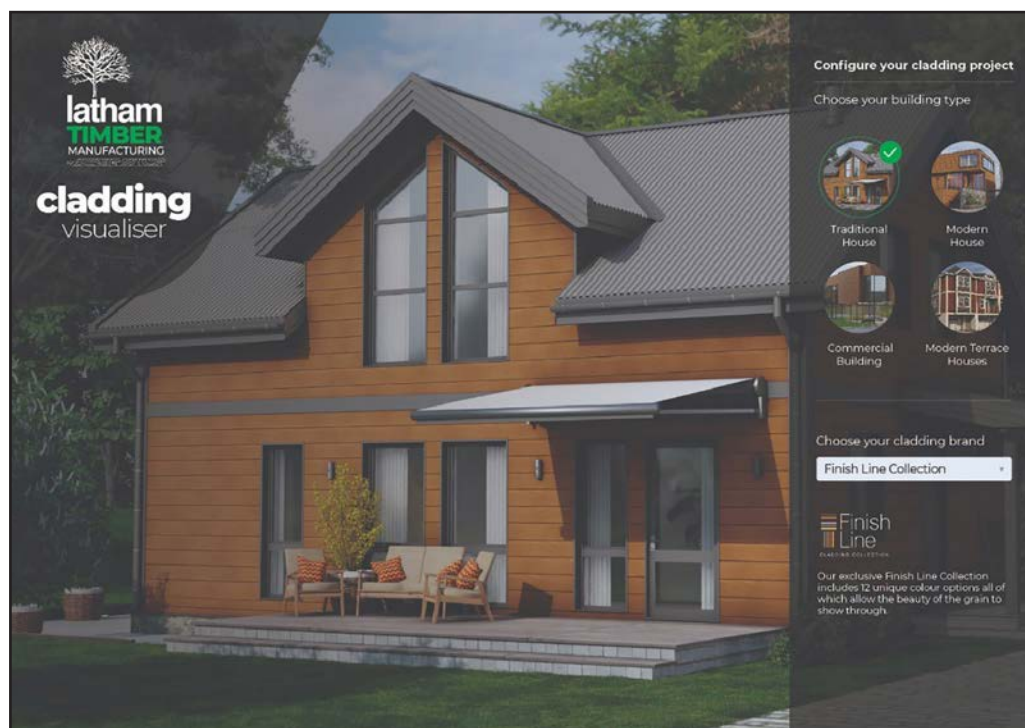
By creating a user profile, visitors can save their concepts, arrange sample deliveries, and even schedule a video meeting with a LTM cladding expert to discuss their selections.

As James Latham's Timber Director, Andy Duffin says, "The new visualiser is the perfect calling card for LTM, and the services it has to offer. Crucially, it shows how we're constantly listening to our audience's requirements and looking for ways to give them exactly what they need to make the most informed choice possible, regardless of time or location. As we continue to grow our share in the facades market, the new identity and cutting-edge visualiser platform positions us to compete for more business, ethically and sustainably."

As of 00:01 on Monday 4th November 2024, Dresser Mouldings assumed the name Latham Timber Manufacturing. The division will continue to be headed up by David Johnson reporting to Andy Duffin at James Latham Group. There have been no personnel or day-to-day operational changes.

Latham Timber Manufacturing
<https://tm.lathams.co.uk/>

James Latham Cladding Visualiser
<https://cladding.lathamtimber.co.uk/>



Working for a future with West Fraser



CAROL BROWN, West Fraser's human resources manager, talks about the experiences staff enjoy at a world-leading wood panel manufacturer.

Recognised internationally as a leading supplier of wood products, West Fraser, which operates two sites in Scotland, has always recognised that the staff are the company's greatest asset. The company has a proud history of training for young people and many team members have enjoyed long, progressive careers with West Fraser.

What is the typical service period for an employee? "The average length of service is 9-10 years although we actually have employees who've hit 25- and 40-years' service. We have three generations from the same family!"

Does West Fraser operate a graduate programme? "We run a graduate programme in our engineering department for mechanical, electrical and process engineers. The scheme was introduced eleven years ago when it evolved from the regular summer work experience placement we offered to students, and we have seen many students successfully complete the programme. Our graduate programme is popular because people are given the opportunity to be hands-on and fully integrated into the business from day one. Graduates get exposed to most parts of the business."

Does West Fraser offer an apprenticeship scheme? "For over 40 years, West Fraser has been giving local 16+ year old school leavers the opportunity to complete apprenticeships at the plants in Inverness and Cowie. As is common with apprenticeships, the new starters can expect on-the-job training combined with day release to a local college."

Does the location of plants make West Fraser a more significant employment opportunity for local people? "Yes, the sites are based in rural communities, so we are among the largest employers in the Cowie, Inverness and Genk (Belguim) areas. We see ourselves as an integral part of the communities in which our employees work and live and we support local charities and sponsor local schools and universities to support our staff."

Are staff offered guidance on their career path or regular reviews? "After completing the four-year apprenticeship and obtaining satisfactory examination results, the majority are employed on permanent contracts. All employees have two formal one-to-one appraisals carried out by their line manager every year to discuss their performance and to explore training and development opportunities. We also offer cross training so that employees can try out different roles and can offer support to their colleagues."

How does West Fraser support staff moral and mental health? "We provide our staff with an employee assistance programme that offers counsellors that offer support with personal and work issues that may be affecting mental health. We also have mental health first aiders on site for staff to go to."

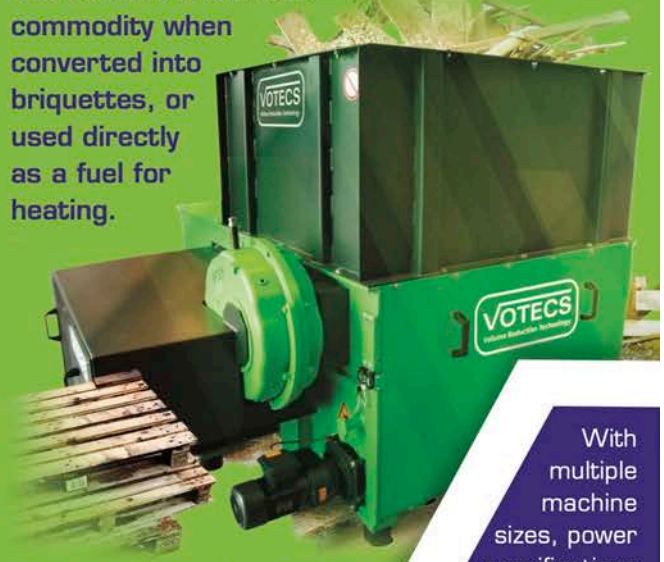
Where can people find out about vacancies at West Fraser? "We have a careers page on our website where visitors will find current vacancies, details of all the generous benefits commensurate with a company that values good employees and information on our undergraduate trainee and graduate development programmes."

West Fraser

<https://uk.westfraser.com/about-us/careers/>

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Slough youth charity wins Selco support

A CHARITY that provides essential youth services in Slough is planning upgrades to its High Street facility after winning the support of a leading builders merchant in a national competition.

Together As One has been named as a monthly winner in Selco Builders Warehouse's Community Heroes competition, securing £500 to spend in branch. The organisation has a mission to provide opportunities for young people in the town. Its offering includes support for young carers, a film club and a group for those with special educational needs and disabilities.

Rob Deeks, CEO of Together As One, said the money would be put to-

wards building an accessible ground-level toilet at its base. He said: "We couldn't believe it when we heard we had been selected as a monthly winner against such stiff competition from right across the country. We believe in striving for social change, working with young people from all faiths and backgrounds to make a positive difference in our community through training, youth work and creative projects. Since moving to our converted shop unit on High Street, we've realised the urgent need for accessible facilities so that everyone can feel welcome to use our services. This prize is a huge boost and we are very grateful to everyone at Selco for their support."

Selco has supported 12 monthly winners through its Community Heroes campaign. Those dozen good causes will all be finalists in the next stage of the competition, where the group which secures the most votes will win £5,000 and a runner-up will bag £1,000.

Simon Humpage, head of multi-channel marketing at Selco, said: "We are delighted to be able to support Together As One, which does valuable work with young people in Slough. Community Heroes has been extraordinarily popular once again with nearly 2,000 entries. It's a real privilege to be able to help good causes make a difference right across the country."

With hundreds of trade brands always in stock, Selco's branches are firmly focused on helping tradespeople complete their jobs as quickly and effectively as possible.

As well as offering trade services, Selco also has a strong digital presence including Click & Deliver and Click & Collect services and an app — as well as a 'Dial & Deliver' telephone service — to make life as convenient as possible for tradespeople.

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



Rob Deeks, CEO of Together As One.

New garden ensures Milly-Rose's memory lives on

A NEW memorial garden has been constructed at a Denton school to remember a six-year-old pupil who died suddenly in 2023.

Milly-Rose Stirrup passed away less than 24 hours after complaining of belly ache, with doctors treating suspected sepsis. However, the cause of the sudden decline and death of Milly-Rose is a rare genetic condition called LPIN1.

Staff and pupils at Denton West End Primary School have been determined to mark the memory of Milly-Rose and decided to build a memorial garden.

The Ashton branch of leading builders merchant Selco Builders Warehouse helped ensure the project was completed as the school wished by donating several hundreds of pounds of materials, including sleepers, sand, stone and cement.

A spokesperson for Denton West End Primary, said: "The news of Milly-Rose hit everyone at the school incredibly hard and it's been very difficult to try and move on.

"However, we were determined to mark Milly-Rose in the best way possible so we elected to build a special garden where children can sit and chat, read, play and remember their lovely friend.

"Milly-Rose was a wonderful girl, very popular with lots of friends and always smiling and we are confident that legacy will live on.

"We are extremely grateful to

Selco for the support they have provided with the garden.

"It has ensured we have been able to go above and beyond what we wanted to deliver and add little personal touches to the garden, such as a dog planter as she loved dogs so much."

The garden is 7 x 5 metres and includes a memorial bench and plaque.

Kevin O'Rourke, branch man-

ager of Selco Ashton based on Alexandria Drive, said: "Milly-Rose's story has touched the entire community and our thoughts still remain with her parents, family and friends.

"As soon as we heard about the memorial garden, we had no hesitation donating materials to help the school achieve its vision. We are delighted to have played a small part in creating an area which ensures Milly-Rose's memory will live on."

With hundreds of trade brands always in stock, Selco's 75 UK branches are firmly focused on helping tradespeople complete their jobs as quickly and effectively as possible.

As well as offering trade services, Selco also has a strong digital presence including Click & Deliver and Click & Collect services and an app - as well as a 'Dial & Deliver' telephone service — to make life as convenient as possible for tradespeople.

Selco
www.selcobw.com



Selco Ashton branch manager Kevin O'Rourke with representatives of the school.

Manchester youth hostel receives Selco backing

A HOSTEL for teenage girls in Manchester has received help to provide a safe and comfortable environment after winning a national competition. Contact Hostel, in Whalley Range, has secured £500 worth of materials from Selco Builders Warehouse through the leading building merchant's Community Heroes campaign. The hostel provides a safe home environment for teenage girls who are facing homelessness, caring for up to nine people at any one time.

Helen Gazard, fundraising partner at Contact Hostel, said: "We are delighted to receive the support of Selco. Maintaining our living areas and providing a home for vulnerable teenage girls when they need it most is our top priority and help like this is always very welcome. We also support the girls to access education, employment or training. Every resident has their own bedroom and access to our comfy living room, our communal kitchen, our newly renovated bathrooms and a dedicated learning hub. We look forward to visiting the Selco branch in Ardwick and selecting the materials we need."

There might be even better news ahead for Contact Hostel, which will now also be a Community Heroes finalist with the chance of winning the £5,000 top prize, or £1,000 as a runner-up. Contact Hostel will battle it out against the other 11 finalists, with the winner decided by a public vote on the Selco website.

Simon Humpage, head of multi-channel marketing at Selco, said: "We have supported some incredible groups through Community Heroes this year, and Contact Hostel certainly falls into that category."

"The charity does amazing work in helping these young women get back on their feet. It's a privilege to be able to help."

"We are looking forward to the Community Heroes voting process starting soon and to finding out who will be our 2024 champion."

Selco

www.selcobw.com



Helen Gazard, fundraising partner at Contact Hostel.

IBMG South East recognised for astounding contribution to charity

THE Independent Builders Merchant Group, South East (IBMG SE) was presented with a bespoke commemorative trowel in recognition of reaching a significant fundraising milestone for Teenage Cancer Trust.

IBMG South East was gifted the commemorative builder's tool, engraved with thanks, in acknowledgement of its incredible £300,000 lifetime donation to the charity.

The partnership with Teenage Cancer Trust starting 12 years ago with Parker Building Supplies and has since expanded to incorporate Chandlers Building Supplies and Fairalls Builders Merchants as the Independent Builders Merchants Group grew.

Charity champion Stuart Chapell of Parker Building Supplies, said: "The original goal, to raise £100k in a decade, was achieved in just eight years. Since 2019 support has really ramped up and to

have now reached £300k is just amazing. This achievement is the culmination of years of fundraising work across every brand and branch of IBMG South East. We are very proud of our efforts and delighted to have helped make a big difference to a very worthwhile charity."

Lynn Hyder of Teenage Cancer

Trust, said "Every day, seven young people aged 13-24 hear the words "you have cancer". They will each need specialised nursing care and support to get them through it. Teenage Cancer Trust is the only UK charity dedicated to meeting this vital need. The support of IBMG has and continues to be vital in ensuring that we are

there for young people with cancer when they need us most, and we thank the entire team across Parkers, Chandlers and Fairalls wholeheartedly for continuously going above and beyond to make this possible."

The IBMG annual golf day is a flagship event of the partnership while numerous other events and initiatives to include marathons; hikes; cycle rides; dragon boating; wing walking; as well as cake sales; BBQ's; branch raffles; quizzes and football tournaments have all contributed to reach the substantial sum of £300,000.

Independent Builders Merchant Group (IBMG) is believed to be the largest owner of independent merchants in the South of England, with 20 leading merchant brands and 179 branches from Penzance to Margate, East Anglia and north to the Midlands.

IBMG

www.independentbm.com





Perry Barr Selco team (from left) John Roberts, Malcolm Greenslade and Anthony Stewart with pupils from Kingsland Primary School.

School support from Selco

A BIRMINGHAM primary school is embracing the great outdoors by encouraging its pupils to grow their own fruit and vegetables — with the help of a leading builders merchant.

Kingsland Primary School, based in Kingstanding, has created its own garden area for the children to enjoy all the benefits of being self-sufficient.

The development of the area was supported by the Perry Barr branch of Selco Builders Warehouse, one of the UK's most prominent builders merchants.

Selco donated all the materials for 11 gardening troughs, while the team at Perry Barr also built the structures so the children could utilise them straight away.

Nathan Allsopp, deputy headteacher of the school which has around 350 pupils, said: "We have developed an Eco Plan over the last year and at the heart of that is sustainability. We want children to understand that food isn't just something you buy from a supermarket and giving them the chance to grow their own fruit and vegetables is a fantastic way of doing that. There will also be some of our pupils who don't have a garden at home so having this facility provides another important life experience for them.

"We have already started growing carrots, potatoes, strawberries and a range of herbs, including mint, lavender and fennel.

"The children are getting a real excitement from their time in the garden and we are hugely grateful to Selco for their support.

"Without their materials — and the team physically constructing the gardening troughs — there is no way we could have made this whole project work."

Amongst the materials Selco supplied were timber, decking boards, fence posts and compost.

Malcolm Greenslade, branch manager of Selco Perry Barr, said: "Sustainability is a key focus for us at Selco so the plans Kingsland Primary School have put in place really resonated with us.

"We were delighted to help with both materials and manpower in terms of putting the gardening troughs together and it was fantastic to visit the school and see how much joy the children were getting from the garden area."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com

Trio from builders' merchants raise £3,000 for charity

THREE COLLEAGUES from Parker Building Supplies set out to summit Snowdon, also known as Yr Wyddfa, for charity.

Stuart Chappell and Richard Barnes who work in sales at Parker Building Supplies, Uckfield, along with Richard's wife, Liz Barnes, joined forces to raise funds for Teenage Cancer Trust completing the challenge in just six and half hours.

The colleagues, who work together at Parker Building Supplies in Uckfield, East Sussex, put in hours of hill walking preparation on the South Downs and across the Seven Sisters in Sussex for the challenge.

Stuart Chappell, Parker Building Supplies, said: "The three of us worked really well together, and were delighted to reach the summit in good time. The climb itself was definitely a challenge, and the wind and cloud at the top certainly made it feel like we were having to work hard for the money people had generously donated.

"Even when the weather turned hostile, with winds of 70 mph and temperatures at freezing, it was the amazing team at Teenage Cancer Trust; the young people they support, and all the incredibly kind people who sponsored us that gave us the motivation to keep going."

Richard Barnes, Parkers Building Supplies, said: "It's such a great feeling to have raised more than £3.3k for Teenage Cancer Trust. We want to thank every single person who donated. It really does mean so much to us and to Teenage Cancer Trust — a very deserving charity that does incredible work."

Every day, seven young people aged 13-24 hear the words "you have cancer". They will each need specialised nursing care and support to get them through it. Teenage Cancer Trust is the only UK charity dedicated to meeting this vital need.

Parker Building Supplies, established in 1984, celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Parker Building Supplies is one of the largest independent builder's merchants in the South East with more than 450 colleagues working across 20+ locations.

Parker Building Supplies ● www.parkerbs.com



Hospice revamp plans boosted by win

A LEADING London hospice is celebrating after winning building materials to improve its facilities in a nationwide competition. The famous St Christopher's Hospice in Sydenham has secured £500 to spend at Selco Builders Warehouse through the leading merchant's Community Heroes campaign.

And the hospice — which has been credited as a significant influence on modern global hospice philosophy — will also be one of 12 finalists gunning for the top prize of £5,000 in cash when a public vote opens.

John Vickers, director of finance and corporate services at St Christopher's, said: "We are very grateful to Selco for their tremendous support. Every donation we receive makes a difference to the people we care for. We deliver vital end of life care services to over 6,000 people in our local community each year. We are currently refurbishing our inpatient unit, which offers 24/7 care and had 650 patients last year. We are making the wards more dementia-friendly with colour-coding, call alarms, increased space, storage units and improved lighting. It's all about creating a more welcoming and less clinical environment.

"We will be pushing hard to win the top prize when the voting opens soon."

Selco has 32 branches in London, including St Christopher's closest outlet on Bromley Road in Catford.

There were almost 2,000 entries to Community Heroes this year.

Simon Humpage, head of multi-channel marketing at Selco, said: "Community Heroes continues to go from strength to strength and it is always extraordinarily difficult to select our 12 finalists. St Christopher's stood out due to the huge number of people it supports and its commitment to constant improvement. It's a privilege to be able to help such a good cause.

"We are looking forward to the Community Heroes voting process starting soon and to finding out who will be our 2024 champion."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



John Vickers, director of finance and corporate services at St Christopher's.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The health & safety benefits of using CaberShield Eco

CONTRACTORS can reduce the risks of slips and falls, while ensuring high technical performance, by selecting the upgraded version of a popular flooring product from the range of West Fraser, a leading UK manufacturer of engineered wood-based panel products.

Able to withstand the vagaries of the British climate, as well as being immune to the spills of plaster or mortar that inevitably occur on site, CaberShield Eco boasts all of the inherent qualities of CaberFloor P5, as well as representing the latest sustainable solution for creating high specification, weather-resistant floor installations. The new portfolio ensures safety for carpenters and other trades, especially when working at

height — either during installation as a temporarily exposed floor area, or as a purpose built deck/platform.

As West Fraser describes it to the industry, these new waterproof panels ensure that contractors can "keep building even with the roof off." In fact, the manufacturer now promises an extended 60 days' durability for CaberShield Eco if correctly fixed using the recommended adhesive. So, in the wettest of weather, building can carry on, with the H&S team reassured regarding slip-resistance, supported by the fact that the boards are able to accept heavy traffic on a busy site without the level of grip deteriorating.

As with CaberFloor P5, CaberShield Eco sheets are 100 per cent recyclable at the end of life and feature a solvent-free, single sided UV resistant coating to the upper surface — so will not deteriorate even in strong sunshine, which again reduces the risk of slip-related accidents. In practice, the solvent-free single component polyurethane CaberFix D4 glue also offers the advantage of eliminating those irritating squeaks when applied as a 'joint and joist' solution.

CaberShield ECO sheets are manufactured in one size — 22 x 600 x 1,200 mm — with an all-round T&G edge profile. The product is both FSC- and CE-certified and is ideal for humid environments in commercial as well as residential applications, across both new-build and refurbishment sectors.

All West Fraser panel products produced in the UK are net carbon negative and manufactured in mills that have obtained the coveted environmental ISO 14001 accreditation. Responsibly sourced, the panels are FSC® certified (C012533) and created from locally grown timber, cutting embodied carbon from transportation.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921

<https://uk.westfraser.com>



Extractly system cleans air (quietly) at Staverton

LEADING dust and fume extraction specialists, Extractly Limited, has recently completed the installation and commissioning of new dust extraction and filtration plant for a major UK furniture manufacturer based in Rotherham, South Yorkshire.

Originating from the village of Staverton, in South Devon, and with almost a century of history behind it, the Staverton brand has become synonymous with high-quality contemporary office furniture. In the late 1920s, a team of craftsmen, including joiners and cabinet makers, was recruited to undertake works on the Dartington Hall estate and, in 1931, Staverton Builders Ltd was incorporated. Over the decades the business has ridden the storms of change but, throughout its various phases and guises, has continued to be design-led and, today, Staverton (UK) Ltd enjoys an enviable reputation as a responsible and reliable, award-winning British manufacturer.

Whilst Staverton's showroom and sales team are based in the heart of London's creative Clerkenwell district, its design, manufacturing and admin functions are accommodated in a strategically located 38,000 sq. ft. facility, alongside the M18 motorway, on the outskirts of Rotherham. In



33,000 m³/hr capacity ATEX filter unit with main fan fitted to 'clean side' of the filter unit for maximum efficiency. Noise is attenuated by the silencer fitted above the fan.



55 kW ATEX main fan.



Internal view of the filter unit in operation shows dust and woodwaste collecting on the tubular filter bags and rotary valve located at the bottom of the hopper.

the busy workshop, responsibility for supervising and managing machining operations is the duty of production manager Mark Powell. "When it comes to dust producing machines, we've got some big hitters here", says Mark, who's been with Staverton for just a quarter of a century. "There are three high-speed CNC machining centres requiring around 15,000 m³ of extraction an hour between them, plus a couple of big saws and an edgebander that together need about 10,000 m³. On top of that we have a snip saw, spindle moulders and BHX drilling centres; all of which can easily add another 5,000 m³ an hour if they're all being used at the same time."

Staverton's previous main fan and filter unit were both nearing the end of their service life and, although the extraction system had been upgraded back in 2015 to take advantage of Ecogate® 'on-demand' energy-saving technology, the company's additional investments over the years in newer, high-speed machinery meant that the system was now operating close to its maximum capacity. Extractly Ltd is also the Master UK Distributor and Installer for Eco-



ATEX isolation valve prevents pressure wave and flames travelling into the factory.

gate® in the UK and, as a result of a timely customer relationship interaction with Staverton, sales director, Jake Oldfield, was invited to visit the Rotherham factory to sur-

vey the site and assess Staverton's current extraction requirements.

As Jake explains: "Since Staverton already had Ecogate® technology installed across the factory, it was evident from recorded system data that the old filter unit and fan were being stretched to the limit and now clearly lacked the power required to efficiently extract dust and wood waste from all the machinery being used." With the old fan and filter being rather long in the tooth, the only satisfactory solution was to install a modern, efficient replacement filter unit, with greater capacity, together with a more powerful main fan.

"Extractly put together a compelling proposal", added Mark Powell. "We previously had a 37 kW fan, running flat out, but Jake recommended replacing this with a 55 kW fan which would easily cope with today's requirements, but also give us plenty of leeway for future expansion. Compared with our previous fan this is quite a step up in power but, with Ecogate® already installed, it means the fan only consumes the energy needed to extract from machines that are operating at any point in time."

For dust collection and filtration, Extractly installed a new ATEX filter unit with sufficient capacity to filter 33,000 m³ of dust-laden air every hour. "To achieve maximum extraction efficiency from the new system we've installed the fan on the 'clean' side of the filter unit," says Jake Oldfield, "and, since dust and wood waste doesn't pass through the fan, a more efficient impeller

design can be used. As a result, the fan consumes less electricity, and ongoing maintenance is minimised due to the inevitable reduction in wear and tear." Dust and wood waste is removed from the airflow as it's drawn through an array of tubular filter bags, which in turn are cleaned by three 1.5 kW regeneration fans. Collected waste is then removed, pressure free, from the filter unit by a rotary valve before being blown by a 15 kW ATEX transport fan into an adjacent storage container.

Of benefit to personnel working in the Staverton factory, as well as those in neighbouring businesses, the silencer Extractly fitted above the main fan is very effective in keeping noise to a minimum. In addition, and to comply with ATEX regulations, Extractly installed an explosion isolation valve into the main ductwork, close to the filter unit. "We always recommend the inclusion of a non-return valve", Jake Oldfield explains. "In the unlikely event of an explosion occurring in the filter unit, the valve prevents a pressure wave and flames travelling through the ductwork and into the factory."

In conclusion, Mark Powell confirmed: "The new extraction works really well — the new filter unit has made a significant difference to the efficiency of our waste collection and Extractly managed to complete the whole installation with minimal machine downtime."

Extractly Limited

Tel: 01924 520462

Email: info@extractly.co.uk

www.extractly.co.uk



15 kW transport fan blows waste into storage container.

A pint of dust: Visual campaign launched to highlight dangers of dust inhalation

A DUST extraction specialist has launched a campaign to highlight the dangers of dust inhalation — as it calculates that common construction jobs such as drilling and floor grinding can see individuals ingest the equivalent of more than a pint of dust across the course of a 40 year career.

With respirable crystalline silica a major cause of silicosis — a chronic lung condition that kills up to 1,000 people a year in the UK — Dustcontrol UK has launched a campaign to underline just how big a risk common construction jobs can pose to workers' health.

The 'Dust to dust' campaign highlights that, by failing to take the right precautions, workers run the risk of inhaling a level of respirable dust that can prove fatal. And to help those working in construction visualise the dangers, the firm has calculated the amount of dust that can potentially be ingested in a lifetime to be the equivalent of 1.28 imperial pints of respirable dust or 0.68 imperial pints of respirable crystalline silica specifically.

From dust to dust:

Uncovering the hidden dangers of dust exposure

Imagine walking into your local pub and being handed a pint of dust. For workers across many industries this outlandish image isn't far from reality when it comes to volume of dust consumption.

Over a lifetime, workers can unknowingly inhale harmful dust particles that accumulate to the equivalent of that unimaginable pint. The long-term health effects are devastating and largely avoidable with the right measures in place.

Dustcontrol UK, a leader in dust extraction solutions, is raising awareness about the often-overlooked health risks of dust exposure in the workplace. From respiratory diseases to severe conditions like cancer, working in dusty environments can result in serious, life-altering health problems.

Construction, manufacturing, and other industries create high levels of dust on a daily basis. According to the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE), harmful dust types include silica, asbestos, and wood dust, all of which can pose significant health risks when inhaled.

Silica dust, for instance, is responsible for about 500 deaths annually in the UK. This fine dust is found in materials like concrete and stone, making it a major hazard for construction workers. Long-term exposure can lead to silicosis, a debilitating lung disease, and even lung cancer.

Perhaps more well known is asbestos dust, which is still lingering in older buildings and kills approximately 5,000 workers a year. The dust is so harmful that even small amounts can have deadly effects.

Also, wood dust from cutting or sanding wood can lead to respiratory issues and increase the risk of nasal cancer.

The dust workers inhale today may take years or even decades to manifest as serious health conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma. In extreme cases, the consequences are fatal.

It's not just about inhaling dust. Over time, workers in dusty environments may be consuming more dust than they ever imagined. The fine particles that linger in the air, unnoticed, can settle into food, drink, and even the lungs, creating a ticking time bomb for their health. Think of it like passively drinking dust — a far cry from the safe and clean environments we expect to work in.

The good news is that with the right dust control systems, the risks posed by dust can be significantly reduced. Dustcontrol UK specialises in designing high-performance dust extraction equipment that captures dust at its source, preventing it from becoming airborne and endangering workers.

Innovations like HEPA-filtered mobile extractors and background air cleaners play a key role in ensuring that dust is removed before it has a chance to harm workers.

By combining on-tool dust extraction with powerful air filtration sys-

tems, businesses can drastically cut down on airborne dust particles.

"We've seen firsthand how effective dust control solutions can change the health outlook of an entire workforce," says Ira Morris, country manager of Dustcontrol UK. "Our systems capture and contain dust right where it's generated, creating healthier, safer environments across construction, manufacturing, and other industries."

The importance of maintaining dust-free environments cannot be overstated. In the UK, dust-related health issues are preventable. Employers have both a legal and moral obligation to protect their staff from unnecessary exposure. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 mandate that employers must implement adequate control measures to reduce the risks.

By investing in dust extraction solutions and adhering to strict health and safety regulations, businesses can safeguard their workers, ensuring that the only thing they're breathing at work is clean air – not dust.

With over 50 years of expertise, Dustcontrol UK provides innovative dust extraction solutions to a wide range of industry sectors, including food processing and pharmaceuticals.

The Dustcontrol product range includes the DC Tromb and AirCube 500, renowned for durability and superior performance. In addition to supplying high-quality equipment, Dustcontrol UK offers comprehensive servicing and maintenance packages, further enhancing the longevity and efficiency of its systems.

Dustcontrol UK ● Tel 01327 858001

email sales@dustcontrol.co.uk ● www.dustcontrol.uk



Joinery apprentice secures second place at SkillBuild National Final 2024

BRADFORD College Apprenticeships continue to deliver outstanding results, as Level 2 Joinery Apprentice Ahmed Shakir clinched second place in the Joinery category at the SkillBuild National Final 2024

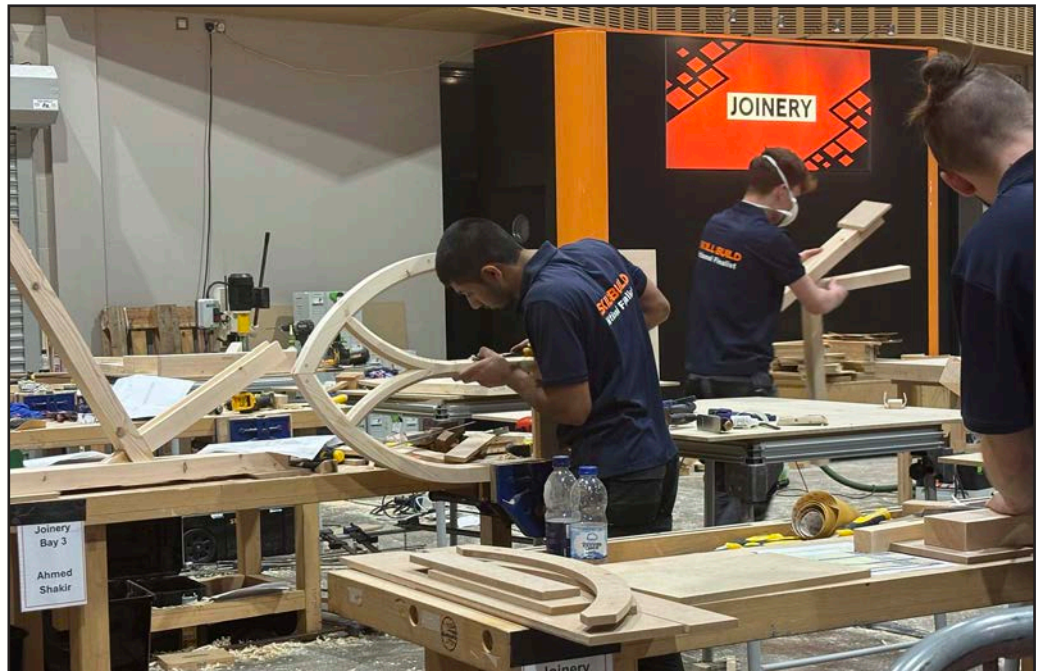
Delivered by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), SkillBuild is the UK's largest multi-trade competition for construction trainees and apprentices.

This year's National Final, held from 19th to 21st November at the Marshall Arena in Milton Keynes, brought together skilled competitors to tackle high pressure challenges that showcased their expertise and adaptability.

Ahmed's journey with Bradford College began in 2021, when he enrolled on a Carpentry and Joinery course, completing both Level 1 and Level 2 over two years. Eager to further develop his skills, he joined Abrahams & Carlisle in September 2023 to begin his apprenticeship in Bench Joinery.

Ahmed's preparation for the National Final began with an impressive performance at the SkillBuild Regional Competition held in York in July, where his high score earned him a spot among the UK's top joinery apprentices.

At the Marshall Arena, Ahmed faced three intense days of competition, constructing an intricate



arched door with a display frame.

Reflecting on the event, Ahmed said: "Being part of the CITB SkillBuild 2024 Final was amazing. The level of competition was very high, with eight regional winners from across the UK. To finish second in the Joinery category was a complete surprise, but I'm so proud of what I achieved."

Jonathan Hemingway, Director at Abrahams & Carlisle, expressed his pride in Ahmed's performance:

"Making the final was an achievement in itself, but finishing second overall is a credit to Ahmed's skill and dedication."

"He approached the challenges with determination and professionalism, and we're incredibly proud of him."

This year's SkillBuild National Final highlighted the exceptional talent within the construction industry. Across three days, competitors were tasked with

constructing intricate projects within an 18-hour timeframe. The challenges tested their technical expertise, precision, time management, and ability to perform under pressure.

The event also drew thousands of visitors, showcasing the diverse skills and rewarding career opportunities available in the construction industry.

Ahmed's achievements add to Bradford College's proud legacy of excellence in apprenticeship training. The apprenticeships are designed to equip students with practical skills and connect them with industry leaders like Abrahams & Carlisle.

The College has supported hundreds of apprentices in building fulfilling careers and achieving their professional goals, with recent Qualification Achievement Rates (QAR) reports revealing Bradford College as one of England's top five large Further Education colleges for apprenticeship achievement rates.

Ahmed is already looking forward to the possibility of competing in SkillBuild 2025, aiming to build on this year's success. His journey stands as a testament to the opportunities that apprenticeships can offer.

Bradford College
www.bradfordcollege.ac.uk



"SMAU Innovation" Award to SCM Group

SCM GROUP is one of the "Made in Italy" entrepreneurial excellences to be honoured at the most recent edition of SMAU, the annual Innovation trade fair held in Milan from 29 to 30 October.

The Italian group is a global leader in technologies for machining a wide range of materials and industrial components and won the 2024 Innovation Prize for its "Solutions Library" project.

Digital transformation and open innovation, key topics at the 2024 edition of SMAU, are also the concepts at the root of this new service devised and developed by SCM Group: a library of technical solutions

for co-workers and customers, which makes the most of artificial intelligence to process the company's technical know-how, effectively classify it and make it available, as and when it is required, to those it may be of use to.

The purpose of the project, which is part of the group's digital transformation programme, is to activate the process and enhance the wealth of know-how acquired over seventy years of experience in the technologies sector for machining wood and other materials.

Alessandra Benedetti, digital transformation & business remodelling

director, picked up the prize on behalf of the group and she explained the purposes and advantages of the new, winning project during the Live Show on "Innovative tools to support and enhance employees' work".

"Solutions Library is part of a wider strategic plan," she explained, "which involves offering customers, not only the product but also software and services beneficial for building a continuous and shared relationship."

An example of innovation which highlights how digital technologies can transform business models by also creating sustainable worth.

SMAU was an opportunity for networking with the key players and stakeholders of the Made in Italy innovation eco-system. Together with Sara Iaconianni, scouting & idea generation manager, and Lorenzo Monti, digital projects manager, SCM Group took part in the "Startup Safari" initiative for examining open innovation ideas and potential opportunities.

SCM Group

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The SCM team, including Alessandra Benedetti.

Roofscape Design Awards 2025 returns

THE TRUSSED RAFTER ASSOCIATION (TRA) announces the return of the Roofscape Design Awards 2025, an event dedicated to recognising the ingenuity and technical skill of designers in the trussed rafter sector.

Following two highly successful years, three new individual categories will be introduced to highlight personal achievements in sustainability, health and safety, and emerging talent within the trussed rafter industry.

The Roofscape Design Awards 2025 will see the three project-based categories, which are:

1. Commercial Project of the Year. Recognising excellence in non-residential projects, from offices to public buildings.
2. Conversion and Refurbishment Project of the Year. Celebrating innovative designs for transforming or improving existing buildings.
3. Residential Project of the Year. Honouring outstanding design and craftsmanship in new-build housing.

The new individual categories are as follows:

1. Innovation Champion of the Year. Recognising individuals leading technological, sustainability and operational innovation.
2. Safety Champion of the Year. Celebrating dedication to maintaining and promoting safe practices within the trussed rafter industry.
3. Career Development Champion. Recognising individuals showing dedication to their ongoing training and professional development.

Nick Boulton, chief executive of the TRA, expressed his enthusiasm for this year's awards, stating: "Trussed rafters are a widely used modern

method of roof construction made from nature's most sustainable building material — timber. Although it is estimated that there are about 60 million trussed rafters in service in the UK today, the design skills involved in their construction often remain underappreciated within the construction industry. The Roofscape Design Awards will shine a spotlight on the roof truss designers' problem-solving skills while showcasing timber engineering design as an attractive career for the next generation. The 2023 and 2024 entries were spectacular and inspiring, and we will be celebrating the beautifully completed projects of 2024."

TRA Roofscape Design Awards open for entry on 25 November to all TRA member companies in the UK and Ireland. Winners will be announced at the TRA AGM in April 2024.

Trussed Rafter Association ● www.tra.org.uk



The Surface Design Awards 2025 finalists announced

THE HIGHLY anticipated 2025 Surface Design Award finalists have been announced, showcasing a range of categories. The awards honour outstanding interior and exterior design highlighting projects that embody innovation and sustainability. The finalists represent creative quality, pushing the boundaries of design and highlighting the ever growing potential in material innovation within architectural and interior design projects.

Surface Design Awards are part of Surface Design Show (SDS), an integral part of the design calendar, held at the Business Design Centre (4-6 February). The event brings together the best in new materiality for the built environment and is the event of choice for the sector to learn about the latest trends, see new products and network with the industry.

The expert judging panel was led by Head Judges, Jorge Mendez-Caceres, founding director of For Everyday Life and Tony Chambers, founder of TC & Friends for Interiors and ex editor in chief of Wallpaper.

Jorge Mendez-Caceres chaired the judging panel for the exterior categories and was joined by Amrit Seera, architect at Vabel, Jon Eaglesham, managing director at Barr Gazettas, James Dixon, director at Benoy Architects and Vicki Odili, director of sustainability at TP Bennett. Tony Chambers was the lead judge for the interior categories and was joined by Lee Roberts, director at Zebra, Pernille Bonser, CEO of Resonate, Simon Hamilton, interior designer and associate lecturer & future practice leader at The Royal College of Art and Amber Luscombe, head of ESG and senior development manager at Oxygen.

The judges were impressed by the innovative designs and products, which seamlessly combined sustainability with diversity, all while delivering a powerful and influential message. A total of 33 entries made the shortlist with the panel also deliberating the Supreme Winner.

Exterior Commercial Building Finalist, The Pavilion @ Cowley Manor by De Matos Ryan stood out to the judges because of the local materials, with the stone sourced only a few miles away from the location. They also commented that the project is a modern take on tradition. Additionally, the judges for the Interior Commercial Building Category were impressed with Roast & Toast by THE gRID architects with them commenting again on the use of locally sourced materials including cow dung, clay and hay which was used to plaster the walls using local craftsmen.

For the Surface of the Year Interior Category, judges were inspired by shortlisted product Float Mini by Humanscale, commenting on the use of bamboo rather than traditional wood and the exclusion of using any harmful Red List chemicals including formaldehyde.

Sponsored by steel window and door experts Fabco the Exterior Housing Category finalist, Perforated House by Novak Hills Architects, accumulated recognition for its "clever and retro materiality use. This residential project shows a clear and unique cooling insulation system while highlighting a 1950's cool interiors aesthetic that you can really celebrate both inside and out".

Whilst the judges for The Interior Housing Category praised both The Parisian Apartment by Cousins & Cousins and The Corner House by LANGSTAFF DAY ARCHITECTS for polar opposites, with the Parisian apartment highlighted for its controlled maximalism and the Corner House being commended for its quiet warmth through the use of materials.

Winners for the Surface Design Show Awards will be announced at a cocktail reception on Wednesday 5 February from 6pm at the Surface Design Show. Each category winner will be presented with a trophy designed by The Good Plastic Company.

Surface Design Show

www surfacedesignshow.com



Parisian Apartment, Cousins & Cousins.



The Corner House, LANGSTAFF DAY ARCHITECTS.

Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre named best timber building at the Wood Awards

A 'REMARKABLE' retrofit of Brighton's timber-framed landmark arts centre by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, the Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre was named the UK's best timber building in a ceremony recently — winning the Gold Award at the 2024 Wood Awards.

Set within historic Regency gardens and adjoining the famous Royal Pavilion, the Grade-I listed Corn Exchange and Grade-II listed Studio Theatre buildings have been thoroughly restored, strengthened and remodelled — revealing a rich timber heritage to visitors fortunate enough to visit.

As well as improving connection and accessibility with the introduction of a new foyer space and café, the project has seen the careful repair and restoration of the UK's longest single-span timber frame through phenomenal effort and incredible engineering by the project team.

By re-analysing the whole structure, meticulously understanding every joint and size, the project team brought the building up to modern design standards with a solution that preserves and enhances the original timber roof — repairing rather than replacing damaged parts.

Through the matching of old timber with new, the team has created a stunning space with an inherent warmth in its colour, which acts as an ode to the UK's timber heritage.

Working closely with theatre and timber experts, this project has brought major technical and operational improvements to the South Coast's leading arts venue and extended the lifespan of this unique timber building by over 100 years.

The construction for Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre was completed by R. Durnell & Sons and Westridge Construction Ltd, with wood supplied by Neil Burke Joinery and Weitzer Parkett. The structural engineers were Arup and the building services and sustainability consultants were Max Fordham.

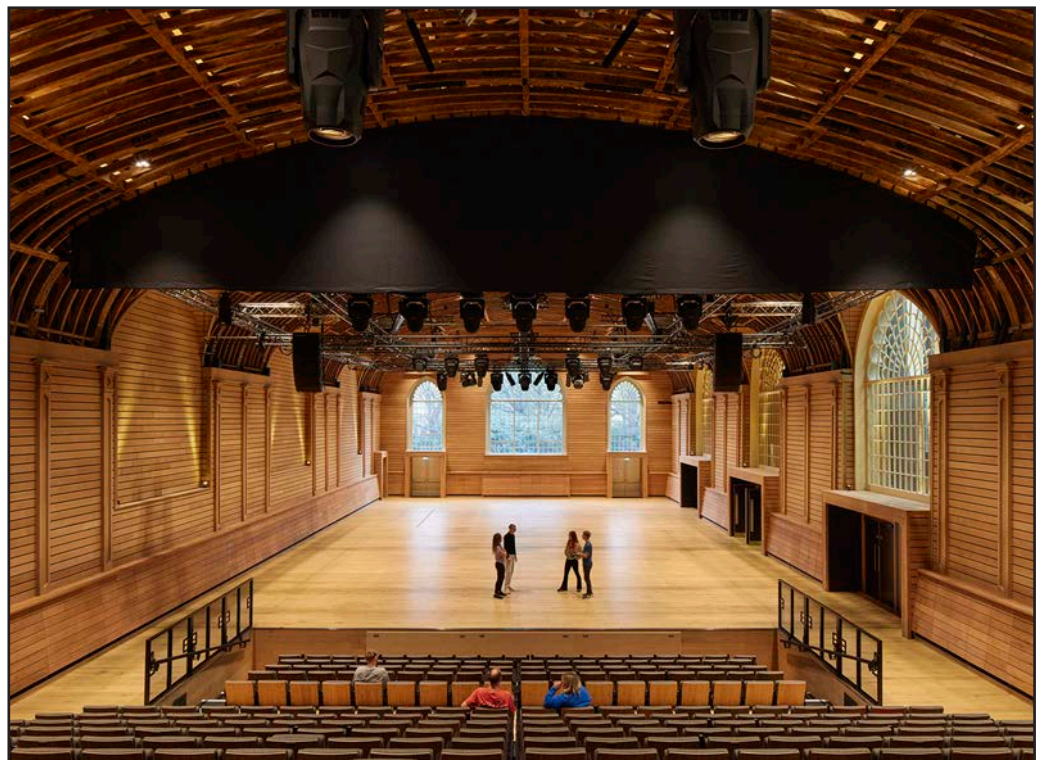


Image © Richard Chivers, used with permission.

"This project highlights two important criteria for the Wood Awards. Firstly, it has retained and carefully restored an historic structure and secondly, the new work has been sensitively designed to fit within it.

"This team has put heart and soul into this endeavour, and we are happy to recognise that," said Jim Greaves, lead judge of the Wood Awards and Principal of Hopkins Architects.

"Every aspect of design has been considered within the interior of this building. The historic roof, stripped bare, sits atop a newly restored interior that recalls the earlier use of the building as a riding school. A space that historically was given over to the horses is now given over to the public.

"The Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre stands as an excellent example of restoration and reuse which we can all learn from.

"The building demonstrates that advanced engineering and skilled craftsmanship allied with a sensitive approach to design can deliver a newly restored and

repurposed building fit for the 21st century."

The Wood Awards building judges, a team of world-leading professionals, visited all 18 buildings shortlisted in the Wood Awards before deciding the winner, in one of the UK's most rigorous assessments for any competition.

Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre won out over more than 150 buildings in the UK to claim the Gold Award. It was a triple winner, as in addition it took out the awards for both the Restoration & Reuse, and Structural categories.

"Congratulations to the team behind the Brighton Dome Corn Exchange & Studio Theatre, and all entrants in this year's Wood Awards," said David Hopkins, CEO of Timber Development UK (organisers of the Wood Awards).

"Timber — and retrofit — have crucial roles in decarbonising construction, and as an organisation we spend a lot of time campaigning, promoting and educating about the role of timber. But there is no substitute for showing examples in practice.

"All of the winners and the shortlisted projects are incredible examples of British architecture and design, and I know the judging gets more difficult every year — with so many wonderful timber buildings in the UK continuing to emerge.

"We are seeing climate conscious architects, engineers, and other designers increasingly choosing to use wood as the primary material in their projects — recognising its low-carbon nature, warmth, and beauty — which has so brilliantly been put on display this year.

"Every single one of the entrants were remarkable, and we hope that the 2024 awards will inspire even more designers to work with wood."

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards can only happen with collaborative industry sponsorship. A huge thank you for continued support from The Carpenters' Company, American Hardwood Export Council and Timber Development UK.

Wood Awards
www.woodawards.com

WorkStack wins best commercial building at Wood Awards 2024

RISING from a compact urban site, the dRMM-designed WorkStack presents a new vision for high-density industrial space — with a minimal carbon footprint — for which it was crowned the best new commercial building at the Wood Awards 2024.

Located in Greenwich, London, WorkStack's distinctive cantilevered form — which takes inspiration from how foresters will compose a 'logstack' to protect it from water — provides fourteen workshop units over five floors. The progressive overhang works as both solar shading and a covered delivery area.

Composed of stacked rectangular Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) boxes, each building element is designed to be as efficient as possible, with this engineered mass timber structure using steel, polycarbonate, glass and rubber only where function or regulation demands.

These panelised components, including the vast 19.2 metre CLT floor panels, were delivered in just 15 lorries, allowing for rapid assembly on site — with a team of 5-8 people able to install the entire frame in just nine weeks.

This innovative design approach also allowed for 21% less upfront embodied carbon than LETI's 2030 Design Target (of 350

kgCO₂/m²), and 44% less than RIBA's 2030 Built Target for whole life carbon (of 750 kgCO₂/m²), while sequestering 343 metric tonnes of carbon in the CLT structure.

Throughout the building, the load-bearing CLT walls and ceilings are left exposed, allowing the beauty of the timber to shine through — without the need for additional internal finishes — offering biophilic benefits to occupants.

The simplicity of the finished structure belies the complex structural, fire safety and construction challenges cleverly resolved through the close collaboration of the entire project team, along with the London Fire Brigade and building control.

WorkStack was celebrated by the Wood Awards judges for demonstrating timber's viability to create a new class of high density industrial buildings — one which can be replicated and integrated in mixed-use developments right across the UK.

The building was constructed by F Parkinson, with wood supplied by Hasslacher and Stora Enso. The structural engineers were Arup with changebuilding, and the mechanical and electrical engineers were WebbYates.

"It is a highly original approach to urban industrial design which is totally appropriate in a tight

urban setting," said Jim Greaves, lead Buildings judge of the Wood Awards and principal of Hopkins Architects.

"The simple yet effective use of CLT panels to create stacked, offset boxes delivers a variety of spaces and is a pragmatic and more spatially efficient alternative to low-rise industrial units in our cities.

"The form also demonstrates the structural potential of engineered timbers — with great thought given by the designers to all aspects of the design, including carbon, from forest through to end of life."

David Hopkins, CEO of Timber Development UK (organisers of the Wood Awards) applauded the considerate and innovative approach of the entire project team, whose vision has shone through on the finished building.

"Workstack is yet another example of a stunning commercial building made of mass timber — which is rapidly becoming the material of choice for developers, architects and engineers who want to build beautiful, efficient, and low-carbon workspaces.

"While some commercial buildings in London have struggled for occupancy post-pandemic, with more workers now either fully-remote or in hybrid roles, the

demand for the low-carbon, natural spaces created through timber continues to grow.

"Exposed wooden surfaces within thoughtful designs like Workstack create great work environments where people want to be.

"Time and again, we are seeing developers who choose timber reap the benefits, rapidly achieving full occupancy.

"Congratulations to the entire team, from the suppliers and manufacturers to the architects, engineers, specialists and contractors on site. This award category is one which is fiercely competitive, and has been fully earned."

The Wood Awards building judges, a team of world-leading professionals, visited all 18 buildings shortlisted before deciding the winners, in one of the UK's most rigorous assessments for any competition.

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards can only happen with collaborative industry sponsorship.

A huge thank you for continued support from The Carpenters' Company, American Hardwood Export Council and Timber Development UK.

Wood Awards

www.woodawards.com



Combilift scoops 'Company of the Year'

COMBILIFT, a global leader in material handling solutions, has been awarded Company of the Year at the prestigious Business & Finance Awards 2024, in association with KPMG Ireland. This remarkable achievement marks Combilift's 9th major win in the last three months, solidifying its position as an industry leader.

The Company of the Year award, presented to Combilift's CEO Martin McVicar by Seamus Hand from KPMG at the 50th Business & Finance Awards ceremony — held in Dublin, is a testament to the company's

significant impact on both the Irish economy and the global market. Combilift, with annual revenue exceeding €500 million, has continued to thrive with its export-focused business model, with 98% of its operations serving international markets.

Since its founding in 1998, Combilift has built a global reputation as what is believed to be the largest manufacturer of multi-directional, articulated, and sideloading forklifts, as well as large material handling equipment such as straddle carriers, with over 85,000 units in operation across 85 countries. The company's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and research and development has been pivotal to its exceptional growth, making it a true leader in the material handling industry.

Martin McVicar, CEO of Combilift, said: "This award reflects the bold vision and relentless drive that has been at the heart of Combilift since Robert Moffett and I started in 1998. Every forklift, every innovation, and every milestone reflects our commitment to pushing boundaries and transforming material handling worldwide. This moment belongs to our employees, our dealers, and our customers, who rely on us to deliver quality material handling solutions to optimise their warehouse space."

Winning this award places Combilift among an elite group of previous winners, including industry giants Glen Dimplex, Kingspan, Primark, Google, and Intel. As a homegrown Irish business with a global footprint, this latest recognition serves as a powerful reminder of the company's ongoing success and its critical role in shaping the future of the material handling industry.

Combilift
www.combilift.com



Left to right: Ian Hyland — Business & Finance, Martin McVicar — Combilift, Seamus Hand — KPMG.

Pallet LOOP shortlisted for innovation award

THE Pallet LOOP, part of BSW Group, is proud to announce it has been shortlisted for a prestigious sustainability award. The business is in the running for a 2025 edie Award in the Circular Economy Innovation of the Year category.

Now in its 18th year, the edie Awards honour organisations that have demonstrated exceptional innovation and are creating value through the development of sustainable solutions designed to reduce waste and promote resource efficiency.

The Pallet LOOP's shortlisting highlights the company's efforts to reduce unnecessary pallet waste across UK construction by recovering and repairing a range of robust, reusable pallets that have been designed with reuse in mind. In May 2024, the business issued its first reusable

timber pallets with the support and sustainable leadership of British Gypsum, one of the largest users of pallets in the sector. This month, Isover is following suit, shipping its insulation products on LOOP's distinctive green-coloured pallets.

Once these pallets reach their final destination, the recipients — typically builders' merchants, principal contractors and housebuilding companies — can contact The Pallet LOOP to get them picked up. The Pallet LOOP operates a nationwide pallet collection service that will recover green and white pallets and provide a PayBack of up to £4 for every green pallet that gets put back into its LOOP.

Nathan Wride, head of partnerships & innovation at The Pallet LOOP, said: "Waste is no longer just an inconvenience; it's a clear sign of inefficiency and environmental harm. In today's world, where resources are finite and sustainability is critical, we must see waste for what it truly is — a problem we can no longer afford to ignore."

"The future is circular — defined by systems where materials are reused, recycled, and kept in circulation, reducing waste and preserving resources for future generations."

"The construction industry has been crying out for a different approach to pallets for years. We are delighted with the results we've achieved in the six months since our green pallets went live. Together with British Gypsum, we've put so much effort into getting this new way of working off the ground. As we redefine norms when it comes to pallets, edie's acknowledgement of our endeavours is a great way to end a momentous year. We look forward to the awards ceremony in March."

The Pallet LOOP ● www.thepalletloop.com



Neolith Ignea wins the German Design Award 2025 for Excellence in Design



NEOLITH, a global leader in sintered stone surfaces, celebrates a new milestone by winning the prestigious German Design Awards 2025 in the Excellent Product Design category for Neolith Ignea. This recognition highlights Neolith's ability to integrate innovation, design, and sustainability into the creation of high-quality products.

The German Design Awards, recognised as an international benchmark celebrating innovation and the power of design to address contemporary challenges, spotlights projects that drive sustainable transformations and foster global competitiveness.

The jury commended Neolith Ignea for its exceptional ability to merge aesthetics, functionality, and sustainability in an innovative product that meets current market demands without compromising quality or environmental impact.

A pioneer in sustainable materials

Crafted with up to 98% recycled materials, Neolith Ignea is a tangible example of the brand's leadership in creating sustainable surfaces. This model combines elegance and technical performance with a sustainable production process that optimises resource efficiency and minimises waste.

"This award is a testament to our vision of how design can be a catalyst for positive change," says Andreas Manero, Marketing Director at Neolith Group. "Neolith Ignea represents not only our ability to create innovative and attractive products but also our commitment to lead responsibly in an industry that demands sustainability and excellence in equal measure," he adds.

Design with purpose

The versatility and sophistication

of Neolith Ignea are deeply inspired by nature. This model evokes the majesty of volcanic landscapes, reflecting the shapes and textures of solidified magmatic matter. Its intense and bold colour creates an atmosphere of elegance and magnetism, perfect for designs that seek to impress and express individuality.

The Riverwashed texture enhances the tactile appeal of the model, while its distinct linear design adds depth and sophistication to any environment.

This approach not only captures the essence of natural processes, but also allows Neolith Ignea to adapt to a wide variety of applications, with the ability to turn ordinary spaces into extraordinary experiences.

Leading the Future of Design

Since its inception, Neolith has remained a global benchmark in

the design and innovation of sintered stone surfaces. This award reinforces the company's dedication to integrating sustainable solutions with exceptional designs that inspire and transform spaces.

Neolith's innovation efforts are intrinsically linked to sustainability. The company stands out for having certifications that endorse its track record in sustainable leadership, such as Cradle to Cradle Certified® Bronze, EcoVadis Gold and Zero Waste, from Bureau Veritas, which underline the brand's ongoing commitment to practices that contribute to promoting the circular economy, the use of recycled raw materials and production processes with a carbon neutral impact, generating a positive impact on both people and the planet.

Neolith
www.neolith.com

Surface Design Show introduces exciting new features for 2025 edition

FROM Green Grads to the Innovation Gallery, through to CIUK's Material Library, the 2025 edition of Surface Design Show (SDS) will have even more unique features for visitors to discover in 2025. Held from 4-6 February, SDS brings together the best in material innovation with over 180 companies showcasing thousands of materials many of which will be launched at the show, alongside a range of features and collaborations that have been designed to educate and inspire.

Exhibiting at the Surface Design Show 2025 for the first time are the Green Grads, a platform that spotlights recent graduates from UK universities who are confronting the world's most urgent environmental challenges.

"Our graduates are tackling sustainability, climate change,



circular production, waste and pollution, biophilia, biodiversity and much more. They include engineers, product and furniture designers, material scientists, ceramicists, textile and graphic designers, craftspeople, artists, and film makers," explains founder and curator Barbara Chandler, who brings over 25 years of experience as the design editor of the London Evening Standard.

The materials showcased will be biomaterials made from wood-chips, breadcrumbs and wool, algae-based dyes an alternative to synthetic and often toxic pigments and materials made from organic waste such as eggshells and banana peel.

Commercial Interiors UK (CIUK) will be launching its Supplier Finder Material Library at SDS, a curated collection of ground-breaking materials from its members. Visitors can explore over 100 innovative material samples which have been designed with commercial interiors in mind, including textiles, wallcoverings, solid surfaces and timber. The interactive displays offer a tactile experience with materials displayed on wire mesh panels with informative tags that provide sustainability credentials and production processes along with information about the brand.

The Innovation Gallery is a further debut for 2025, designed to champion up-and-coming material innovators, it is the place to discover groundbreaking materials and concepts emphasising new companies at the forefront of material innovation. With a strong commitment to fostering small businesses, the Innovation Gallery provides an invaluable platform for independent creators and SME's to showcase their work on a global stage.

A team from the Journal of Biophilic Design, the publisher and broadcaster of research into the health and environmental benefits of biophilic nature-inspired design, will be present to bring visitors knowledge, inspiration, case studies and ideas on how to design and help businesses reach net zero, how to increase biodiversity, and how biophilic design improves the whole value chain from real estate to employee costs.

For EverydayLife (FE.L) will showcase 'Housing Salinas', a project that was designed in response to community displacement in Puerto Rico as a result of Hurricane Maria. It is the creation of a long-term solution that strives towards a future where residents can live, work, and flourish in an environment that embodies the highest standards of

social and environmental responsibility. The low cost, 3D printed housing solution is constructed from mortar-based concrete and combined with the robotic capabilities of construction company, ICON. Jorge Mendez Caceres, co founder at FE.L said: "The Housing Salinas project highlights our commitment to creating a vibrant and sustainable solution that could be measured against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The ambition is to provide more than just houses; there is an aspiration to cultivate a harmonious living environment that prioritises social inclusivity, environmental responsibility, and economic prosperity."

Features returning for 2025 include Surface Spotlight, The Stone Knowledge Hub, Furnishing Futures and Mastercharge.

Located right in the heart of the show, Surface Spotlight will once again be presenting a selection of carefully selected surfaces, finishes and materials that embrace the 2025 show theme 'Creative Conscience'. Curated by material, design and trend expert Sally Angharad, the trends highlighted will be blended, softened, curved and polished. Surface Spotlight is an interactive display that allows visitors to get up close and personal with some of the materials



that will be shaping our future.

SDS is proud to announce its continued partnership with Furnishing Futures, an incredible charity founded by interior stylist, writer, and social worker Emily Wheeler. Furnishing Futures focuses on creating beautifully designed, fully furnished healing homes for women and children who have suffered from domestic abuse. After escaping domestic abuse these individuals often find themselves in social housing without basic amenities, such as flooring or white goods. The charity addresses this critical gap by partnering with the interiors industry to repurpose good quality ex-display items, returns, props, or donated furnishings and designing beautiful safe spaces. Based in Leyton in East London, Furnishing Futures will be present at the show, giving visitors the opportunity to see examples of their work and discuss this important topic in more detail.

Returning for 2025, Mastercharge will provide a recharge point for all exhibitors and visitors to use during the three-day show. Alongside being a sponsor for the show, Mastercharge's recharge

point will focus on integrating wireless charging technology into various surfaces without affecting the appearance.

SDS25's new Main Stage Partner is Procédés Chénel International, a team of creative individuals that help designers with worldwide development, production and distribution of decorative solutions, technologies and materials. Their team will be designing and installing the main stage at the show which will hold the extensive programme of debates, panel talks and insights into the latest material innovations.

The Stone Knowledge Hub is also returning to the 2025 Surface Design Show, with confirmed exhibitors including Albion Stone, Arcturus Stone, Britannicus Stone, Burlington Stone, Fila Surface Care Products, Stone Cladding Systems and Welsh Slate. The go-to place for architects and designers looking to find inspiration and information for their natural stone projects, the Stone Knowledge Hub is host to some of the leading names with the UK natural stone sector.

Surface Design Show
www surfacedesignshow.com

Nine Zero sees a surge in timber flush casement windows

NINE ZERO Timber Windows and Doors has noted a 20% increase in orders for its timber flush casement windows when comparing Q1/Q2 with Q3/Q4, suggesting the manufacturer's sleekest timber design strikes the perfect balance for both heritage property retrofits and sustainable new-build projects.

As the UK housing market faces increasing pressure to meet energy efficiency standards and preserve architectural character, flush timber casement windows have become a go-to solution for architects, developers, installers and homeowners alike — as they seek out high performing, modern yet traditional products, that meet or exceed sustainability requirements.

"Timber flush casement windows have been steadily increasing in popularity for a few years, but I think the recent jump highlights a critical shift in the market," explains Steve Winscott, company director at Nine Zero.

"The feedback I'm getting from customers is that the flush sash design currently has a far broader appeal than perhaps we predicted. Timber flush casement windows are being requested for new build and period properties, alongside plenty of 'green retrofit' projects, proving that timeless, elegant design never goes out of style."

With the UK government targeting a 68% reduction in emissions by 2030, retrofit projects



have accelerated, and the role of timber as a renewable material has ramped up in prominence in recent months. Handcrafted from FSC-certified timber, Nine Zero flush casement windows combine the charm of sliding wooden sash windows with contemporary features, including thermal, acoustic, and PAS 24 security standard compliance.

Flush casement windows stand out for their sleek multifaceted design and the ability to modernise period properties, while preserving heritage. Nine Zero also offers traditional detailing and carefully selected decorative features to customise its full range of timber windows and doors, such as glazing, bars, mouldings and architectural hardware.

Nine Zero Timber Windows and Doors
<https://nine-zero.co.uk>

International Timber and Sash Window Specialists elevate Victorian home with Accoya

INTERNATIONAL Timber, a leading UK importer and distributor of bespoke, sustainable timber and panel products, has partnered with Sash Window Specialists and Midhurst Windows & Doors Ltd to enhance the exterior windows and porch of a stunning Victorian home in Staffordshire.

Sash Window Specialists is a manufacturer, supplier and installer of traditional timber sash and timber casement windows designed to transform homes across the country. Their expert craftsmanship and attention to detail make them a trusted name in period property restoration.

For this particular renovation, Sash Window Specialists manufactured five custom-made Accoya windows and a porch for its sister company Midhurst Windows & Doors Ltd to install at an impressive Victorian residential property. The Accoya timber was sourced from International Timber due to its outstanding qualities, including high durability in all weather conditions.

Working together for over a dec-

ade, Sash Window Specialists, Midhurst Windows & Doors Ltd and International Timber have developed a robust partnership, based on a reliable supply of premium timber and International Timber's dedication to delivering exceptional service on every project.

Why Accoya?

Accoya is a high-performance timber renowned for its durability in diverse climates. Key benefits include strength, sustainability and exceptional resistance to wear and tear.

Given the challenges windows and doors face from exposure to the elements, Accoya's resistance to moisture and pests make it the perfect material for any exterior project. Accoya forms an effective barrier against insect attacks and fungal decay, ensuring long lasting performance even in the most challenging environments.

Accoya is dimensionally stable, reducing swelling and shrinkage by 75% or more. This ensures windows and doors to operate smoothly year-round. Its robust qualities also make it easier to machine and install, which benefits both manufacturers and joiners.



With this project, the homeowner's original windows and doors were severely rotten, requiring complete overhaul. Sash Window Specialists needed a timber product that could withstand the test of time and endure harsh weather conditions of the exterior façade. The customer also requested a durable white water-based paint finish for aesthetic appeal.

International Timber selected Accoya for its unmatched durability, making it ideal for creating long-lasting window frames and porches. With a lifespan exceeding 50 years, Accoya's chemical modification process ensures superior rot-resistance without compromising the wood's natural beauty, even when painted or treated.

Hugh Randall, Purchasing Director at Sash Window Specialists, said: "International Timber provides an excellent and reliable service on every project. We have worked together for over 10 years, consistently relying on their ability to supply Accoya for all our needs. This collaboration has resulted in

high-quality home exterior improvements for many customers, and enabled the mutual sharing of expert advice within the timber and manufacturing industry."

Lucy Sirett, Operations Director at Midhurst Windows & Doors LTD, commented: "We source the finest materials, combining traditional woodworking with modern technology to deliver products that stand the test of time. We use Accoya for our sash windows as it's a beautiful, durable and sustainable alternative to plastic. The quality and guarantee of Accoya is unmatched, which is why we exclusively use it and will likely never return to softwood."

Stuart Viner, sales executive at International Timber, added: "It was fantastic to collaborate once again with Sash Window Specialists on this remarkable project. They continue to source from us due to the dependable service that we offer and the fact that we are always willing to go the extra mile."

International Timber
www.internationaltimber.com

The latest SCM innovations for panel sizing

New Gabbiani P95 and PT95 range: full control of the production process

GABBIANI P expands the range with the new p95 and pt95 models, suitable for both batch one and mass production.

Automated machines, affordable to all users, thanks to guiding technology, making the production process intuitive and safe.

These new models are equipped with all the higher-end features and options that the market demands:

- **FLEXCUT 1/S:** more cuts in less time. High performance enabled by the use of two fully independent pushers. Dramatic reduction in machine cycle time due to simultaneous processing of multiple bars with differentiated cuts (with a maximum number of two side-by-side 600 mm bars).
- **Cutting with high finishes** up to 50 m/min, thanks to blade motors with power up to 18.5 kW.
- **LED indicators** of both front and rear loading in the presence

of lifting table: an intelligent led bar system guides the user during the processing stages for intuitive and safe production monitoring. In the version with the lifting table, the system guides the user to the correct forklift loading of the panel stack, signals the need for a stack change, and signals, if present, the removal of the pallet/martyr.



- **LED device for guided positioning** of movable air floating tables: an intelligent led system that indicates to the user the correct positioning of the movable air floating tables with respect to the format of the panels being processed.
- **Angular cutting device** pro-

vides for inclination of the squaring guide by handwheel and automatic positioning at panel dimension by a linear stop positioned on the main pusher.

The key words of this new project are productivity, quality and price.

Maestro Stackwise

A state-of-the-art solution designed to increase efficiency and productivity. The system uses advanced algorithms to analyse and optimise piece stacking during the made-to-measure cutting process, ensuring that they are strategically placed to achieve maximum efficiency, reducing scraps to a minimum and maximising return.



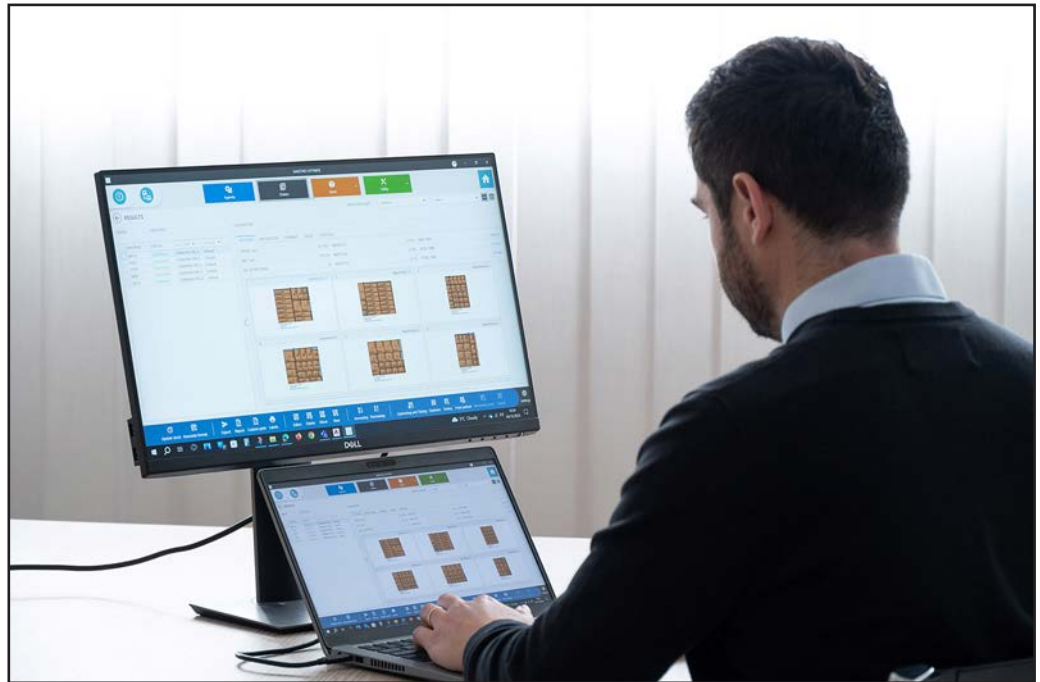
Maestro Optiwise

In the manufacturing industry, competition is not just based on its ability to offer a quality product. Nowadays, being able to rely on sustainable processes which optimise both the consumption of raw materials and relative costs as much as possible, is an increasingly decisive factor. A requirement which has become ever more pressing for companies working with wood.

Panel cutting is a particularly crucial part of the production cycle and any improvement in this area could have a very significant impact on profits. This is why SCM has developed its Maestro optiwise optimisation software for panel saws. Let's take a look at its main advantages.

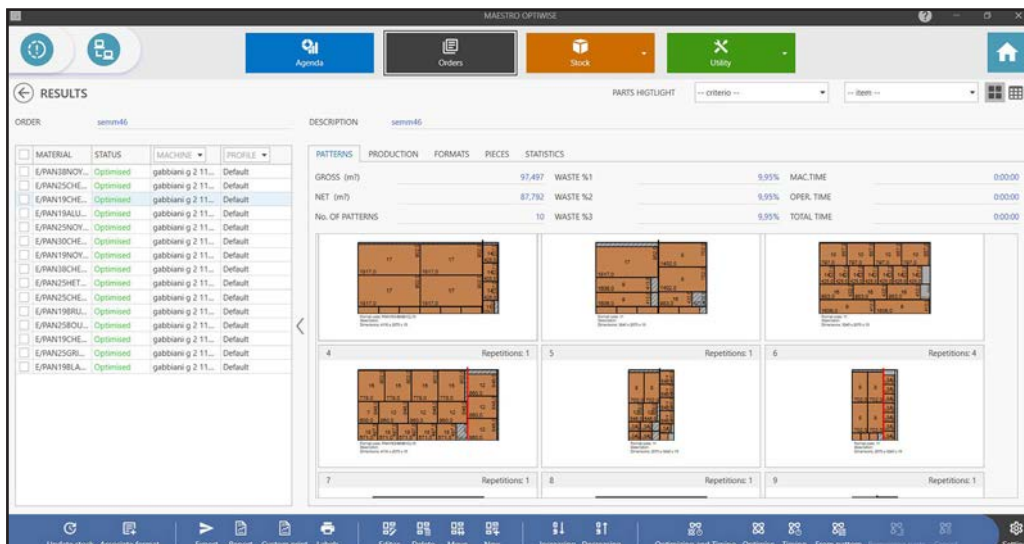
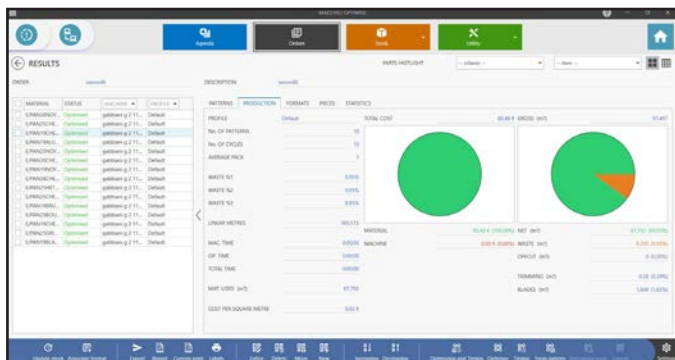
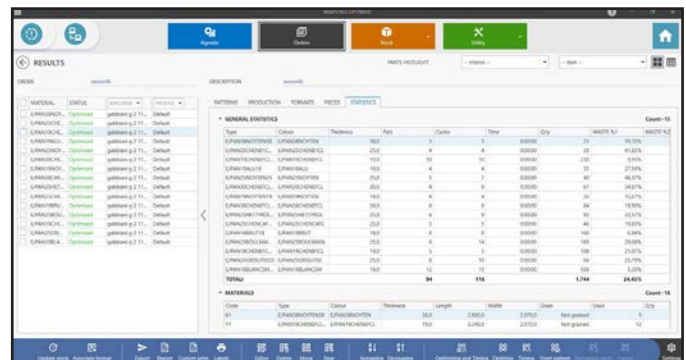
Less waste: One of the most significant advantages in using Maestro optiwise is its ability to maximise the use of material. SCM's software was designed to optimise panel cutting diagrams, reducing waste to a minimum. The software intelligently arranges the cuts by ensuring that as much as possible of each sheet of material is used.

Sustainability and cost reduction: The efficient use of material achieved with SCM's software can help companies reduce the im-



pact on the environment while simultaneously bringing down production costs.

Increased productivity: Maestro optiwise's easy parameter setting allows you to "customise" the cutting result to suit actual production demand, after which, SCM's panel saw optimises the steps needed to machine the material. So, not only is time saved but the machine's lifespan is ex-



tended thanks to reduced wear.

Simpler management: Maestro optiwise's user-friendly interface simplifies the entire machining process. It is easy to use and integrates perfectly with the panel saw, making it accessible even to less qualified operators. This advantage reduces training times and the risk of error.

Customisation and flexibility: Maestro optiwise is not a "stan-

dard" solution. The software can be customised to meet specific production requirements. Parameters and priorities can also be set to suit objectives and company preferences, so that the software adapts to one's specific needs.

Reporting: Maestro optiwise offers complete reporting tools. This approach, based on data, helps companies make strategic changes to further optimise their work.

Integration with other SCM solutions: Maestro optiwise integrates perfectly with SCM's extensive range of products, enhancing efficiency and productivity.

Investing in Maestro optiwise means achieving the maximum potential from an SCM panel saw and opening up unimaginable new horizons for one's business.

SCM Group
Tel 0115 977 0044
scmuk@scmgroup.com
www.scmgroup.com/en_GB/

A private home oasis in the heart of the desert

FOR Jad Shamseddin and his family, the purchase of their very first home, a decade-old villa located in Dubai's Jumeirah Village Triangle, represented the first steps towards fulfilling a long-term dream. Having lived in the city for eight years, the enviable access to Dubai's various shopping malls and public amenities was one key attraction for the home, but it was the 700 m² plot size that provided Jad and his family the opportunity to curate a private, botanically rich garden to call their own that proved crucial.

As Jad explains: "The inspiration behind this project is related to our love for the outdoors, fresh air and genuine passion for botanical things. We really wanted to do something authentic and aligned with nature, that is also functional and aesthetically pleasing".

With this inspiration in mind, the family have installed a brand-new swimming pool in the garden, with Bali tiles selected to provide a natural feel. Real grass was entirely sown into the new turf and trees capable of growing in the hot weather were planted around the perimeter of the garden.

The family chose Kebony Clear wood to deck the seating area



next to the swimming pool, which also features a hanging pergola to provide much-needed shade during the Dubai daytime. Explaining his selection of the poolside material, Jad comments: "Kebony is a real wood, not a plastic wood composite product. It beautifully ages with the Dubai weather and even when it's very hot outside, the decking is still comfortable to walk on".

Kebony is a leading international wood modification technology company, recognised for over twenty years as a global

pioneer in driving the use of sustainably sourced building materials. Developed in Norway and Belgium, Kebony provides an ecologically friendly timber product to combat the significant detrimental environmental impact of the global construction industry.

Traditionally, the intense heat of the Middle East has been a barrier for using timber in poolside decking projects, due to the risk of wood splintering in intense, arid weather conditions. Kebony's dual modification™ technology transforms sustainable FSC certi-

fied softwoods into durable and aesthetically beautiful timber products with the same, and in some cases superior, properties as endangered tropical wood species.

The bio-based process permanently alters the hardness of the wood, guaranteeing safety and longevity that can withstand the hot climate of the Middle East, while diverting the need for deforestation of the world's precious rainforests and helping to reduce global CO₂ emissions.

"It's the perfect combination of beautiful design and durability," adds Jad, "Since the renovation, the first thing that everyone compliments is the beautiful decking".

Reflecting on the completion of the stunning private project and the integral role of Kebony, Mauro Affuso, Sales Manager for Kebony Middle East, comments: "At Kebony, our mission is to support homeowners and designers bring healthy architectural projects to life.

"We are proud to see how Kebony wood realised sustainable and natural inspirations of this project, and thanks to the material's longevity, wish the family much enjoyment in their stunning new home garden for years to come".

Kebony
www.kebony.com



Wilsonart further expands stockist network to offer full UK availability of Bushboard kitchen surfaces

WILSONART UK has appointed a further two stockist partners in a move that confirms nationwide availability of its Bushboard range of kitchen worktops and splashbacks.

London-based Brent Products and Norwich sited, Mr Plastic, will offer Bushboard's full range of trend-led decors across the company's Options, Omega and Alloy Splashbacks quality-focused brands, to customers in the South East and East Anglia respectively.

This latest announcement, from the leading engineered surfaces specialist, comes within weeks of its appointment of an initial four new regional stockist partners; Decormax, Llandaff Laminates Ltd, Mitchells Worktops and Plasman Laminate Products Ltd.

With Wilsonart's lead distribution partner, Panelco, already providing coverage across Scotland,



this bolstered network of six new expert stockists creates full UK coverage and easy access to some of the most innovative kitchen surfaces on the market for the group's diverse customer base.

Brent Products has established itself as a leading supplier of decorative laminate products over the last 50 years, consistently delivering high-quality solutions to its customers. Meanwhile, Mr Plastic has built a strong reputation, with over 30 years of experience, backed by exceptional customer service and in-depth industry expertise.

Tim Emery, Sales Director at Wilsonart UK, said: "The speed at which we've been able to form such a comprehensive network of new partners shows just how committed we are to maintaining and advancing a reliable distribution network across the country.

"Each of our new partners brings extensive experience and a dedication to excellent customer service, aligning perfectly with our core values of quality and reliability."

Wilsonart Engineered Surfaces
www.wilsonart.co.uk

West Fraser CaberDek can now weather the storm for longer

ALREADY widely used across the construction industry to create floors, terraces and flat roofs which will withstand wet weather for up to seven weeks before being permanently protected, West Fraser's genuinely rugged CaberDek boards have now been granted BBA approval for a significantly longer, 60 day period.

The upgrade is predicted to see even more contractors and developers switching to the high performance product in preference to standard alternatives such as OSB and even marine grade plywood. The upgrade has come about as West Fraser has listened to the views of its end users and own product development teams regarding CaberDek's potential.

West Fraser's Marketing Manager, David Connacher, commented: "CaberDek has long enjoyed great sales success where specifiers and contractor customers are seeking to ensure floors and roof decks are protected against rain, snow and problems like plaster or paint spillages, that can cause delays in getting a building ready for handover. The fact that we can now assure the construction industry that CaberDek can still present a pristine surface after 60 days — a full two months — backed by fresh testing and BBA accreditation — can only increase the product's popularity."

Meeting BS EN312: part 5 standards, CaberDek provides a secure working surface with its robust non-slip film that will withstand impacts, punctures, and tears common on construction sites. For optimal bonding, CaberFix D4 adhesive is recommended for secure the flooring to



joists and sealing the tongue and groove joints, as well as around exposed edges. When used with CaberFix tape, it protects against spilled plaster, paint and the weather; while for use in the harshest winter conditions, CaberFix X-treme Tape can withstand the most severe temperatures.

The confidence which CaberDek offers contractors was emphasised recently by an endorsement from a timber frame installation specialist whose company carries out much of its work in the often-challenging Scottish climate. Kevin Clinton, with over 20-years' experience in the timber frame industry, set up CJC Timber Frame in 2021 with his wife, Natalie. Kevin confirmed the benefits of using the West Fraser product on a multitude of builds: "On a lot of projects, even if the weather is too bad to be

getting the roof on, we will install the upstairs floor using CaberDek. It gives us a slip resistant working platform which also keeps the rain off the floor below, and of course West Fraser guarantees it for six weeks exposure. After which you are able to peel off the top membrane and have a really good surface. The news therefore that the certification is rising to 60 days will be a big help with the weather we face for much of the time in Scotland."

Designed to exceed acoustic requirements within the Building Regulations, CaberDek, together with CaberFix D4, achieves an impressive 44 dB sound reduction. The film is easy to peel off, leaving behind a clean, undamaged surface ready for various floor finishes.

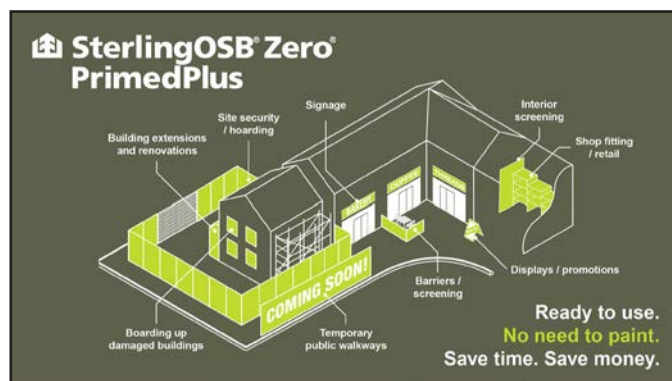
West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>

Benefits of SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus

WEST FRASER is discovering many developers, contractors and other specifiers are moving away from using traditional plywood in favour of its SterlingOSB Zero panel — including for applications such as erecting site hoardings, creating pedestrian walkways and other high visibility uses where its SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus can prove the superior option while saving both time and costs.

The primary reason is, of course, that SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus requires no painting or other preparation, and is ready for public facing roles. It is easy to apply graphics or other high resolution images, SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus is supplied in either white or grey and is pre-primed on one side, while all the edges are sealed for further durability against their infamous British weather. The front coat comprises of a high-quality, cross-linked epoxy acrylate, UV-cured coating, which is what gives it such a smooth finish.

Structurally twice as strong



as plywood, the oriented wood strands also offer reliable stiffness and load-bearing capabilities along the panel's length. Plywood can be prone to delamination while the results of cutting and machining it are not as sharp as when working with SterlingOSB Zero. Also, from a sustainability point of view, plywood production requires larger-diameter trees from older-growth forests; whereas OSB boards can be manufactured from smaller trees including both thinnings and waste/scrap timber that might otherwise be discarded.

David Connacher, marketing manager at West Fraser, commented: "The edges are sealed with a unique wax impregnated hydroscopic treatment to reduce water ingress. The versatile boarding is ideal for promotions and events, exhibition stands, the hospitality sector, as screening or around walkways: all of which can bear marketing messages, logos, imagery and more. Plywood, by contrast, has limited uses as it can break under considerable pressure and may also be susceptible to moisture which will weaken it further. We believe these are just

some of the reasons customers are switching."

Typical of the testimonials being received for the product is this from an East Midlands construction company: "Not only does the PrimedPlus present a smarter finish, but from a visual perspective it does what the company claims and stays smart for longer; and we expect we will be able to reuse most of the panels on other jobs without any redecoration unless, say, the project sponsors change." Lewis Sloan, procurement manager for INCO Construction & Design.

SterlingOSB Zero boards are usable in the design process as a BIM Object, so are favoured by architects and the range is increasingly being used internally for shopfitting or furniture making, being odour-free. Plus, specifiers generally favour the fact that the West Fraser production process involves no added formaldehyde, making it the environmentally friendly choice.

West Fraser
01786 812921
<https://uk.westfraser.com/>

dp-slim for kitchens & bathrooms

DECORATIVE Panels Lamination is proud to unveil dp-slim — a revolutionary acrylic surface solution that combines cutting edge technology with elegant design. Newly launched, dp-slim offers a versatile and durable option for manufacturers creating bespoke kitchens, bathrooms, and other modern interior spaces.

At just 4 mm thick, dp-slim redefines possibilities with its lightweight yet robust composition, delivering a sleek, seamless finish that's perfect for high demand environments. Part of the dp-slim Crystal Collection, this innovative product includes over 16 stunning designs from REHAU Rauvisio Pure, Strong, and Deep portfolios. The collection has been further enhanced with the exciting addition of REHAU Crystal Mirror, offering a reflective, sophisticated touch ideal for contemporary designs.

Designed for Kitchens and Bathrooms

dp-slim is purpose-built to meet the specific needs of kitchen and bathroom manufacturers. Its exceptional durability, easy maintenance, and aesthetic appeal make it the perfect surface solution for:

Backsplashes: A modern, grout-free alternative that's both practical and visually striking.

Shower Walls: Adds durability and style to wet areas with a seamless, luxurious finish.

Wall Panels: A sleek and contemporary option for feature walls in bathrooms and kitchens.

Whether designing for high-end residential kitchens, elegant hotel bathrooms, or multi-unit developments, dp-slim delivers a combination of style and performance that you can rely on.

Key Benefits

Engineered for ease of fabrication, durability, and outstanding results, offering several key benefits:

Lightweight and Durable: At 50% less weight than standard glass and 10 times more resistant to breakage, dp-slim ensures easier handling and reduced damage during production and installation.

Scratch-Resistant UV Coating: Guarantees long-lasting beauty



and protection in high-use areas.

Hardcoat Finish: Delivers enhanced resistance to chemicals and abrasions, ideal for kitchen and bathroom applications.

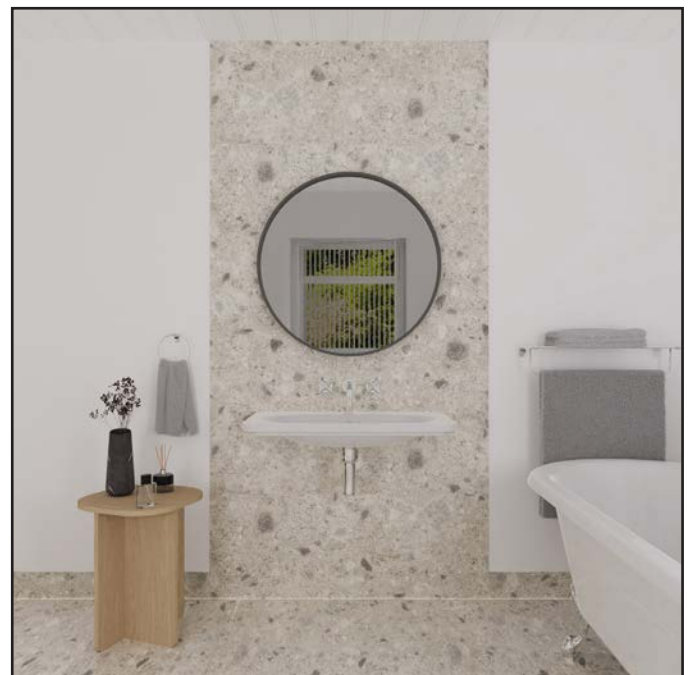
Hygienic and Easy to Clean: A dirt-resistant coating simplifies maintenance, offering end-users a low-maintenance solution.

Flexible Processing: Fabrication is simple with standard woodworking tools, enabling precise cuts and customisation without the risk of shattering.

Why Choose dp-slim for Kitchens and Bathrooms?

As a groundbreaking innovation in surface design, dp-slim offers a contemporary alternative to traditional tiles. Its lightweight construction and exceptional durability address the challenges of creating stylish, low-maintenance interiors, making it ideal for both large-scale manufacturing and bespoke projects.

dp-slim eliminates the need for grout lines, providing a seamless, hygienic surface that is easy to clean and maintain. Perfect for modern kitchens and bathrooms, its applications include sleek backsplashes, sophisticated shower walls, and durable wall panels. By combining aesthetics with practicality, dp-slim enables



manufacturers and designers to meet the rising demand for functional yet visually stunning interior solutions.

Order and Customise

dp-slim is available in laminated acrylic sheets with dimensions of 2,800 x 1,300 x 4 mm, making it ideal for a variety of production scales. With minimum orders starting at just one sheet, dp-slim offers flexibility and accessibility for manufacturers of all sizes.

Be at the Forefront of Innovation

dp-slim is the latest advancement in acrylic surface design, crafted to empower manufacturers with a product that's as versatile as it is beautiful. Discover the new dp-slim Crystal Collection today and revolutionise your kitchen and bathroom designs with style, durability, and ease.

Decorative Panels
www.decorativepanels.co.uk

CJC Timberframe finding multiple uses for SterlingOSB Zero



A **TIMBER** frame erection specialist based in Glasgow, but working across the entire country, has been sharing posts with its many followers on social media that show how West Fraser's high performance panel products fill many roles on its often distinctive and technically challenging projects.



CJC Timberframe Ltd was set up three years ago by Kevin Clinton with the support of his wife Natalie and specialises in carrying out the erection of site specific, factory manufactured, mainly closed panel systems, for self-builders and other individual customers.

He and his team of half a dozen fully trained erectors install everything from the wall plates to the roof trusses and — North of the Border — the sarking: taking the project through to the point where the envelope is fully weatherproof. And given the frequency of wet and windy days over the past 12 months, the resilience of the manufacturer's SterlingOSB Zero and CaberDek have proved invaluable in enabling progress to be made.

Kevin Clinton comments: "Back when I left school, I knew I wanted to be involved in the building trade and have had over 20 years' experience of timber frame erection. Then in 2021 I had the opportunity to set up my own timber frame erection company of which my wife Natalie is also a director, and we have put all our efforts into it.

"Since then we've worked right across Scotland as well as in places like Worcester and Plymouth. Mainly we work on behalf of self-builders and are contracted to put up individual, architect design homes: generally using kits from Scotframe, Norframe and Rob Roy Homes, who I often recommend to potential customers — as well as other trusted fit-out trades we have experience of working with.

"While quite a number of the properties feature habitable loft rooms, a lot of the builds include roof trusses and floor cassettes from Pasquill who have production sites across the UK, and they also use SterlingOSB Zero in their fabrication processes.

"The OSB boards are a very high quality — very good to cut and fit — and for jobs in Scotland we will normally be fitting them as a sarking over the trusses to take counter-battens and then the slates

"Also, on a lot of projects, even if the weather is too bad to be getting the roof on, we will install the upstairs floor using CaberDek. It gives us a slip resistant working platform which also keeps the rain off the floor below, and of course West Fraser guarantees it for six weeks exposure. After which you are able to peel off the top membrane and have a really good surface."

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REHAU

 **dp-limitless**

dp-slim crystal

Timeless glass designs with the unrivalled strength of crystal

Designed for **vertical indoor use**, **dp-slim Crystal** is perfect for **splashback** and **wet wall** applications. With its **easy to clean**, **hygienic surface**, **dp-slim Crystal** is a suitable replacement for traditional bathroom and kitchen wall tiles. **dp-slim Crystal** is the ideal glass, tile or traditional stone and marble substitute for all hospitality and retail environments.

Available to **order in quantities from as little as just one laminated acrylic sheet** with dimensions: **2800mm x 1300mm x 4mm.**

Visit www.decorativepanels.co.uk to explore the full **dp-slim** collection within our **dp-limitless** portfolio.



No commitment to purchasing in bulk



High scratch resistance



50% lighter than real glass



10x less brittle than real glass



Easily processed



4mm acrylic surfaces



CaberMDF: an ideal all-rounder for housebuilders



FOR THOSE who have yet to encounter West Fraser's CaberMDF range it is probably justified delving into the history of English cricket, where Sir Ian Botham was widely regarded as its greatest ever all-rounder — as good a performer with bat or ball in hand, as well as being a remarkable slip-fielder who rarely dropped a catch. He even played professional football for Scunthorpe United.

The analogy then is to the product's versatility and underlying quality, with West Fraser manufacturing five distinct grades of CaberMDF, these being Trade (Light), Pro (Standard), Trade Moisture Resistant, Pro Moisture Resistant and Industrial; with many of the UK's housebuilders utilising them primarily for interior fit-out work, with applications ranging from the kitchen to the bedrooms and the production of fitted furniture elsewhere around the home.

Perhaps one of the most versatile for housebuilders to specify is CaberMDF Trade, as it is suitable for general purpose use where simple profiles are needed, as is Trade MR. Both boards offer inherent strength and ease of cutting or machining while they also offer a very good surface for decoration.

Trade Pro is well suited to producing architectural mouldings like skirting boards and architraves, while the Pro MR can be used for most applications where damp conditions can be anticipated. Then CaberMDF Industrial is just as rugged a contender as 'Beefy' Botham himself, meaning it can do everything from taking deeply routed profiles, and vacuum applied PVC membranes for doors, as well as accepting more intricate designs.

David Connacher, marketing manager at West Fraser, comments: "Moisture resistant CaberMDF Pro MR performs long term

even when subjected to humid environments, making it ideal for kitchen and bathroom furniture, windowsills, skirting boards and door architraves.

"As with all CaberMDF, the task at hand is easier when choosing a product that saws, drills, shapes and routs cleanly and easily, without splintering or chipping, unlike plywood or plain boards. Plus, the range is suitable for use with heavy woodworking machinery as well as hand tools, thus providing complete flexibility.

"Meanwhile, due to CaberMDF's high quality fibres and internal bond strength, a higher standard of workmanship can be achieved, while screws and other types of fasteners will hold more firmly.

"And, importantly, CaberMDF panels can be specified for wall panelling, kitchen units, bathroom furniture and even toilet cubicles and public washrooms as well as shopfitting. The five

products work in homes, public buildings, banks, hotels and many other applications where its machining and finishing characteristics can be used to full advantage."

By opting for West Fraser's CaberMDF range, housebuilders can be assured they are working with a product which conforms to European E1 emission standard, while also complying with BS EN 622: Parts 1 and 5 and carries the coveted CE mark.

All West Fraser panel products produced in the UK are net carbon negative and manufactured in mills that have obtained the coveted environmental ISO 14001 accreditation.

Responsibly sourced, the panels are FSC certified (CO12533) and created from locally grown timber, cutting embodied carbon from transportation.

West Fraser
01786 812 921
Uk.westfraser.com

White on Cue: Valchromat White Pearl from James Latham

JAMES Latham, a leading independent distributor of timber, panels and decors, has proudly introduced the sensational Valchromat White Pearl.

This innovation marks a turning point in the manufacture and production of full-colour MDF, achieving an unprecedented white hue.

The result of seven years of R&D undertaken by Valchromat, White Pearl truly embodies the premium brand's boundary pushing reputation.

Distributed by James Latham in the UK and Ireland, this game-changing board stands out from the competition due to its exceptional brightness and opacity. A unique proposition, this MDF has an attractive white shade across its entire length, breadth, and depth.

Get it white the first time

Set to transform the way pale colours are used in interior and furniture design, the material pro-



vides a literal and figurative blank canvas, offering endless aesthetic potential for architects, designers,

furniture makers and fit-out professionals alike.

The latest addition to Valchromat's 12-Colour Palette range, White Pearl pairs seamlessly with other shades in the collection or contrasts beautifully with other materials, from natural timber and stone to burnished metals and tempered glass.

Importantly, White Pearl empowers specifiers to unlock their creativity, whether envisaging the panel taking centre stage or in a crucial supporting role. Its relative light-reflecting nature also means it can take advantage of dynamic lighting, delivering a minimalist, spare backdrop that throws other features into relief, even more so when finished in a light reflective coating. It's also able to harness coloured lighting arrangements to create richer shades on the surface without needing to swap out the panel, ideal for galleries, event spaces, or retail boutiques.

Not just a pretty face

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, White Pearl is engineered for performance. Its strength and moisture resistance make it an ideal material for everything from standalone furniture to interior cladding; simultaneously delivering form, function, and visual appeal.

A firm fabricator favourite, it's

easy to work and machine, tool friendly, non-toxic, and upon request, can be supplied as a flame-retardant option. Similar to Valchromat's other panels, it's also produced from sustainably sourced pine sawdust and waste in a low-carbon environment.

Commenting on this pioneering new product, Nick Widlinski, panels director at James Latham says, "Once again, Valchromat has moved the dial even further for what can be done within the MDF category. This is rightly regarded as an important moment across the entire timber trade and we feel privileged to be able to introduce it to the UK & Irish markets. The material is also symbolic of our businesses' shared reputation for industry firsts and commitment to self-improvement, enhancing our propositions to give customers what they want, when they need it and, sometimes, before they've even thought of it."

Valchromat White Pearl is stocked nationwide across James Latham's 12 depots. It's available in a variety of thicknesses, from 8 mm to 30 mm, and dimensions starting at 2,440 mm x 1,220 mm.

James Latham

<https://www.lathamtimber.co.uk/products/panels/mdf/valchromat>

co.uk/products/panels/mdf/valchromat



CaberMDF is ideal for joinery jobs across the board

"Across the board" due to CaberMDF's inherent, high-quality fibres and internal bond strength, a higher standard of workmanship can be achieved by the joiner with a product that shapes and routs cleanly and easily without splintering or chipping, whether using woodworking machinery or hand tools.

David Connacher, marketing manager of West Fraser, presents the comprehensive CaberMDF range.

CABERMDF has been a key feature in West Fraser's range for decades; and it is more significant a product than ever as the joinery industry employs progressively less solid timber and specialist products like hardwood veneers.

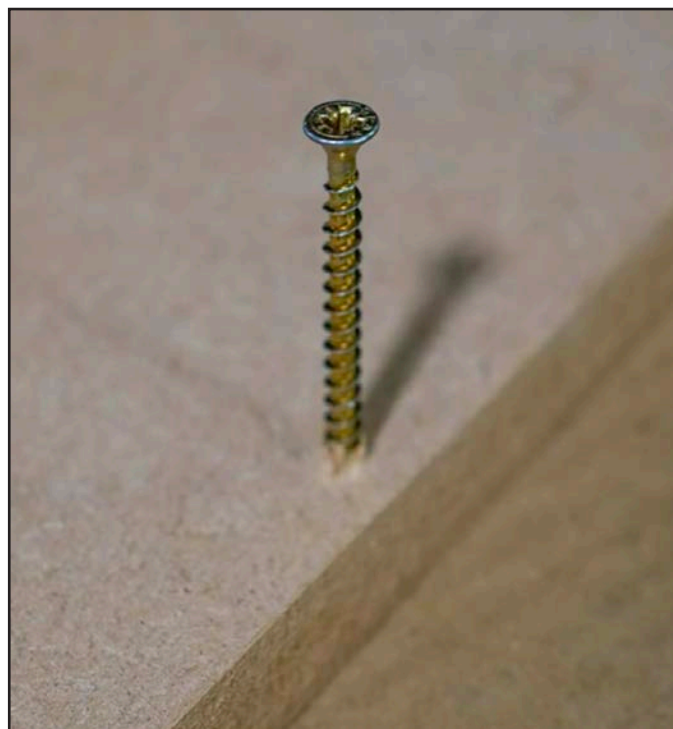
Medium Density Fibreboard is an ideal board for joinery in that there are multiple grades available to suit a wide variety of applications with each appropriate for use in every room of a building — and for the fabric of the building itself.

Firstly, we should perhaps clarify what can be a confusion regarding the difference between joinery and carpentry. When you want something made of wood, do you call on a joiner or a carpenter? People in the South of England tend to use the term carpenter whereas, in the North, people prefer the term joiner. The dictionary, though, defines

them as two trades which share similar skills, with a joiner theoretically fabricating items by joining sections of timber without using metal fasteners, screws or nails. A carpenter's task is to fit these items on site, usually employing metal fasteners, screws and nails; a carpenter also undertakes tasks like fitting locks and scribing fitted furniture to irregular walls.

In practice, a 'bench' joiner's toolkit can include nail guns or RF (Radio Frequency) devices to speed-cure adhesive, while an experienced site carpenter will be adept at hand cutting a roof and capable of building fitted wardrobes or shelving units from scratch — probably using MDF.

West Fraser manufactures five grades of CaberMDF; these being Trade (Light), Pro (Standard), Trade Moisture Resistant, Pro Moisture Resistant and Industrial. Trade Pro is ideal for architectural mouldings like skirtings



and architraves which a joiner might well rout and cut to size in the workshop. Pro MR can be used in damp conditions so it would be the prudent choice for use in areas such as kitchens and bathrooms, for making cabinets, washroom units and bath panels, or boxing in pipework — the applications are endless.

CaberMDF Industrial is even more versatile as it has multiple uses, including for deep routed profiles such as membrane pressed PVC doors, as well as designs with advanced routed profiles and painted finishes; an ideal board for the joiner's bench where intricate detail can be machined or sometimes still crafted using hand tools.

One of the most useful materials for joiners and smaller volume manufacturers is CaberMDF Trade as it is suitable for general purpose work where simple profiles are needed. In turn, CaberMDF Pro MR performs well in wet or

humid environments, making it applicable for kitchen and bathroom furniture, windowsills, skirting boards and door architraves.

"Across the board" due to CaberMDF's inherent, high quality fibres and internal bond strength, a higher standard of workmanship can be achieved by the joiner, with a product that shapes and routs cleanly and easily without splintering or chipping, whether using woodworking machinery or hand tools.

All West Fraser panel products produced in the UK are net carbon negative and manufactured in mills that have obtained the coveted environmental ISO 14001 accreditation. Responsibly sourced, the panels are FSC® certified (C012533) and created from locally grown timber, cutting embodied carbon from transportation.

West Fraser

Tel 01786 812921

<https://uk.westfraser.com/>



David Connacher

International Timber provides Thermowood Redwood D cladding for Additional Learning Needs school

DURABLE Class D Redwood Thermowood cladding from International Timber has been used for the construction of a government and local council funded Additional Needs School in Newtown, Wales, led by the award-winning Wynne Construction.

Ysgol Cedewain is a purpose built school located on the outskirts of Newtown Wales, neighbouring with the picturesque Welsh landscape. Redwood Thermowood timber cladding, supplied by International Timber, features on the exterior of the school alongside traditional brickwork and contemporary glass.

International Timber is proud to have contributed to the construction of this new Additional Learning Needs school. The school will offer state-of-the-art facilities with additional features such as a hydrotherapy pool, sensory and physiotherapy rooms.

With a £22 million pound investment into the development of the school, Wynne Construction required materials that would stand the test of time and worked alongside Jewson to source products that would do just that. The Thermowood cladding supplied by International Timber ensures that the investment will last for up to 30 years due to the wood's



resistance to weathering and fungi, increasing its durability.

Wynne Construction specified the volume and lengths of timber necessary for the build and International Timber sourced directly from Scandinavia prior to the project start date to ensure production was not held up.

Class D Thermowood Redwood timber which undergoes heat treatment, was the ideal choice

for Wynne's cladding as this process modifies and enhances the properties of the timber. Thermowood is lightweight, durable, and less prone to warping compared to natural timber, ensuring long-lasting performance and minimal maintenance.

Thermowood can be also used in conjunction with metal. The low moisture content means when metal comes into contact

with thermally modified wood, it does not corrode as much, another added benefit of Redwood Thermowood.

James Sadler, Sales Executive at Jewson, said: "After collaborating with International Timber for many years, they constantly provide expert guidance for all timber challenges, offering effective solutions."

Rob Trill, senior sales executive at International Timber, added: "We are thrilled to be chosen as a supplier for this incredible build. Timber cladding is often specified in large builds with high volumes of traffic, wear and tear due to its durable and environmentally friendly qualities.

"Redwood Thermowood is a great eco-friendly and stable timber, which played a huge part as to why it was chosen for this particular project. It also has many other benefits, including the fact it is resistant to rot giving it a 30-year service life if maintained correctly, increased stability due to thermal modification and is a low-maintenance material choice for external facades."

International Timber
www.internationaltimber.com



Saint-Gobain's offsite division making full use of West Fraser panel products

AS A LEADING supplier of off-site manufactured timber based building systems, Saint-Gobain's Off-Site Solution (OSS) Division has come to value the high performance product range and responsive customer service levels offered by timber panel specialist, West Fraser: with products such as SterlingOSB Zero and CaberDek being used across multiple product ranges.

In addition, the West Fraser panels are manufactured from responsibly sourced timber using renewable energy, thereby matching up to the client's own ESG commitment to be carbon neutral by 2050.

Saint-Gobain's roofing and flooring marketing manager, Lokesh Patel commented: "Our fabricated components are manufactured from the highest quality materials using state-of-the-art production equipment to rigorous quality control standards; ensuring long-term reliability and service life. All production processes are fully compliant with ISO 9001 (Quality), ISO 14001 (Environmental) and OHSAS 18001 (Health & Safety).



"As just one example, the roof cassettes we use in our I-Roof system are recognised as an innovation in custom-made, large format roof elements that deliver enhanced performance over in line with the latest building regulations. They are designed by our in-house designers and fabricated in our factories ready for installation on site. The top of the cassette is finished in OSB, with a surface membrane to provide weather protection during installation. The I-Roof system provides a room-in-roof solution for 2-5 storey homes, where we supply fully manufactured walls and roofs complete with insulation and plasterboard. The system allows for a quick and easy on-site install, all managed from start to finish by our knowledgeable team."

OSS actually operates production sites across the UK, from Inverness in the north of Scotland to Bodmin in Cornwall; with West Fraser products not only being used at the majority of them, but the specialist supplier also being closely involved in development work and day to day logistics management.

Senior technical manager, Donald Matheson, explained: "The West Fraser product range gets used right across the OSS Division, including for roof and floor cassettes and in closed panel wall systems for housebuilders. The OSB for example offers various benefits in terms of its quality: it is good visually, there are no failures, and we receive no calls from customers relating to it. We use different thicknesses of SterlingOSB Zero and CaberDek as well as ancillary products like D4 adhesive.

"In addition, West Fraser always does its best to advise us if lead times are going to change so that we can plan accordingly. Our account manager at West Fraser is very proactive and always responds in a timely manner to protect our volumes when things get busy, protecting our stocks. We also get good technical support from West Fraser whenever we require it, such as recently when Alan Kirkpatrick, technical sales manager, supported us by providing special interface details relating to all the CaberFloor products when we were updating the complete set of our drawings we supply to specifiers so that they could be uploaded as BIM files."

With its well-established product portfolio and its own production plants similarly spread from Scotland to the South-West, West Fraser has proved itself well equipped to fill the role of supportive supply chain partner and is currently engaged with OSS in the extended testing programme being carried out at Salford University on an innovative new timber frame building system. All West Fraser panel products produced in the UK are net carbon negative and manufactured in mills that have obtained the coveted environmental ISO 14001 accreditation. Responsibly sourced, the panels are FSC® (C012533) certified and created from locally grown timber, cutting embodied carbon from transportation.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com>

