

PANEL, WOOD & *Solid Surface*

Issue No. 179/180

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Mirka Ltd (Finland) celebrates 80 years

Turn to page 21 for the full story



News: pp 2-8 ● Awards: pp 9-11 ● Exhibitions & Shows: pp 12-20
Sanding & Finishing: pp 20-21 ● Woodwaste & Dust Control: pp 22-24
CNC Machinery, Equipment & Software: pp 25-27 ● Education & Skills: pp 28-31
Sustainable Development: p32 ● Design & Innovation: pp 33-42

Combilift donates its 75,000th truck to international charity



AS PART of Combilift's celebrations for its 25th anniversary, the Irish materials handling specialist has announced that it is donating its 75,000th truck — an Aisle Master articulated forklift — to Convoy of Hope, a non-profit humanitarian and disaster relief organisation.

Convoy of Hope works alongside communities and its wide network of volunteers aim to alleviate poverty and hunger and to bring help and hope wherever they are most needed in the world. As this type of aid is sadly always in demand, operational expansion has also seen a corresponding increase in the requirement for warehousing capacity to accommodate the vast volume of supplies that are stored and ready for delivery to areas in need.

The World Distribution Center is based in Springfield, Missouri, and from this location at the "crossroads of America" truckloads of relief supplies and food are sent on their way across the USA and further afield around the globe. Combilift supplied its first Aisle Master for this site four years ago, and a further three units were delivered last year. Convoy of Hope's senior director — distribution, Jeff Smethers, said: "A lot of our exponential growth



has been down to the Aisle Masters as they enable us to get more loads in and out faster. And thanks to Combilift's free warehouse layout service and the Aisle Master's narrow aisle capability we have achieved the best possible storage density and very efficient operation."

The announcement was made at a gala dinner in Chicago during the ProMat trade fair, and Combimat's CEO and co-founder Martin McVicar said: "The work that Convoy of Hope does is invaluable to relieve suffering around the world and we wanted to make our own contribution by donating our 75,000th truck to this very worthwhile charity."

Eric Meier, senior vice president — supply chain at Convoy of Hope said: "We are so grateful that Combilift and Martin and the whole team have actually given us one of these trucks for our operations. This is going to help people for years — and ensure that every day someone in the world will receive aid — and that brings hope."

Convoy of Hope ● <https://convoyofhope.org/>
Combilift ● www.combilift.com

CaberDek helps keep Berkshire self-builder on budget and programme

HAVING NURTURED a desire to construct his own dream home for the past 20 years, self-builder and project manager, Harjit Padda, is now nearing the stage of achieving a fully weatherproof envelope. Harjit took the prudent step of installing West Fraser's CaberDek across the upper floor level, knowing the board product can resist exposure to the elements until the roof is tiled while also shrugging off plaster or paint spills as the fit-out progresses.

Harjit acquired the Berkshire site some four years ago and opted to replace the existing bungalow with a high-performance two-storey, four-bedroom dwelling incorporating a variety of modern building solutions. These included a Norwegian manufactured Insulated Concrete Formwork, or ICF, system for the walls, supporting engineered timber beams at first storey height. Harjit laid 22 mm CaberDek P5 panels across the timber beams to create a strong, resilient platform for work to proceed.

Harjit comments: "As well as doing some of the work on the house myself, I am also doing a site management and safety training scheme. Things are very busy but progressing well. I've always been a tech fan and wanted to stay at the forefront with building technology, so I chose the Jackson Thermomur ICF system rather than a conventional brick and block house.

"I'm making it 'fabric-first' and very airtight, close to Passive House standards. I was keen to incorporate technologies to make the work quicker as well as better quality, hence the metal web joists and CaberDek for the upper floor. The CaberDek works really well with the ICF. I knew there was likely to be a three-to-four-week period when it would be open to the weather and the CaberDek P5, with its peelable film, coped easily.

"We've installed the tongue and groove panels using the manufacturer's adhesive and screws and it makes a very stable deck. So far, we are on budget and close to programme. The passion is keeping me going and we hope to be in sooner rather than later."

Available in either 18 mm or 22 mm thickness panels, CaberDek is produced from moisture resisting P5 particleboard which has the top face covered with the very tough and slip resistant film which helps ensure the installed floor can remain exposed to the weather for up to 42 days. The 50+ square metres of CaberDek was supplied through Travis Perkins, one of West Fraser's national network of distributors.

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



Obituary: Gerd Ney

IT IS with great sadness that NEY Ltd announces the death of Gerd Ney, who passed away peacefully in hospital on Saturday 11th March aged 82, from complications arising from a short illness.

An iconic figure in the woodworking industry for more than 40 years, Gerd Ney built his fledgling company to become one of the leading brands in the UK and Ireland, and was instrumental in starting up hundreds of new businesses over this time.

"Our condolences go out to family, friends, colleagues and the many industry and business associates he created across the globe. He will be greatly missed, but his legacy will remain," said Shahana Kishver of NEY Ltd.

NEY Ltd

<https://store.ney.co.uk/>



Gerd Ney 1940-2023

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Leitz UK launches new online store

LEITZ UK has launched a new e-commerce platform to make the ordering process easier and more convenient for customers purchasing standard stock items. The platform features more than 426 of Leitz's most in-demand tools from across all of its product lines, with more items being added daily. The storefront itself launched on 27th February.

Registered accounts are able to take advantage of some extra features to help them manage their tooling more effectively. Customers can now

save their favourite tools and make use of the express checkout by saving order lists or uploading spreadsheets to keep track of previous orders and quotes. All of this is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, meaning that supplies can be ordered at any time, helping to minimise downtime for your machines.

For larger businesses, Leitz is now offering the option of delivery to multiple addresses, which should help with managing the tooling needs of multi-site manufacturers, all in one comprehensive and easy-to-use

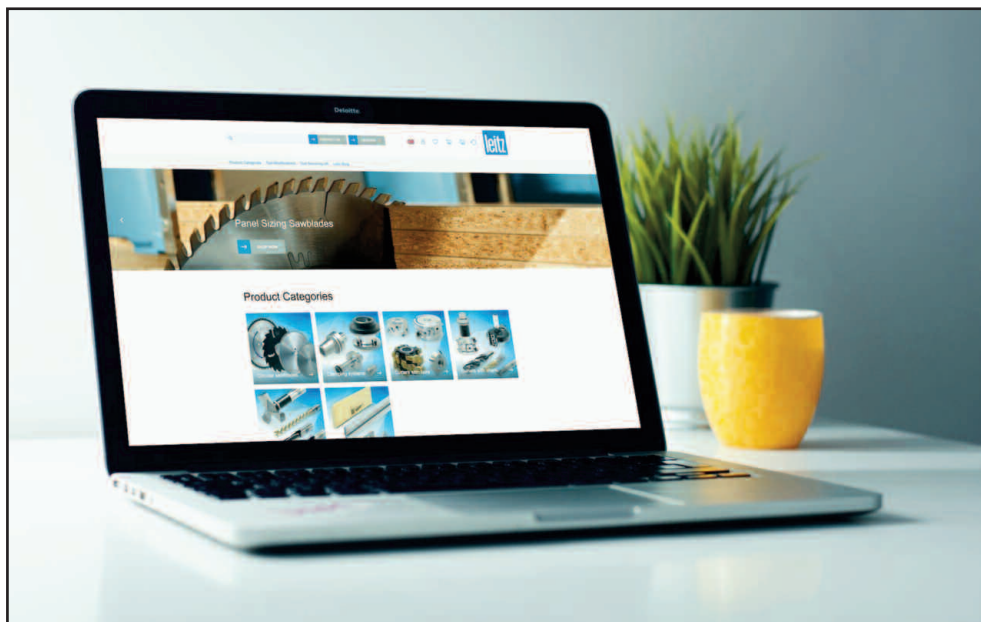
system. The new storefront has an online product finder to make it easier for customers to find the right part.

"We're thrilled to be launching the Leitz online store," said Simon Liddell, managing director for Leitz UK. "We're in the process of getting all of our products available on the site, but if you can't find what you're looking for online, don't worry! Our bespoke tooling services and modifications are always available."

"Servicing remains a cornerstone of our business, and we understand the challenges that come with adapting to new machinery. That's why we're here to offer consultation and advice. Whether you need help reducing noise, improving machine efficiency, or cutting power consumption, we have the tools and expertise to help you tackle these issues."

Leitz Tooling

https://shop.leitz.org/en_gb/



Boldmere School catches top ticket prize

BOLDMERE Junior School has secured £1,000 worth of building materials and a coaching session for pupils from two Birmingham Bears cricketers after proving just the ticket in a special competition.

Boldmere Junior School claimed top prize in the Six4Schools campaign run by Birmingham Bears and club sponsor Selco Builders Warehouse.

The initiative saw schools across Warwickshire invited to take advantage of a special discounted adult ticket offer for Bears home matches at Edgbaston Stadium throughout the 2022 Vitality T20 Blast campaign.

Schools received a £6 cash-back payment for every adult ticket sold and any school which sold more than 20 went into a prize draw for the chance to win £1,000 worth of building materials from Selco to utilise on a club school project and a coaching session from Bears stars Oli Hannon-Dalby, Craig Miles and Abbey Freeborn.

Matt Sadler, Boldmere Junior School head, said: "We were delighted to have won the draw and to receive this fantastic prize."

"A lot of our pupils love playing and going to watch cricket so they were thrilled to welcome two Birmingham Bears and one Central Sparks

player into the school to pick up some important tips and skills.

"The prize of building materials from Selco is also a massive boost to us. We are going to use the £1,000 to help us to construct a sheltered outdoor area where children can head for reading sessions and other learning activities."

Selco has five branches in Birmingham in Tyburn, Tyseley, Perry Barr, Solihull and Stirchley while its main Support Centre is based in Wythall.

Carine Jessamine, marketing director of Selco, said: "We have been long term partners of Warwickshire County Cricket Club and Birmingham Bears and, as well as promoting the cricket side of the sponsorship, we are always looking for opportunities to engage the local community."

"The Six4Schools campaign was a perfect fit as it not only helped inspire the next generation of cricket fans to attend matches and grow their love for the sport, it also allowed us to support a school local to enhance their facilities."

"Boldmere Junior School was certainly a fitting winner and we are delighted to help provide materials to create an outdoor space for pupils."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



Back row: Craig Miles (left) and Oli Hannon-Dalby (right) from Birmingham Bears with Simon, head of multi-channel marketing at Selco. Front row: Boldmere Junior School pupils (from left) Elijah Owens and Rosie Bryan.

A clever combination from Makita

LEADING power tool manufacturer Makita UK has added a new two-piece combo kit to its extensive range of LXT products, to offer professionals a useful set of tools at exceptional value.

A must have for any tradesperson, the new DLX2460TJ combo kit features two of Makita's most popular professional cordless power tools — the DTD153Z 18 V LXT brushless impact drive and DHP487Z 18 V LXT brushless combi drill.

Housed in a Type 3 Makpac connector case for easy storage and trans-

portation, the kit also includes two 5.0 Ah 18 V LXT BL 1850B batteries and the DC18RC fast charger which can be used across Makita's vast LXT range.

The DTD153Z is an extremely powerful impact driver with 170 Nm max torque, delivering a no-load speed of 3,400 rpm and providing up to 3,600 impacts per minute — making it capable of driving screws up to 125 mm into timber without a pilot hole and up to 30% faster than a conventional drill/driver.

Makita's compact DHP487Z 18 V LXT brushless combi drill features variable speed control to deliver up to 1,700 rpm, 25,500 bpm and 40 Nm maximum fastening torque for a wide range of drilling, fastening and hammer drilling applications. Weighing up to 1.7 kg, this lightweight and portable combi drill is a versatile power tool that can handle a wide scope of applications. It also has a single sleeve keyless chuck for quick and easy bit changes with 20 torque settings, plus drill mode for added fastening control.

Kevin Brannigan, marketing manager at Makita, said: "Our Combo Kits are incredibly popular with many different product configuration options available to suit individual requirements, applications and budget. What's more, these kits offer significant savings when compared to buying the components individually, making these a much more economical purchase for end users. We have added the new DLX2460TJ two-piece combo kit to our line up to offer even more choice, with a premium range of power tools that can tackle a wide variety of jobs on site. Plus, the kit includes two batteries and a fast charger which can be used across our entire LXT cordless platform — which now spans over 290 products.

Makita ● www.makitauk.com



Avro laying football foundations for the future

AN OLDHAM grassroots football club has hit the back of the net by securing the support of one of the UK's leading builders merchants.

Avro FC, which has more than 500 players, has received a £1,000 donation from Selco Builders Warehouse.

The money will be used to fund the development of coaches in safeguarding, first aid, equality, inclusion and diversity and mental health.

Avro has a total of 25 teams throughout the age groups, with the first team flying high in the North West Counties League Premier Division.

Charlie O'Brien, operations director at Avro FC, said: "We are hugely grateful for the donation Selco has made.

"We have around 500 players involved in the various teams and it's a huge undertaking to keep all the plates spinning. The development of our coaches is imperative to the success of the football club and the educational support they will receive from Selco's donation will be invaluable."

Selco has 74 branches across the UK, including four in Manchester in Ardwick, Ashton Moss, Baguley and Salford.

Kevin O'Rourke, branch manager at Selco Ashton Moss based on Alexandria Drive off Lord Sheldon Way, said: "We look to support the local communities in which we operate any way we can.

"Grassroots sports clubs are always at the heart of those communities and Avro is no

different with so many teams and players. We are delighted to play a part in supporting the development of coaches who give so much time and effort to ensuring people of all ages have the chance to enjoy the benefits of competitive football."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



From left, Bev Shields (Selco), Avro FC Operations Director Charlie O'Brien and Kirk Davernport (Selco).

IBMG's Merchant Mission team wins charity challenge

A TEAM from the Independent Builders Merchant Group (IBMG) was crowned the winners of the Teenage Cancer Trust's Mission Unstoppable challenge.

The Merchant Mission team, comprised of Chandlers Building Supplies, Parker Building Supplies and Fairalls, raised almost £15,000 for the charity in just 10 weeks of dedicated fundraising.

Competing against five other teams to raise the most funds for Teenage Cancer Trust (TCT) within the allocated time period, IBMG's Merchant Mission squad took poll position with a remarkable £4,000 lead on the runners up, and a £6,000 lead on the team that came in third place.

Initiatives run by IBMG's Merchant Mission team included a footie World Cup challenge, sponsored dog walk, Christmas jumper jolly, a gala dinner, charity auction, in-branch darts competition and much more.



Five employees, spread across Chandlers Building Supplies, Parker Building Supplies and Fairalls, formed the IBMG's Merchant Mission team to spearhead the campaign and engage with colleagues across the IBMG branch network. Pictured left to right, they were led by Stuart Hayler of Fairalls, Taylors Hill; Murdina Hook, Parker Building Supplies, Crowborough; Keiryn Giles, Fairalls, Taylors Hill; Jake Graham, Chandlers Building Supplies, Banstead; Mike Granger of Chandlers Building Supplies, Woking; and Maddie Hickman at IBMG's head office. (Photo credit: Independent Builders Merchant Group.)

Stuart Hayler of IBMG's Fairalls said: This was a super team effort. We put together our Merchant Mission team of five from branches of Parker Building Supplies, Chandlers Building Supplies, Fairalls located throughout the South East. Everyone bought into the mission with the Teenage Cancer Trust message resonating. It has been an incredible journey and an achievement that makes us all really proud."

Helen Farquharson of Teenage Cancer Trust said: "Congratulations to IBMG's Merchant Mission team on winning the challenge. We cannot thank you enough for all your hard work. We have enjoyed watching you take on new challenges over the last number of months. You have been an unstoppable force that is really helping young people through cancer."

The Independent Builders Merchants Group (IBMG) owns more than 20 leading builders merchants brands through the South of England to include Parker Building Supplies, Chandlers Building Supplies, Fairalls, RGB and Grant & Stone among others. IBMG continues to grow with several more recent acquisitions to include: Merkko, Cornish Fixings and Wantage Builders Merchants. IBMG now owns 173 merchant branches spanning five divisions; general builders merchants; plumbing, heating & bathrooms, electrical wholesale, roofing & timber. **Independent Builders Merchants Group ● www.independentbm.com**

Bristol rugby club wins competition jackpot

NORTH BRISTOL Rugby Club has won £5,000 to improve its facilities for female players after coming out on top in a national competition.

The thriving rugby club managed to secure the most votes in Selco Builders Warehouse's Community Heroes contest. North Bristol RFC was one of 12 good causes shortlisted by the leading builders merchant in the competition, with the general public selecting the winner in a month-long vote throughout February. The rugby club secured almost a third of the 10,000-plus votes cast.

Punk Against Poverty, meanwhile, won £1,000 as runner-up with a 12% share of the vote. The Community Interest Company provides support to families in Exeter and Torquay, including supplying free school uniforms to children in need.

Steve Bold, club chairman at North Bristol RFC, said the money would be spent on the women's game. He said: "We are absolutely thrilled to have won Selco's Community Heroes competition and would like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us. This money will make a huge difference to the club and in particular our female players and spectators. It will allow us to upgrade the female toilets and changing areas which will be a huge boost. When our clubhouse was built in around 1986 women's rugby was not considered, but that area of the game has grown tremendously. We need to keep investing and making improvements to our facilities so that we are accessible to all.



From left, David Godfrey and Steve Bold of North Bristol RFC.

"The Community Heroes competition has been very exciting to be involved in. It's fantastic that Selco is getting involved with charities and community groups right across the country."

Selco has two branches in Bristol on Taurus Road in Filton and Cater Road in Bishopsworth.

Each of the 12 Community Heroes finalists had already won £500 worth of building materials from Selco before voting began.

Carine Jessamine, marketing director at Selco, said: "A huge congratulations to North Bristol RFC for being crowned our Community Heroes champions, and also

to Punk Against Poverty for coming second. North Bristol RFC is a fantastic club with 21 teams across men's, women's and junior rugby. They make a really positive impact on their local community and this money will help them progress further. This year's Community Heroes competition was extremely successful with more than 2,000 entries and 10,000 votes. Thank you to everyone who took part. It's a great privilege to be able to support good causes in the areas in which we operate."

The 12 finalists were: Bury Veterans Hub, 13th Warrington East Scout Group, Coventry Foodbank, Downham Men's Group, Educ8/S.T.A.R.S, Haxby & Wigginton Youth & Community Association, North Bristol RFC, Punk Against Poverty CIC, Sirhowy Valley Hub, St John Ambulance Cymru, Up The Garden Bath CIC and Watford Mencap.

Selco ● www.selcobw.com

International Timber joins STARK Group

INTERNATIONAL Timber joined STARK Group A/S on 1st March 2023. The acquisition, first announced on 12th December, confirmed that International Timber's parent company had reached an agreement to sell International Timber to STARK Group. This sales is now completed and International Timber is now wholly owned by STARK Group.

International Timber has now joined one of the fastest growing merchants and distribution groups in Europe and a business completely focussed on its expertise in distributing building materials for tradespeople.



The International Timber brand name, much recognised and respected by those in the industry, will continue and International Timber will become part of the UK subsidiary of STARK Group, STARK Building Materials UK.

Paul Martin, managing director of International Timber (pictured), said: "STARK Group is a leading distributor of building materials across Europe and their business will bring their experience of successful growth. They have a culture of sharing best practice and will be supporting our plans to deliver the solutions, services and great experience that will help customers grow and make their life easier. So it's great for our customers and for our suppliers who are also a critical part of our success. Customers won't notice any immediate change, as it's very much business as usual and we will continue to trade as normal for customers."

"Over time we will be working closely with STARK, sharing and building on our great plans for our customers. We have a lot of opportunities now to share best practice with STARK and learn from their business and operations elsewhere in Europe. They have a tremendous track record of growth and delivering a great experience to their customers. We'll be spending time seeing in what ways we can learn from this experience to support our local customers."

STARK Group CEO Søren P Olesen said: "We are very pleased to have completed this acquisition in great time and look forward to welcoming the International Timber colleagues and branches to STARK. We have a strategy that successfully focuses on professional tradespeople and the renovation and maintenance market together with specialist distribution for a range of customer segments. Entering the UK market is a great opportunity for our combined business to share best practice across the Nordics, Germany, Austria and the UK making life even easier for tradespeople. We're delighted to now be a major employer in the UK, with 9,000 colleagues, where we will continue to operate as a good corporate citizen, placing a strong emphasis on sustainability, valuing and caring about our new UK employees and supporting UK growth and building decarbonisation."

International Timber ● www.internationaltimber.com

Croydon builders merchant celebrates 20th anniversary



Paul White, Selco Croydon branch manager.

A LEADING builders merchant in Croydon marked 20 years of trading in April with its longest serving customers and staff at the heart of the celebrations.

The Selco Builders Warehouse branch on Mitcham Road first opened its doors in 2003 and is still going strong today, serving hundreds of local tradespeople every day.

A week of celebrations was held at the branch including trade days with key suppliers, a customer darts tournament and a bake sale and raffle in aid of Cancer Research UK, Selco's nominated charity for the year. Some of the customers who have been trading with Selco throughout the two decades attended a special celebration breakfast and received a bottle of champagne.

Paul White, branch manager of Selco Croydon for the past 18 months, and speaking during the celebrations, said: "We are proud to have been an established part of the Croydon community over the last 20 years."

"A lot of our customers use our branch multiple times a week, as well as other Selco branches in the local area, so we have built up strong relationships with many of them over the years."

"We wanted to make them a big part of the celebrations and we will have a number of our longest-serving customers joining us on Friday, while we had a special event for colleagues who started at Selco Croydon on the opening day and are still with the company now."

"It's been a fantastic 20 years and we are already looking forward to the next 20 as we provide tradespeople with the most convenient solution possible to meet their every day working needs."

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 a new app — as well as a 'Dial & Deliver' telephone service — to make life as convenient as possible for tradespeople.

Selco ● www.selcobw.com

Selco extends Salford Red Devils partnership

SELCO Builders Warehouse has demonstrated its commitment to rugby league in Manchester by sponsoring Salford Red Devils Women for the 2023 campaign.

The leading builders merchant began a three-year-deal as the front of shirt sponsor with Salford's men's team last season in which they embarked on a memorable run to reach the Super League play-off semi-

finals. Now Selco, which has a branch on Regent Street, will provide the same sponsorship for the female team ahead of their first season in Super League 2.

Salford Red Devils Women were formed at the start of last season and finished top of the Championship League, as well as winning the League Cup.

Carine Jessamine, marketing director of Selco, said: "We are delighted to extend our involvement with Salford Red Devils to also support the women's team ahead of a huge season."

"We are long-term backers of rugby league and in supporting the World Cup last year, we demonstrated our commitment to helping the sport grow. Salford women's team had a fantastic first season in 2022 and it was a natural fit to provide our backing as they move into the second tier of women's rugby league. We wish them, and the men's team, every success for the forthcoming season."

There are plans for a number of Salford Red Devils Women's matches to be played as part of double-headers with the men's team at the AJ Bell Stadium this season, and the team will also feature in the Women's Challenge Cup for the first time.

Marcelle Lock, manager of Salford Red Devils Women, said: "It's been an incredible 12 months since the team was formed and we have come a long way in a very short period of time. To have Selco on board as our main sponsors and matching the men's team on that front is a fantastic boost for us all. This season will be a fantastic experience for the whole team and we are looking forward to the challenge."

With hundreds of trade brands always in stock, Selco's 74 UK branches are firmly focused on helping tradespeople complete their jobs as quickly and effectively as possible.

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



From left, player Hannah Wicks, Selco Salford branch manager Simon Lee and Summer Harris.

School's food donation scheme receives Selco boost

A LEEDS school which collects and distributes food to vulnerable families in its local area has received backing for the scheme from a leading builders merchant.

Primley Wood Primary School, based on Fir Tree Rise, collects donations of surplus food from supermarkets and makes it available to the local community, with particular focus on families badly affected by the cost of living crisis.

To help create a more inviting environment for people to collect the food, the school's Parent and Teacher Association is seeking to create a permanent food stand.

The Leeds Roundhay branch of Selco Builders Warehouse has donated all the materials for the permanent fixture, including cement, sharp sand, timber and posts.

Jordan License, head teacher of Primley Wood Primary School, said: "With the pandemic and the cost of living crisis, some families in the local community have come under severe financial pressure over the last few years."

"We wanted to do something to help and have created good relationships with supermarkets to enable us to offer their surplus food to local residents."

"At the moment, the produce is available for collection free of charge from crates but we want to encourage more families to feel

comfortable collecting the food so had our sights set on building a permanent structure.

"We are hugely grateful to the team at Leeds Roundhay Selco for providing the materials. It's going to make a significant difference to residents living near the school."

"We have around 300 children in the school but this scheme is open not only to those families but also the wider community."

The Selco branch, located on Roundhay Road, is one of two based in the city with the other on Elland Road. Matt Keith, branch manager of

Selco Leeds Roundhay, said: "The service offered by Primley Wood Primary School is a fantastic initiative and, as soon as we heard about it, we had no hesitation pledging the materials for the new food stand."

"At Selco, we are committed to doing what we can to support the local communities in which we operate. This is an extremely worthwhile project and we hope our backing will play a small part in supporting vulnerable families through a testing time."

With hundreds of trade brands always in stock, Selco's 74 UK branches are firmly focused on helping tradespeople complete their jobs as quickly and effectively as possible.

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



Jordan License, head teacher of Primley Wood Primary School (back left) with Selco Leeds Roundhay transport manager Tony Clamp (back, second from right), branch manager Matt Keith (back right) and other school representatives.

Altendorf Group receives award

THE ALTENDORF Group from Minden, Germany, is a world market leader in the manufacture of premium-class sliding table saws and edgelanding machines. Now the company has been awarded the internationally renowned World Technology Leader Award — with a fantastic third place in the public online voting placed ahead of global corporations such as Apple, Samsonite and Jabra.

Altendorf was nominated for its revolutionary HAND GUARD system, globally the first and only certified and AI-controlled safety assistance system for sliding table saws. Two cameras monitor a large area around the saw blade. When a hand is detected and gets too close to the saw blade, it is stopped and driven down in a maximum of a quarter of a second. No damage is done to the sawblade and the system can be operated again after max. 10 seconds. Many customers such as industrial companies cutting plastics or aluminium, education facilities or woodshops are using HAND GUARD to increase the safety for their workforce.

HAND GUARD is an important pillar in Altendorf's commitment to safety and innovation. The Altendorf Group will continue its efforts to make working with wood and other materials safer and more efficient for professionals around the world. HAND GUARD is available through Altendorf's worldwide dealer network.

The winners of the WTLA were determined in a public online voting that ended with a new partici-

pation record: more than 43,000 votes from more than 80 countries were placed. With a total of 4,496 votes, the Altendorf Group came surprisingly in third place behind the company ASML and the joint venture BMW and Nvidia. Consumer electronics manufacturer Apple landed in fourth place, followed by other well-known brands such as Jabra, Samsonite, Cosco or Sixt. The Altendorf Group is proud to be part of this prestigious community of leading companies and thanks all participants for their active participation in the public vote.

The award World Technology Leader and the inquiry and voting process is organised by Diana Research Pte. Ltd./Singapore. The market intelligence and research company specialises in the identification and analyses of leading companies worldwide. Its services and rankings are used by renowned international media companies as well as universities

and research institutes. Chairman of the WTL Award is Michael Oelmann, longtime editor in chief of the German business magazine Wirtschaftsblatt and former chairman of the Family Company Owners Association Die Familienunternehmer in NRW.

The Altendorf Group is a world leading manufacturer of premium sliding table saws. The company was founded in 1906 and has strong brand recognition worldwide. Its most successful product is the F 45 sliding table saw. The latest innovation is HAND GUARD.

Altendorf Group
www.altendorfgroup.com



Why do architects love SterlingOSB Zero?

ROB ANNABLE, director of Axis Design Architects, talks to West Fraser about his use of SterlingOSB Zero. Rob was co-creator, alongside Justin Pickard, of the commended entry in the West Fraser SterlingOSB Zero/RIBA competition: The Retreat.

While the competition afforded Rob and Justin the opportunity to imagine a hypothetical use for SterlingOSB Zero, Rob explained that he makes great use of the product in his work.

Why do you specify SterlingOSB Zero? "Probably because of its cost versus return. It is a cost-effective product for forming timber structures, volumes and partitions. Across the construction process, it has a good return on its investment."

As an architect what do you like about SterlingOSB Zero? "I use SterlingOSB Zero in practice quite a lot because of increased interest in timber frame construction. Using it as a racking board and as part of a strategy for air-tightness in collaboration with other membrane and tank products, it often becomes a key part of the work that I do using timber frame construction."

How important is it as an architect to use an OSB supplier who is committed to sustainable production and supply? "It's critically important! The decision to move more towards timber frame and use sustainable materials throughout my practice has to be underpinned by this sort of commitment. There's little point in specifying timber products that don't offer that sort of security."

To find out more about West Fraser's support for architects and to access useful downloads visit the architects' page.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>
<https://uk.westfraser.com/resources/architect-support/>

Wood Awards 2023 launches call for entries

THE CALL for entries for the Wood Awards 2023 is now live! Enter your wood-centric building, furniture or product before 23 June 2023 and have your work recognised as the best in the UK.

Architects, engineers, installers, furniture makers, product designers — or anyone else with an exceptional timber project — can now enter via the Wood Awards website — free of charge — for a chance to receive a highly coveted Wood Award.

Since 1971, the Wood Awards has been the UK's premier competition in the timber design and construction industries. By recognising and rewarding outstanding timber design, craftsmanship and installation — and showcasing the many ways that timber transforms and enriches our lives — the Wood Awards acts as a vehicle to drive positive change in our built environment. Submissions are split into *Buildings* and *Furniture & Product*, with categories including 'Commercial & Leisure', 'Education & Public Sector', 'Interiors', 'Private', 'Small Project', as well as 'Bespoke', 'Production', and 'Student', respectively. This covers a wide range of projects, alongside one additional category introduced in 2022: 'Restoration & Reuse', which will recognise the ways timber is preserving and enhancing our architectural heritage — and importantly — reducing the embodied carbon of construction. The prestigious Gold Award is given to the stand-out project that the judges deem to be the overall winner-of-winners. As well as the Gold Award, other awards that can be given at the judges' discretion include the Structural Award and, for the first time, a newly introduced Sustainability Award.

The Wood Awards is believed to be unique. It is not-for-profit: purely aiming to recognise excellence. It also features an elite independent judging panel that assesses all submitted entries — and visits each shortlisted project in person. This makes the Wood Awards an exceptionally rigorous competition.

Judging panels are led by Jim Greaves of Hopkins Architects, for Buildings, and design critic, curator and journalist, Corinne Julius, for Furniture & Product.

Jim Greaves, chair of Buildings judges, said, "This year we have a new 'restoration and re-use' category that will recognise the work of designers and constructors who have chosen to restore and adapt existing buildings. We have also asked Neil Smith, of Max Fordham, to assist the judges in their assessment of the environmental performance of the entries. With each year the ambition and breadth of the Wood Awards en-

tries grows, and I would positively encourage everyone involved in an interesting timber project to participate."

Corinne Julius, chair of Furniture judges, comments, "The Wood Awards are aimed at encouraging the use and appreciation of wood by the public, industry, makers and students. We hope that the Awards promote a renewed appreciation of this beautiful, varied, sustainable and renewable material. Wood is the material of the future."

Dave Hopkins, CEO of Timber Development UK, comments, "Timber Development UK is delighted to be leading on the Wood Awards 2023 after a stellar first year of organisation for 2022. We want to encourage more people to use wood in all kinds of design projects in order to try and decarbonise the material world — and believe that the first step to doing this is to inspire people with incredible designs."

With permission from the owner, anyone associated with a building or product that has been completed in the last two years is able to enter. Buildings must be located within the UK, whilst furniture and other products must have been either designed or manufactured in the UK. Fitted furniture must be in the UK. There are no restrictions on the size or budget of a project. Entrants are welcome to submit more than one project. All entries must be submitted via www.woodawards.com. Please note that there is no entry fee for submission.

The 2023 shortlist will be announced in September and showcased at a specially commissioned exhibition. The Wood Awards has ambitious plans for an exciting finale to the competition, further details on both will be announced in due course.

As a not-for-profit competition, the Wood Awards can only happen with collaborative industry sponsorship. Major sponsors of the Wood Awards 2023 include Carpenters' Company, American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) and Timber Development UK.

For over 30 years AHEC has been at the forefront of wood promotion in Europe, successfully building a distinctive and creative brand for US hardwoods. AHEC's support for creative design projects such as Discovered, Connected, and MultiPLY for the London Design Festival demonstrate the performance potential of these sustainable materials and provide valuable inspiration. AHEC has pioneered the modelling of environmental Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) for hardwoods, an approach that has since been adopted by other industries. LCA measures a number of impacts: primary energy demand (from renewable and non-renewable resources); global





warming potential; acidification potential; eutrophication potential; and photochemical ozone creation potential.

The Carpenters' Company is a City of London Livery Company. The Company was originally established as a medieval trade guild to safeguard the welfare and interests of carpenters in the City of London. Today, charitable activities and support for the craft of woodworking through scholarships, competitions and the Building Crafts College are the two cornerstones of its work.

Timber Development UK has been formed from the merger of two of the largest and longest established organisations in the supply chain, the Timber Trade Federation (TTF) and Timber Research and Development Association (TRADA). Bringing these two associations together as one has created the largest, most comprehensive supply chain body in the UK, spanning from sawmill to specifier and all points in between. The aim is to use this new organisation to capitalise on the growing interest in designing with timber and to act as an agent of change towards more sustainable, low carbon forms of construction.

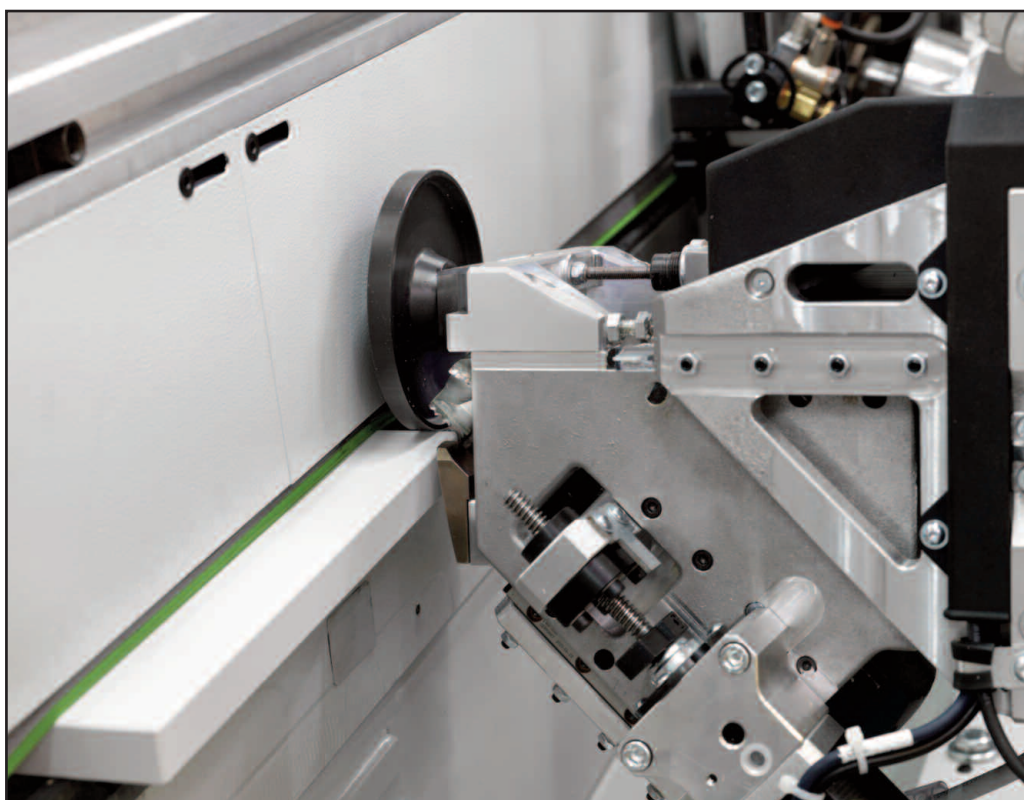
Wood Awards

www.woodawards.com

Image © Jim Stephenson



Ligna 2023: the perfect stage for Biesse



AT LIGNA, Biesse will showcase a new visual identity that represents the corporate renewal process and actively expresses the group's values and identity — centred on multi-materiality and being inherently international — while preserving the features that distinguish the various sectors in which it operates. It's an evolution that will enable the company to compete in ever-changing international markets and bring tangible benefits to customers.

"We look forward to meeting all who visit Hall 11 to discover the group's evolutionary journey and its emphasis on multi-materiality, which distinguishes Biesse from its competitors," says Ettore Vichi, chief regional officer EMEA and APAC. "High-tech solutions, integrated systems and lines designed to accommodate the needs of manufacturing companies wishing to strengthen and increase production performance will be in action," Mr Vichi concludes.



A great emphasis will be placed on automated solutions, which ensure a decisive increase in production and the complete reliability of both the production process and the loading and unloading operations. Visitors will get a first-hand look at an integrated plant consisting of panel sizing and nesting solutions, with automatic loading and unloading linked together thanks to SmartConnection, a software programme for in-house order management.

The focus will be on the new batch one edgebanding line with robotic loading and unloading. The dual characterisation of the new product marks the beginning of a path towards sustainability which, thanks to the skills and assets available, will enable the group to recognise and assess its environmental and social impact and integrate innovation into product development processes. It is in this context that Biesse presents its new product, introducing technological innovation while also improving environmental performance.

In Hall 12, trade fair visitors will be able to participate in a rich programme of panel discussions (streamed to the Ligna website with simultaneous translation into English) covering the most relevant trending topics in the woodworking industry. Biesse will contribute to the programmes with three panel discussions on the following topics:

- SmartConnection — production planning & control, software for factory/production management
- Woodworking made Izy — a common language connecting machines
- "Technology and sustainability"

Biesse invites visitors to take part in the Guided Tours organised by the trade fair, during which innovative products and optimal solutions for every process will be demonstrated alongside top product specialists.

Biesse S.p.A ● www.biessegroup.com



MARTIN at Ligna 2023: innovative control technology for trade and industry

THE INDUSTRY is making great steps towards the most important trade fair event of the year, the Ligna in Hanover. On a stand space of more than 400 m², the Bavarian machine manufacturer MARTIN will present premium machines for professional woodworking to the international trade fair public.

Ligna will take place again from 15th to 19th May 2023 after a now four-year interruption, and will once again attract visitors from all over the world to Hanover.

MARTIN will present the complete range of sliding table saws, spindle moulders, thicknessers and surface planers as well as the special sanding machine for wood window construction at Stand E30 in Hall 12.

"We at MARTIN are very proud to be able to present our innovative, now patented ConnectControl control technology to vis-



itors for the first time at Ligna. We are convinced that with this innovative concept of machine control we have once again given a noticeable innovative impetus to the entire industry," Michael Mühlendorfer, marketing manager at MARTIN, says.

A highlight of this Ligna, Mr Mühlendorfer continued, is the cloud-based, patented ConnectControl control concept that characterises the latest generation of sliding table saws and table milling machines from MARTIN.

With this multi-award-winning MARTIN invention, users receive a uniquely designed, high performance machine control system that not only opens up completely new horizons for the user in machine operation, but also opens up the entire world of modern data exchange.

The innovative, patented ConnectControl system is available for the new T14 and T29 spindle moulders and the two new T66 and T77 sliding table saws. Thanks to the modular design of ConnectTouch, the permanently installed touch-screen control, ConnectPad, the Apple iPad, with the ConnectApp and the cloud solution ConnectDrive, the customer has the option of upgrading or downgrading the

control of his machine at any time, even after purchase. This provides a comfortable level of investment security and flexibility.

The state of the art in the operation of stationary standard wood-working machines is dominated by electronic controls that are permanently connected to the machine; the possibility of multi-functional use of the existing control electronics is not given.

These controls are also only connected to the internet in exceptional cases, mainly for maintenance. With ConnectControl, MARTIN is taking into account the increasing digitalisation of the working world, which is also unstoppable in the traditional trade. A central cornerstone here is communication.

Modern companies and their employees increasingly work with electronic work documents, ie tablets. On the one hand, because the tablet carries all relevant work documents, on the other hand, because it is a central means of modern communication.

It made sense to take this development a step further and use the tablet as an extended machine control system. With the tablet or the corresponding app, users have access to extensive extensions of the essential machine operation, which runs on the 7" touch screen permanently installed on the machine. In addition, access to data centrally managed in the company, such as order data or mould information, is ensured via the tablet or the associated cloud application.

Of course, every machine equipped with ConnectControl can be operated without a docked tablet as well as without an on-line connection, but then without the possibilities of communication to the "outside".

The intelligent combination of a mobile tablet and a 7" touch screen permanently installed on the machine enables the multi-level operating concept to provide efficient electronic support for the operator directly at the machine.

On the other hand, the tablet also ensures communication between the machine and the work preparation department as well as between the machine and the construction site, for example. The tablet as the employee's central work device ensures that work processes are perfectly organised even if changes occur that flow into the company from outside. Examples of this are changes or rework that are necessary at short notice, which occur from time to time during an assembly operation. Through the use of modern communication technology, these flow seamlessly to the machine — quickly and efficiently. Neither outdated work instructions nor obsolete drawings need to be exchanged; everyone has the current status directly at hand at all times. By integrating modern technology into the machine operation, even the last hurdle of the information flow is taken.

The ConnectControl control concept has already received two awards. On the one hand, the innovative, successful design of the control structure was honoured with the German Design Award 2022. Secondly, and MARTIN is particularly proud of this, the innovations that were realised in this concept were also honoured with the German Innovation Award 2022.

Visitors can also look forward to the new, fresh design of the MARTIN machines. The entire range now comes in a modern white, the familiar water blue is now reserved for the area around the logo.

"Our machines have long stood for woodworking at its best. Many



functions that you may not even have thought about complete all models, from the entry-level class to our top models. And they really leave nothing to be desired," says Mr Mühldorfer.

At the Ligna stand, MARTIN will present the complete range of the company to visitors. In addition to the two new spindle moulders T14 and T29, both of which offer all the possibilities of digitalisation thanks to ConnectControl, the combined planer T32, which has been newly added to the range, will also be shown for the first time at Ligna. This planer will be accompanied by its "sisters", the tried-and-tested T45 thickness planer and the T54 surface planer.

Thanks to ConnectControl, companies can now also make full use of the possibilities of digitalisation on the new T66 and T77 sliding table saws. Both sliding table saws are already equipped with infinitely variable speed control as standard, as are the table routers. The cutting height of the T66 is now 155 mm with a 450 mm saw blade, whereas the T77 reaches up to 205 mm cutting height. Where a T66 swivels on one side up to +46°, the T77 swivels to 47°. Optionally, a T77 can also swivel on both side from +47° to -46°.

The Q-FIN special sanding machine, which won the German Innovation Award in Gold, has literally ushered in a new era. The machine, which has been in use in numerous leading European window manufacturing companies since 2014, is now able to process the glass neck in the quality finishing process in addition to the other main surfaces thanks to the chamfering unit shown for the first time at Ligna. Both the profiled scantling and the glass bead can now be prepared on all relevant surfaces in such a way that the resource-consuming intermediate grinding can be omitted.

"Be ready for a new era in wood window manufacturing and experience how Quality Finishing from MARTIN works at Ligna in May," concluded Mr Mühldorfer.

MARTIN at Ligna: Hall 12/Stand E30, 15th to 19th May 2023.

MARTIN ● www.martin.info

Daltons Wadkin on show at Ligna 2023

FOR THE FIRST time since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the Ligna exhibition will be returning.

Considered the world-leading trade fair for woodworking and wood processing plant, machinery and tools, Ligna attracts approximately 75,000 visitors from around the globe with its array of technology showcases and industry expert talks.

The 2023 event will be held in Hannover, Germany, between 15th and 19th May. After a three-year absence, there is heightened interest and anticipation for what will be shown off and revealed.

Alex Dalton, managing director of Daltons Wadkin, a long-established UK distributor and manufacturer of industrial woodworking machinery, gives his thoughts on what we can expect from the 2023 instalment of Ligna.

"After such a big delay, it's easy to expect that there will be more shown off at Ligna than usual," says Alex Dalton. "From a hardware perspective, the woodworking industry has reached a point where revolutionary changes are getting rare. Instead, more emphasis is being placed on improving the capabilities of the accompanying software. And I expect it will be software that takes centre stage at Ligna this March, particularly within the areas of automation and digital fabrication. The automatic processes with these machines have been well developed over several years, to a standard in which they cannot drastically get much better.

"However, the biggest changes we tend to see come with the software, particularly with how operator safety can be improved, how labour-intensive jobs can be deskilled as much as possible, and how user interfaces can be made more functional, both for the vendor and the user.

"Another important factor in improving software is how it makes the machines we operate more intuitive. There tend to be different levels of input when it comes to software, but increasingly the industry is manoeuvring into a position where machines require as little input from operators as possible. By making our machines more intuitive we're freeing up our operators to apply their skills in other areas of the business, including managing and optimising the cutting lists and working to get the most yield out of products. That information is then fed back into the machines and, depending on its manufacturer, the hardware is often linked up, talking to a central control brain and working in tandem. With more intuitive software we get more intuitive machines. And one would believe that the more intuitive our processes are, the more efficient they will increasingly become.

"When analysing technology development broadly across multiple in-



dustries, it is very rare that we see anything revolutionary. Instead, we see a greater focus put into making tweaks and changes that make the technology at our disposal even better. Take the Apple iPhone as an example. With each annual release, we do not get presented with a product that is wholly different from the previous model. But we do get just enough minor improvements that make a difference to the consumer and continually elevate the standard of performance in line with consumer expectations. Speaking specifically about woodworking, there are two classes of machinery in our industry: there is automated and manual and not too much in between. And similar to Apple, the approach in the woodworking industry is to take the machines and products and make small but noticeable changes that will help companies become more efficient. At the core of that is a focus to make machines safer but also easier to use due to the increasing knowledge and skill gap facing the industry.

"Sustainable manufacturing is undoubtedly the biggest area for improvement right now and the upcoming Ligna exhibition could give us a deeper understanding of the way our sector is going to become more focused on this area. Greater strides are starting to be made with ESG — Environmental, Social and Governance — in mind. The industry is taking steps to reduce waste, utilise sustainably sourced materials, and implement efficient manufacturing processes. But more can always be done and this coming May's Ligna exhibit is as likely an event as any to showcase what further action can be taken to reduce our environmental impact and produce products that retain quality but are also less harmful.

"Whether it takes centre stage, we will have to wait to find out."

All images credit: LIGNA.de

Daltons Wadkin ● www.daltonswadkin.com



Surface Design Show 2023 — the best yet

SURFACE Design Show 2023 took place at the Business Design Centre 7th-9th February 2023, with the overwhelming response from both visitors and exhibitors being: "It's never been better!"

A total of 175 exhibitors showcased the best in surface design, with over half of them being new to the show. Nearly 6,000 architects, designers and specifiers visited over the two and a half days to be inspired by the innovative materials on display and the excellent speaker's programme.

The overriding theme of the show was 'Shaping Communities', which explored an open dialogue amongst industries and brands, with the common goal of building stronger relationships between people and places.

Located right in the centre of the Show, Surface Spotlight Live (SSL) featured ground-breaking materials for visitors to touch and feel, giving a truly 'hands-on' experience for architects and designers to enjoy and learn from.

Curated by trend expert Sally Angharad and sponsored by CDUK, SSL presented a selection of surfaces, finishes and materials that celebrated the power of creative thinking, demonstrating how ethical innovation is providing positive design solutions.

The show had an incredible speaker's programme, kicking off with the Opening Night Debate held in partnership with RIBA, titled 'Climate Change and Future Proofing' which featured a stellar line up of industry experts. The passionate session, hosted by Simon Sturgis, founder of Targeting Zero, brought together a younger generation of architects, designers and clients. They not only explored the issues around the future durability and adaptability of current projects, but also how to ensure that the commercial value of projects can be future proofed against climate change.



Other talks included:

- Sourcing Locally, hosted by Veronica Simpson, in conversation with Camilla Leech, Richard Renman and Emily Skinner.
- The PechaKucha included an all-female panel and was hosted by Nikki Osborn, creative director of Basha Franklin, with panellists including Oluwafunmbi Adeagbo, project architect of Morris & Co, Natasha Bonugli, creative director and founder of Bon Collective, Nicola Rutt, founding director of Studio MULTI and Sofia Steffenoni, founder of Matter of Stuff.
- Legends Live returned for the second year, in partnership with Mix Interiors and saw editor Harry McKinley interview Katrina Larkin, co-founder, Fora and chief ESG officer, The Office Group.

Committed to supporting and promoting up and coming designers in the materials sector, the New Talent area was bursting with innovation. Sponsored by Canon UK and curated by Jennifer Castoldi, the 2023 New Talent section saw over 30 participants display a range of sophisticated designs from textile designs to augmented reality and 3D tiles. A recurring

theme among many participants this year was the use of natural materials and dyes.

Winners of the 2023 Surface Design Awards were announced at a breakfast ceremony on the last day of the Show. This year the judges were blown away by the quality of this year's entries, which led to a Surface Design Show first with the decision to crown not one but two entries as the Supreme Winners: Glade of Light by BCA Landscape, won the Landscape & Public Realm category and the Winner of the Commercial Building Interior category was MONC by Nina + Co with Smile Plastics. See our Feb/Mar issue for a full report on the Surface Design Awards 2023.

Surface Design Show 2024 will return to the Business Design Centre 8th-10th February 2024.

Surface Design Show
www surfacedesignshow.com

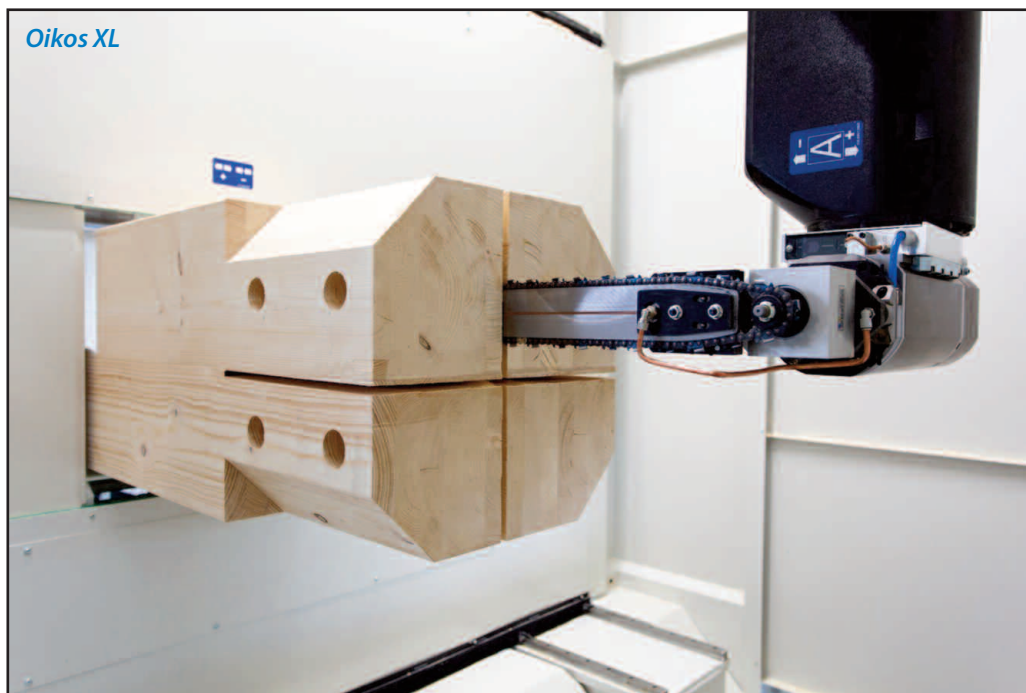


The latest SCM innovations for timber construction at the Forum Holzbau events

SCM CONFIRMS its participation in Forum Holzbau, believed to be the most important global initiative dedicated to timber construction. On 30th and 31st March, the travelling exhibition arrived in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius for its first event in 2023: Forum Wood Building Baltic. For the occasion, the Italian group, a leader in the production of secondary woodworking technologies, joined the numerous key figures in the supply chain — planners, designers, builders and machinery suppliers — to bring its vision of the future of “green” building and map out routes and strategies for the development of this constantly evolving market.

SCM participated in the Vilnius Forum, and will participate in most of the other Forum Holzbau events to follow throughout the year in France (Lille, 12th-14th April), Poland (Warsaw, 25th-26th April), Spain (Pamplona, 1st-2nd June), Germany (Berlin, 4th-5th July, and Cologne, 17th-18th October), Sweden (Vaxjo, 28th-29th September), Italy (Lazise, 10th-11th October), and Austria (Innsbruck, 30th November to 1st December)

Forum Wood Building Baltic was the first occasion to discover, together with the SCM team, the innovative technological solutions of the Italian Group: the highly flexible and precise CNC machining centres Oikos XL for glulam beams and columns, Area XL for large format CLT panels, Area X for CLT panels and curved glulam beams and the highly modular sanding-calibration machine for CLT panels DMC System XL.



Oikos XL and Area XL:

Cutting-edge technology to build the future of timber construction

Oikos XL is the new “extra-large” version of Oikos X, SCM’s innovative six-axis CNC machining centre for timber construction. It was designed to produce large-sized glulam beams and columns with a maximum section of 1,250 x 610 mm.

One of its main advantages is the automatic management and processing of very heavy elements, thanks to a sturdy mechanical structure and reliable locking and handling systems. The unique feature remains the six-axis technology, which allows the machining on all six faces of the element with all tools available and with no rotation or repositioning required.

Power and flexibility together with perfect quality of the finished elements, thanks to machining accuracy and special anti-scraping devices.

Area XL is SCM’s five-axis CNC machining centre specifically designed for the industrial production of large format CLT panels. Elements of sizes up to 3,600 x 400 mm can be processed, thanks to a powerful and high-performance machining head unit — 63 kW in continuous operation — that allows heavy duty stock removal with extreme ease, even using very heavy tools.

High productivity rates can be achieved by equipping the machine with a second machining head unit, capable of executing several operations simultaneously. Besides, the integration into automated CLT panels production systems is possible by means of a special roller worktable. A wide choice of tools and aggregates, up to 60 tool stations in total, allows





any type of project to be carried out by choosing the right configuration. Optional auxiliary units allow transversal throughfeed-drilling even on the maximum panel size.

Moreover, increased efficiency and reliability are guaranteed by work-piece handling and referencing systems and innovative cleaning systems.

Area X:

The new CNC machining centre with mobile gantry-type structure for the timber construction industry

Excellent machining quality and maximum reliability: these are the advantages of the new Area X model dedicated to timber construction. It makes possible the production of finished elements, ready for assembly at the work site, as well as zero downtimes caused by any problems.

It positions itself at the centre of SCM's five-axis CNC machining centre range with a mobile gantry-type structure and PRO worktable for CLT wall, floor, ceiling elements as well as curved beams. This solution allows processing of elements up to 3,600 mm wide and 360 mm thick, while the length can reach up to 36 m.

The PRO version worktable is the key feature of this new model. The high level of configurability comes from the availability of five different bases (from 16,000 to 36,000 mm) that can be fitted with automatic systems for work piece reference and locking, together with innovative cleaning systems for the work area.

Area X can have a simpler worktable for a stand-alone version or a more complete one for a version to be integrated into automatic production lines. The 30 kW machining head unit guarantees excellent performance even under heavy duty conditions and is supported by a specific suction system for dust-free operations.

The tool store can accommodate up to 15 tools and/or special aggregates to cover all possible operations: squaring, rebating, routing, drilling, nesting cutting, execution of sharp edges, slots and notches.

All SCM's CNC machining centres for timber construction are equipped with Maestro beam&wall, the proprietary software that allows workflow optimisation and enhanced production flexibility. By Maestro beam&wall, programming is possible either on a PC in the office or on 'eye-M' operator console directly on the machine, leaving freedom of choice to the customer.

DMC SYSTEM XL:

New horizons for CLT panel sanding

SCM extends its many years of experience in sanding to the timber construction sector with a new project for machining CLT panels.

DMC System XL is a solid, reliable and highly technological sanding-calibrating machine that offers configuration versatility and unification of the components and parts in common to optimise management costs.

This new solution is composed of a solid steel structure capable of machining the upper side of panels up to 3,700 mm wide and 500 mm thick. Its strength is the modularity that for decades has been one of the most popular advantages of the DMC sanding range.

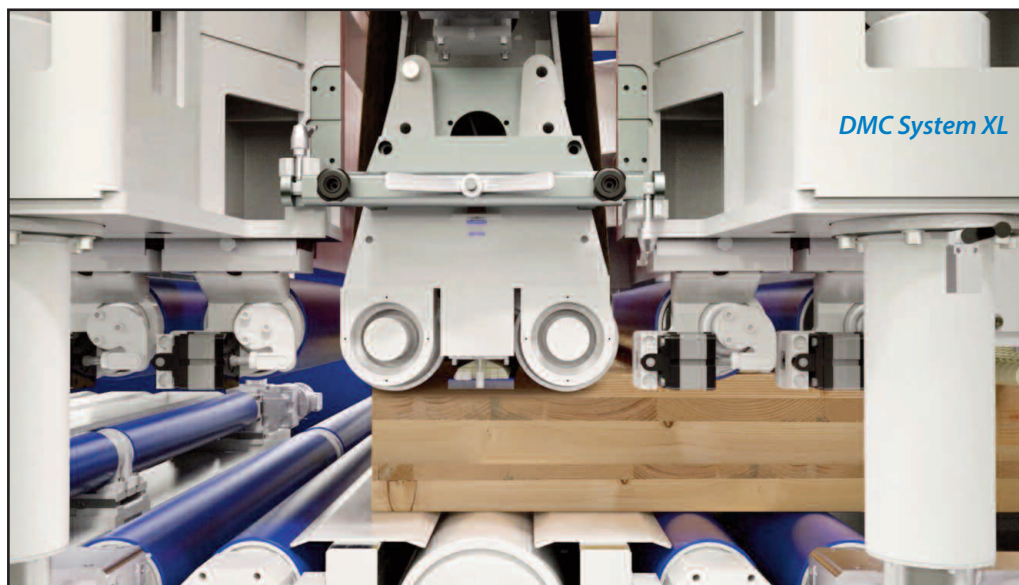
SCM has engineered three modules (roller unit, pad unit and crossbelt unit) that can be combined with one another based on specific production requirements. Moreover, at a later date, the customer will be able to add further units to the selected configuration, achieving an efficient and coherent integration between machines, controls and electrical panels.

At the planning stage, top-quality materials and components have been chosen to last long and withstand the most intense machining. Furthermore, the heart of the DMC System XL technology was developed to make the operator's maintenance work easy, fast and always safe.

SCM's approach to CLT sanding is to help customers distinguish themselves on the market with solutions aimed at improving the surface finishing and increase the value of the finished product.

SCM Group • Tel 0115 977 0044

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Dustcontrol UK at Safety & Health Expo 2023

DUSTCONTROL UK will be exhibiting a range of its construction dust extractors and factory-fitted centralised dust extraction units at Safety & Health Expo 2023.

Taking place on Tuesday 16th May to Thursday 18th May at the ExCel, London, the Dustcontrol team will be showcasing and demonstrating its industrial H Class dust extractors including the DC 1800, DC 2900, and DC Tromb 400, in addition to its range of air cleaners at stand SH2650.

The DC Tromb 400 is Dustcontrol's most powerful single-phase dust extractor, having been designed to meet modern safety requirements and work in conjunction with tools that have become ever more efficient on today's construction sites.

The maximum airflow is as high as 400 m³/hr, which is more than enough capacity for equipment such as floor grinders with a working width of 500 mm and large electric cut-off saws. It is also easy to transport around construction sites, move in stairwells, and lift into tight spaces, while the wheels are puncture-proof and lockable for working on uneven ground. In addition, bag replacement is easy, and its HEPA H13 filter offers optimum quality, containment, and performance.

The powerful DC 2900 range will also be on display, which can be used for industrial vacuuming or on-tool dust extraction. Its suction casings



make it particularly effective for dust-creating activities.

Ira Morris, country manager at Dustcontrol UK, said: "The Safety & Health Expo is always an exciting event to be a part of. We'll be showcasing our first-class centralised vacuum equipment, including HEPA filtered, ATEX-rated and cyclone-based dust extractors — perfect for industrial cleansing requirements.

"The Dustcontrol team will share how our robust machines can capture and extract different kinds of particles and pollutants with the highest level of filtration to achieve better results."

The company, based in Milton Keynes, has more than 50 years of experience in developing cyclone-based portable dust extractors and centralised vacuum systems to fit client requirements in the manufacturing, engineering, food processing, construction, and demolition industries. It is an expert in problem-solving with a high technical capability of capturing dust at its source, then containing and transporting it to a convenient discharge solution.

Safety and Health Expo is one of Europe's leading health and safety events, welcoming industry professionals from around the world to source solutions across occupational health, wellbeing, PPE, site safety and more.

Dustcontrol UK ● Tel 01327 858001

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

SANDING & FINISHING

Introducing Benjamin Moore's brand-new exterior paint Element Guard®



EVERY structure's exterior should have a beautiful look and excellent protection, no matter the weather. Benjamin Moore's Element Guard is a premium exterior paint specially formulated to offer advanced moisture protection that performs in any weather, including wet and humid environments.

Its excellent adhesion, resistance to cracking and peeling, and superior hide and colour retention combine to ensure Element Guard will apply all Benjamin Moore exterior colours in premium quality, designed to last and backed by a limited lifetime warranty, when used in accordance with the label instructions.

Element Guard's 100% acrylic resin provides protection against wind-driven rain, excessive humidity and other harsh weather conditions.

With early rain resistance, you can apply Element Guard 60 minutes before rainfall or dew and between the temperatures of 1.7 to 37.7°C, meaning you can extend your workday and painting season.

Key features and product benefits:

- Provides a mildew-resistant coating: create exterior protection that stands up to all types of moisture.
- 100% acrylic resin formula: provide excellent adhesion and resistance to peeling and cracking.
- Engineered with Gennex® Colour Technology: contributes to superior hide and colour retention across Benjamin Moore colours.

For the ultimate combination, use Benjamin Moore's Aura Exterior Satin or Low Lustre on the woodwork for the highest performance.

Element Guard will be available at authorised stockists nationwide.

Benjamin Moore

www.benjaminmoorepaint.co.uk

Mirka Ltd (Finland) celebrates 80 years of pioneering surface finishing



MIRKA (UK) Ltd's parent company, Mirka Ltd (Finland), is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year, growing to become one of the world's leading manufacturers in the surface finishing industry.

For eight decades, Mirka has been at the forefront of innovation in abrasives manufacturing, including pioneering dust-free sanding with the launch of Abranet in 2001 as well as several award-winning power tools such as DEROS.

Mirka was founded in 1943 in Helsinki by the engineer Onni Aulo, but due to the continuation of World War II, production did not start until 1946. Headquartered in



the heart of rural Ostrobothnia, Finland, the company has expanded with a network of daughter companies spanning the entire globe, with Mirka (UK) Ltd becoming the first daughter company to be established in 1979.

While the business is a very different company today, its core vision remains the same; to give people and its customers the opportunity to perform better and achieve that perfect finish. Its daily operations are continually striving to improve its products, added-value services, and training support to enable its employees to fulfill their potential and for its customers to continue to be successful.

"The most important element of our evolution has always been to listen to the voice of our customers," says Mirka's CEO, Stefan Sjöberg.

"We are proud of all the milestones we have achieved, but to stay relevant we must also look forward to the next big thing, and here we see a lot of potential. The Green Deal in the European Union, and the green transition in the world, in general, are things that will shape how we look at our business and how we perform — not only for Mirka but for the entire industry. The company that solves this puzzle will be relevant for many years to come, and looking at our organisation today, I am confident that Mirka will be here to celebrate its 90th and 100th anniversaries as well, Mr Sjöberg concludes.

Mirka ● www.mirka.com/uk/



Out with the old ... in with the new Extractly system

EXTRACTLY Ltd recently installed a complete dust extraction system at Unitech Oxon Ltd, including Ecogate energy-saving control technology, a new filter unit, and ductwork to replace an existing system which was now tired and insufficient for the company's needs.

Located on the outskirts of Banbury, with extensive factory and showroom facilities, Unitech is a long-established, family business, delivering bespoke kitchen and bedroom design, manufacture and installation to a discerning residential market. "Our goal has always been to provide our clientele with individually-designed kitchens and bedrooms — something we would be pleased to have in our homes — manufactured to the highest quality and exacting requirements, yet competitive priced," says founder and owner Kevin Crouch.



Installation of the new Biesse Rover B FT HD was the catalyst for upgrading the extraction system at Unitech Oxon Ltd.



Ecogate's motorised dampers integrated into the Nordfab QF ductwork system automatically open and close as machines come on or offline.

To help achieve this goal, Unitech has always embraced new ideas and technologies in order to streamline and enhance production methods and the business recently invested in cutting-edge CNC technology with the installation of a high-performance Biesse Rover B FT HD machining centre — only the second of its kind in the UK. "Although our ductwork system was installed only five years ago, it hadn't given us the service we had expected," Kevin explains. "It was getting to the point where we were going to have to make some expenditure on repairs or replacement, but then our decision to invest in the new Biesse kit made the need to update our extraction system an essential requirement."

Extractly sales engineer, Tom Firth, visited the factory to review Unitech's dust extraction requirements, and also conducted a free energy-saving survey. Extractly's subsequent proposals for upgrading the company's extraction included replacing the previous ducting with Nordfab 'QF' Quick-Fit clipped ductwork system throughout, along with a new externally-sited Nederman LBR Smart-Filter with 55 kW main fan and rotary valve discharge, together with a smaller 15 kW transfer

fan to convey filtered waste to the existing storage silo. As Tom Firth explains: "Unitech's decision to install the new Biesse CNC equipment was something of a game-changer, and the previous extraction system just wasn't designed to cope with the potential volumes of dust waste that could be generated with the factory in full production."

Based on manufacturers' data, Unitech's collection of dust-producing machinery required a combined total extraction volume of around 38,000 m³/hr. However, Extractly's survey established that the installation would benefit significantly from the inclusion of Ecogate technology since, in common with most woodworking and joinery manufacturers, Unitech's machines are never all in use at the same time. Typically, Unitech's machine usage required a maximum extraction capacity of just 33,000 m³/hr, and installing Ecogate would further reduce this requirement by around 15%.

Without Ecogate's energy-saving technology, the system would have required a filter unit with a capacity of around 40,000 m³/hr with the main fan operating at full speed, all day, every day. But, with Ecogate's 'on demand' technology installed, the speed of the main fan will be continuously adjusted to provide optimum extraction, in real-time, and only for machines that are operating at any given point in time. The new Nederman filter unit is designed to offer a total capacity of 33,500 m³/hr which, with Ecogate controlling the main fan, still affords Unitech some spare capacity to accommodate additional machine installations, or to cope with possible future demand from high-speed replacement equipment.

At Unitech, Extractly installed an Ecogate greenBOX 12 control unit, which has the capacity to control extraction from up to 12 workstations, and motorised Ecogate dampers are integrated into the ductwork serving each machine. As machines come on or offline, the Ecogate dampers open and close automatically and the greenBOX controller instantly instructs the Ecogate PowerMASTER variable speed drive unit to increase or decrease fan speed to exactly match extraction demand. Directly controlling fan speed in this way not only reduces the filter capacity requirement, but also reduces the power



The Ecogate PowerMASTER, specifically designed to optimise an Ecogate-controlled extraction system, features an easy-to-use keypad with high contrast screen for easy configuration, and can automatically manage fan start-up and shutdown.

Nederman LBR-R SmartFilter with rotary valve discharge, 55 kW main fan and 15 kW transport fan.

required to run the fan, which in turn will significantly reduce electricity bills — typically cutting the cost of extraction by 50%, with a payback on the initial capital investment in under two years.

Extractly also incorporated several 'Dust & Waste Clean-up Kits' which simply connect to the extraction system with 100 mm diameter flexible duct; each controlled by an Ecogate 'Push-to-Run' button.

"We're pleased with the system Extractly installed," says Kevin Crouch in conclusion. "The installation is neat and the extraction is very efficient — and a secondary benefit of incorporating Ecogate is that the factory is noticeably less noisy than it used to be!"

Extractly Limited
Tel 01924 520462
Email info@extractly.co.uk
www.extractly.co.uk

A Class-M act from Makita

FOLLOWING changes to the guidance on the control of dust from construction activities and in response to customer feedback, Makita is pleased to announce the launch of its first battery powered M-Class approved dust extractor. This full sized 40L, cordless solution with both wet and dry functionality, and the addition of Bluetooth connectivity for use with Makita's AWS tools for wireless power-on and power-off communication between the equipped tool and dust extractor, is part of Makita's powerful XGT battery platform — further enabling professionals to achieve a truly cordless jobsite.

The new VC006GM 80VMax (40Vx2) Brushless XGT M-Class Dust Extractor joins an already extensive extractor range offered by Makita and is the first in the manufacturer's line-up to be powered by Makita's innovative XGT battery technology. The brushless motor is powered by two 40VMax XGT batteries in series to provide up to 350 W of suction power and an airflow comparative to corded models, at an impressive 3.7 m³/min. Furthermore, the extractor offers a maximum sealed suction of 18 kPa (when operated with the Ø 38 mm x 2.5 m hose) and can be used for both wet and dry applications — with a 30 L and 40 L capacity respectively.

Notably, the unit features Makita's Auto-start Wireless System (AWS) which uses Bluetooth for wireless communication between Makita's AWS-equipped tools and the dust extractor. Once connected via AWS, the VC006GM will automatically power on or off when the connected cordless tool starts or stops, running only when the tool is in use. For added convenience and productivity, users can link up to 10 AWS tools to the VC006GM. This brilliant technology not only saves time on site by removing the need to plug-in each tool to the extraction unit, but also affords professionals with a safer and quieter work area, with no cord presenting a potential trip hazard and as the machine is only activated when the tool is powered on, this also improves battery runtimes. The VC006 will also run for several seconds after the trigger has been released on the connected tool, to pull any remaining material completely through the hose.

The machine's dual filters automatically self-clean during operation, to reduce clogging and enable the machine to continue to extract dust at the optimum rate.



For safety, the airflow sensor emits a warning sound if the flow is reduced by a clogged filter, or when the tank is nearing full capacity. The robust machine is also compatible with Makita's Makpac system enabling tools to be securely stored on top of the dust extractor.

"Our customers spoke, and we listened," said Kevin Brannigan, marketing manager at Makita. "We have introduced our new cordless M-Class dust extractor in response to overwhelming customer feedback as more and more professionals demand a full sized, M-Class approved extractor with all the functionality of a mains extractor with the additional benefits that cordless offers. Powered by our XGT technology which is specifically designed for high demand applications, this new machine is the ideal choice for improved site safety and those looking to benefit from cordless flexibility."

Available as a body only (VC006GMZ01), or complete with 2x BL4050 5.0 Ah batteries and twin charger (VC006GMT21), the 80VMax VC006GM M-Class dust extractors come with a number of accessories as standard including filter bag; floor and corner nozzles; a Ø 28 mm x 3.5 m hose and Ø 38 mm x 2.5 m hose, and is available to order now.

Makita ● www.makitauk.com



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Advanced CNC routers and waterjet cutting solutions from AAG for SJG International Ltd

AAG IS a leading global manufacturer of CNC routers and waterjet cutting solutions, focused on helping companies of all sizes improve their automation.

With over 30 years of experience, they have built and installed thousands of CNC and waterjet cutting systems across a wide array of industries. From metals, plastics and foams and everything in between, they are a world leader in producing cutting systems that will help your business grow and expand to exciting new levels.

One of the companies that they have supplied is SJG International Ltd, an award winning, market-leading manufacturer of rubber extrusion, gaskets and foam conversions. The company supplies gaskets, washers and sheeting material to a wide range of customers including military and defence to automotive and rail, sports and leisure and many more who need sealing solutions for various applications. They work with their customers to produce rubber and foam solutions that seal, insulate, protect and cushion in often difficult and challenging environments and can assist at every stage of the process, from designing a first prototype to choosing the right materials.

Employing 50 staff, everything that is produced is designed, tooled and manufactured at the custom-built unit in Alcester. SJG International Ltd has full CAD design capabilities in-house and can work from a drawing supplied by the customer or create one to their specifications and requirements. For this to happen they required a machine supplier that had the same exacting standards that they themselves have achieved. They chose AAG, and use AXYZ Routers and WARDJET Waterjets as part of the manufacturing process for rubber extrusions, gaskets and foam conversions. The use of these advanced technologies from AAG allows SJG International Ltd to produce high-quality components with improved efficiency, speed and accuracy.



When asked why they chose AAG as their preferred supplier, purchasing director Rachel Russell explained: "We have a close relationship with AAG and that has made it easier to work with them to bring new machinery and ideas into the business. As the machines are versatile with cutting, routing and knife cutting it has allowed us to be more flexible and this has made it easier in attracting a wide variety of clients. Thanks to the continued innovation such as five axis cutting, made possible using our WARDJET cutter from AAG, and our customer service, we have built a loyal customer base across the world."

There are five models in the AXYZ routers range; all with their own unique options and versatility to cross over infinite markets. The routers are controlled by AAG's A2MC controller or the control interface MOVE that drives all machine tasks and is designed to optimise the operation of the CNC machines, perform tool changes, set up your work offsets, call up a new file or optimise the cutting speed. MOVE is designed to make machine operation easy and intuitive. Currently SJG International Ltd has four AXYZ routers in its portfolio of machines which has enabled SJG International Ltd to produce components with improved accuracy and consistency, reducing the risk of errors and improving the overall quality of its products and reducing lead times and costs.

Also, in the machine make up of SJG International Ltd is the J-Series WARDJET waterjet — a high-precision cutter that enables the company to produce components with complex shapes and designs, with minimal waste and improved accuracy. The WARDJET series are offered in varying sizes to adapt to the customers' floor space. The versatility at the manufacturing stage means that machines can be bespoke and built to customers' precise requirements — be it the need for a greater Z-travel or custom fixturing in the table or tooling configurations — WARDJET can incorporate the customer's needs.

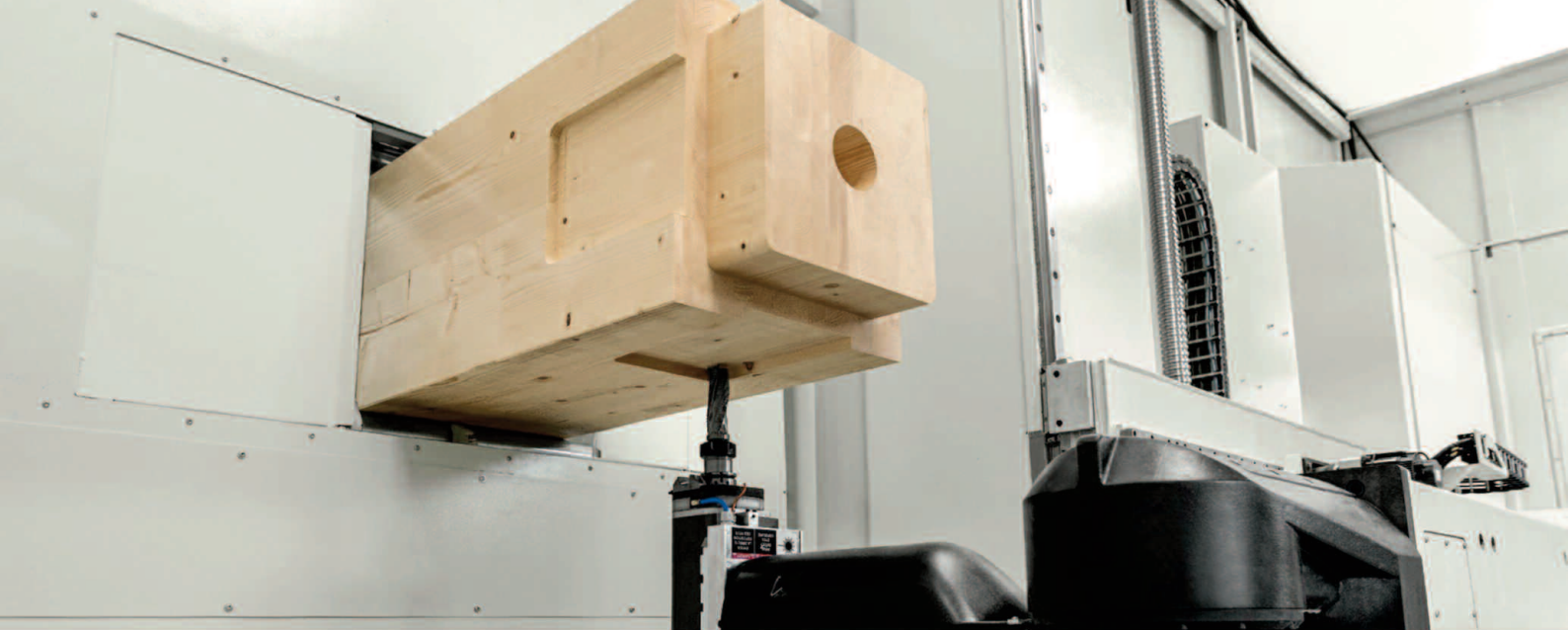
The use of these advanced technologies helps SJG International Ltd to meet the growing demand for high-quality components that make industries safer and drive innovation. The combination of AXYZ routers and WARDJET waterjets allows the company to produce components that exceed industry standards and customer expectations whilst, at the same time, improving its efficiency and competitiveness in the market.

AXYZ Automation Group (AAG) ● Tel 01952 291600

AXYZ Routers ● www.axyz.com

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Walsall college students shine in competition

STUDENTS at Walsall College have been put to the test by Liberon as part of a carpentry and joinery competition. The woodcare experts called on first year learners on the college's Level 2 Bench Joinery course to build and finish a stool for children, using Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison Paste.

Students were handed a specific design by their lecturer and asked to complete the project over 15 teaching hours in total. Two winning students plus a runner-up were selected from the class by director of faculty, Neil Sambrook and curriculum delivery manager, Nathan

Hartshorne. The project incorporated Yellow Pine for most of the stools with Tulipwood used to create the circular seats. A laser cutter was programmed by the team at the college's digital innovation hub to sear the college logo on the seats. The two winners and runner-up each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon.

Richard Bradley, marketing manager at the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "The students did a great job. I understand they are all aged between 16 and 18 and are new to carpentry and joinery. The standards achieved are a real testament to their skills. We'd like to congratulate the winning students and runner-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 tool-handling skills; their ability to produce both mortice and tenon and bridle joints; their aptitude for setting out and handling a cutting list; and their proficiency in transferring measurements to the timber used. All in all, a great all-round teaching exercise. I've been so impressed with the way the students have applied themselves to this. I've always been a strong advocate of Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison Paste, which really brings out the beauty of wood, but this competition has highlighted its attributes even more. I'm hoping we can repeat a similar competition with Liberon later this year."

Being highly lustrous, Liberon's Wax Polish Black Bison makes wood look simply beautiful. Made from a blend of waxes, it provides good resistance to finger and water marks, and is considered ideal for small surfaces such as chairs.

Liberon ● www.liberon.co.uk



Left to right: Joe Clorley, Jordan Thacker, D'Niero Osagie (joint winner), Jake Duckhouse (joint winner), Hary Quirk (runner-up) and Ashley Carroll.

RGB helps students 'build' for the future

THE PLYMOUTH branch of RGB Building Supplies recently sponsored the Skills Group Learner of the Month programme and rewarded young people who are starting out on their construction careers.

Property maintenance student Maisie Walton, bricklaying learner

Callum Patrick, carpentry student Aiden Taylor, and plastering learner Cerys Matthews all won Study Programme Learner of the Month awards.

The students were recognised for their enthusiasm, attendance, time-keeping and attitude, and received a selection of tools donated by RGB Building Supplies.

Skills Group is one of the largest independent learning providers. At its state-of-the-art and realistic training centre in Plympton, students can learn a variety of skills, including carpentry and joinery, bricklaying and groundworks.

Richard Perry from RGB Plymouth presented the students with their prizes. He commented: "I was delighted to meet the students, present them with their prizes and find out more about their learning. It's great to see new blood coming into the industry, bringing fresh ideas and enthusiasm."

"Through their training, these young people can go on to have fulfilling careers and make a real difference to the sector. I wish all of them the best of luck with the future."

RGB Building Supplies
www.rgbbltd.co.uk



BM TRADA launches new series of technical timber webinars for 2023



BM TRADA has announced a new programme of technical timber webinars which will be delivered throughout 2023.

Beginning on 23rd February, a total of nine webinars will be split into three series — all of which are free-to-attend and will be hosted by a number of the UK's leading technical timber experts.

Each series will focus on one of three main areas of discussion: timber frame, technical timber and fundamentals of timber. Benefit-

ting from refreshed content and new topics on strength grading; modified woods, plywood and other panel products; and degrading microorganisms, the webinars are set to provide a valuable educational resource for stakeholders across the construction industry.

Ben Sharples, commercial lead for timber services at BM TRADA, comments: "Provided it is ethically sourced, timber is an inherently sustainable construction material that uses a fraction of the carbon

in its source to end-use process when compared with other construction materials and products, not to mention its ability to sequester carbon too. With the UK construction industry tasked with reducing its carbon emissions in line with government net zero targets, timber is likely to have an increasingly prominent role to play over the coming years."

The first area of focus was on timber frame, with webinars focusing on key timber frame details

(23rd February) and moisture management (16th March). The next series features three technical timber sessions covering misconceptions when strength grading solid timber (27th April), modified woods and panel products (11th May) and understanding wood degrading insects and microorganisms (25th May).

The final series will consist of four webinars discussing timber fundamentals starting with timber origins (2nd November), before covering quality (16th November), moisture (30th November) and protection (14th December).

Ben Sharples continues: "While timber is likely to further increase in prominence as a primary construction material over the coming years, it can also be found in countless architectural and heritage projects, all of which are covered by a strict code of practice. We hope that by offering such an extensive programme of educational content we will be able to support all stakeholders, irrespective of the age or condition of a project, and help add clarity to some of the most persistent technical timber misconceptions."

BM TRADA

[www.bmtrada.com/
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[timber-webinar-series-2023](#)



Selco helping Flower Skills to bloom



Left to right: Carolyn Bellers, Selco Charlton Manager, Alfie Prizeman, Ashton Webb, both Flower Skills students (permissions given), and Lee Poole from Flower Skills.

A CHARLTON construction training provider which helps produce the tradespeople of tomorrow has received the backing of a leading builders merchant.

Flower Skills, based on Woolwich Road, provides training to young people aged between 14 and 16 who have fallen out of the mainstream school system, as well as supporting adults seeking to gain trade and construction industry skills.

Selco Builders Warehouse has teamed up with its supplier BSW Timber to provide hundreds of pounds worth of materials for the students to carry out their training.

Mark Ager, managing director of Flower Skills, said: "We are hugely grateful to Selco, along with BSW Timber, for providing us with the materials our students need to achieve their qualifications. We try to offer a thorough overview of the trade and construction skills which they may

come across in their working life, providing training in multiple trades including carpentry, plastering, painting and decorating and tiling. Our mission is to provide the young people and adults who embark on our training courses with the platform and skills to forge a career in the trade or construction and donations such as this make a real difference."

At least 20 people attend Flower Skills every day, with many working towards a Multi Construction Skills Level 1 qualification.

Carolyn Bellers, branch manager of Selco Charlton which is also based on Woolwich Road, said: "We are delighted to be supporting Flower Skills which is well known within the local community for doing fantastic work."

"Here at Selco, we support tradespeople at whatever stage of their career they are at and we are delighted to help provide a platform for the tradespeople of tomorrow to develop."

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



Left to right: Daniel Stott, Luke Lumsden, Lee Poole from Flower Skills, Flower Skills Student Ashton Webb (permission given), and Steve Hymas, Selco Charlton Deputy Manager, Carolyn Bellers, Selco Charlton Manager and Stuart Murray, Selco Driver.

Timber Development UK launches timber skills action plan to achieve net-zero targets in the construction industry

TIMBER DEVELOPMENT has unveiled a comprehensive **Timber Skills Action plan** in partnership with the **HCI Skills Gateway**, aimed at equipping the UK construction industry with the necessary skills to increase the use of timber and achieve net-zero targets.

With the construction industry responsible for almost 40% of global emissions, and half of all materials extracted from the environment, experts have identified the use of timber as a key solution to significantly reduce carbon emissions. Engineered products like cross-laminated timber can capture and store carbon in the built environment, resulting in a net benefit of 754 CO₂/m² reduction compared to other forms of construction.

The Timber Skills Action plan provides an industry-agreed breakdown of the skills and knowledge required for building with timber. This will aid the development of training programmes and support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) progression, enabling built environment professionals to confidently incorporate timber into building designs.

David Hopkins, chief executive of Timber Development UK, said: "Our ambition is to support every built environment professional to identify and address timber skills and knowledge gaps so the industry can make the best use of timber in construction."

"The construction industry faces a steep climb to achieve net zero targets as one of the worst-performing industries. Timber provides a ready-made solution that doesn't rely on greenwashing, speculative innovations, or progress in other industries to deliver genuine carbon savings in the short and medium term. We now need the construction sector and government to hear this call to action."



To address the skills gap, Timber Development UK has built a coalition across industry, academia, and funders, creating the competency framework at the heart of the plan. The framework already underpins a set of short, practical courses developed by NMITE's Centre for Advanced Timber Technology (CATT) in partnership with TDUK. The Timber TED (Technical Engineering & Design) courses provide comprehensive and flexible training for modern timber construction methods, enabling professionals to upskill and reskill in this critical area.

Kirsty Connell-Skinner, programme manager at the HCI Skills Gateway, said: "This plan, led by HCI Skills Gateway using Scotland's best practice, is an important step in the development of the UK-wide timber construction trade, as it allows us to set a national mission for the industry."

"The four UK nations have achieved different standards and progress within the sector, but this action plan has been built on the best practice, learning and thorough research by a strong group of partners, and serves as a collaborative way of moving forward."

Timber is lightweight, easily workable, and can be processed efficiently using modern methods of construction, reducing waste and improving productivity. This provides solutions for affordable, energy-efficient housing, national retrofit targets, and net-zero public sector buildings. With the launch of the Timber Skills Action plan, the UK construction industry can take a significant step towards achieving its net-zero targets and reducing its impact on the environment.

Timber Development UK

<https://timberdevelopment.uk/resources/skills-action-plan/>

TIMBER IN CONSTRUCTION
**SKILLS ACTION
PLAN**

EPAL reports record pallet repair figures

EPAL UK and Ireland has reported an uplift in the number of pallet repairs carried out across its network, as customers seek to mitigate the impact of growing supply chain costs.

The organisation, which administers the EPAL system for the UK and Ireland region, said more than 100,000 pallet repairs took place for the first time during 2022, as businesses increased pallet reuse for reasons

including sustainability and reducing costs. Production of new EPAL pallets also grew year-on-year in the UK market in every month of 2022 to a total of one million across the year, a record for the country. In Ireland, production remained largely stable, despite challenging conditions that affected availability of timber at times during the year.

Felicity Smith, national secretary for EPAL UK & Ireland, said: "We are really pleased to see reuse of EPAL pallets going up for another year to hit these record levels. Driven by increasing cost pressures, as well as the increasing legislative and customer demands on sustainability, more supply chains are looking to recondition, repair and reuse their pallets. The EPAL network of licensed repairers is expanding, which is making it easier for them to do this."

"This, alongside the growth we saw in the production of EPAL pallets during 2022, is further indication that more customers are asking their suppliers to use EPAL to make their supply chains more efficient, sustainable, and ISPM 15-compliant."

Administering some 650 million EPAL Euro pallets and two million box pallets internationally, EPAL is believed to be the world's largest open exchange pool.

EPAL

www.epal-pallets.org/eu-en/



Wooden pallet manufacturing and reuse show large uplift: TIMCON

MANUFACTURING and reuse of timber pallets increased significantly according to the most recent survey commissioned by the Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) and the research arm of the Forestry Commission, Forest Research.

The UK Wood Pallets & Packaging Market survey showed that UK manufacturers produced an estimated 48.6 million in 2021, up 8.3 per cent from 44.9 m the previous year. These manufacturers repaired and sold on for reuse a further 16.2 m pallets, up from 15.6 m in 2020. Overall, pallet repair was down slightly, at 48.1 m, compared with 49 m the year before.

The annual survey is based on a questionnaire answered by TIMCON members, who manufacture approximately 80 per cent of the 50 million new pallets produced in the UK every year.

Commenting on the figures, TIMCON President John Dye said: "It is encouraging to see that this report shows a substantial uplift in the number of new pallets manufactured. While there was a small drop in the reported number of pallets inspected and repaired, this number is still similar to the number of new pallets — and I would expect to see it start to rise again in the months ahead, and also be boosted by the formal implementation of the UK Government's eagerly awaited reuse incentive in 2025."

Mr Dye added that the manufacturing increase has led to corresponding growth in sawmilling output into the pallet and packaging sector of around 13 per cent. He also noted that employment in the pallet and packaging industry had risen to 4,221, a year-on-year increase of 23 per cent.

The report was presented to TIMCON's general meeting held in Manchester during March, which also heard updates on TIMCON's work with the UK Government, including the recent consultation on the reform of existing Packaging Waste Regulations, and the new Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging Waste, due to come into force in 2025. As a result of this work, said Mr Dye, Defra announced earlier this year that it was still considering the recycling target for wooden packaging and, rather than setting recycling targets for wooden pallets, it is now considering options for reuse obligations before recycling.

Photography by Paul Nemeth.

TIMCON ● Tel 0116 274 7357 ● Email info@timcon.org ● www.timcon.org



SterlingOSB Zero for industrial chic in compact Paris loft apartment

AS ONE of the most popular as well as romantic cities in the world, Paris boasts premium properties where consultants and clients strive to optimise the space available. An inspiring example is the “Under the Roof” project where a tired old garret has been given a new lease of life with SterlingOSB Zero from the West Fraser range.

As featured in the January edition of Grand Designs Magazine, the apartment’s compact kitchen has cupboards at wall and floor level utilising the OSB’s distinctive surface structure, exposed as part of the refurbishment’s minimalist styling. The rugged OSB is also used for flooring and some pieces of furniture around the home, with its natural form very much to the fore.

The project was designed by Florent Chagny Architecture for the new owner, who wanted to re-imagine and upgrade the 50 m² space which is on the top floor of an 1830s wooden building in Paris’s 5th arrondissement.

Responding to the client’s brief, the designers decided to primarily utilise two “raw industrial” materials: steel and OSB. Key changes included the removal of some old partitions and a 1990s spiral staircase, while the installation of contemporary rooflights and a steel framed glass screen above the lounge space introduced much needed natural light.

Florent Chagny commented, “The client wanted to give a new identity to the apartment he had just purchased and is delighted to live in a new, contemporary stylish space with a high ceiling and much more light; important in the centre of large cities like Paris.”

Commenting on the choice of OSB as a primary material, he added: “The idea was to highlight the functionality and form of the materials used. By choosing an industrial wood — a raw material usually meant to be hidden — we were also seeking to express all of the small details we had created. Architecture makes sense when design explores the different scales, and, in a way, we are paying tribute to the manufacturer’s creativity. Significantly, OSB is quite warm and it complements steel.”

As part of a comprehensive, overall carbon negative product range, SterlingOSB Zero T&G presents specifiers with precision-engineered tongue and groove



boards which are typically specified for pitched or flat roof decking and timber frame construction, as well as for flooring and other applications.

Also from an environmental viewpoint, the ‘Zero’ in the name means no formaldehyde is added during its manufacture, which is a first in the UK, encouraging its specification on improved health and safety grounds.

Available in thicknesses of 18 and 22 mm, the boards are produced in 2,400 x 1,200 mm and 2,440 x 1,220 mm sizes with T&G joints on two edges, as well as an 18 mm thick version with T&G profiles around all four edges and face dimensions of 2,400 mm or 2,440 mm by 625 mm. They are strong enough for use in most load-bearing applications, while BBA

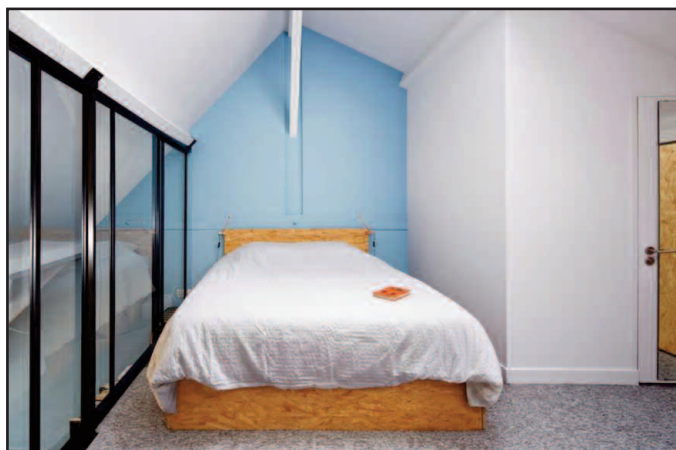
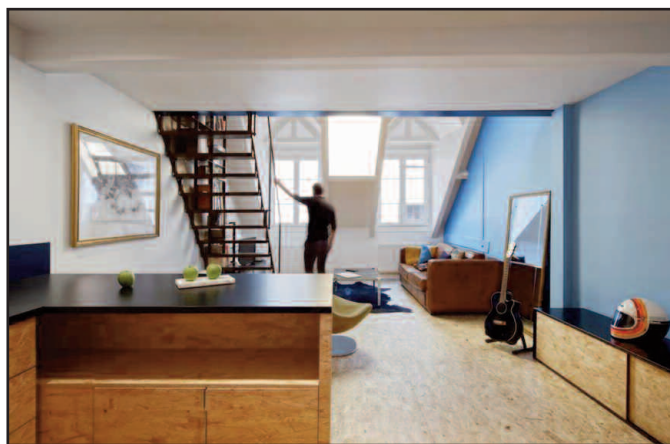
certification and recognition by both NHBC Technical and Zurich Municipal are key assurances for housebuilding applications.

SterlingOSB Zero T&G also bears the coveted UKTFA Q-mark, a quality certification which provides a benchmark for manufacturers and offers confidence to designers and end-users across the UK.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921

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

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Into the woods with new Loft Oak range by Rotpunkt

ROTPUNKT, a leading designer and manufacturer of climate friendly German kitchen furniture nourishes the market's love of natural timber kitchens with the launch of Loft Oak: a new range of oak-grain laminate furniture in three colour options — Loft Brown Oak, Loft Nature Oak and Loft Black Oak.

The new Loft Oak furniture range by Rotpunkt is new in 2023, and specially made from renewable materials so customers can enjoy the same qualities of solid oak without the environmental impact.

Matt Phillips, head of UK operations at Rotpunkt explains: "Quality raw materials are as precious in the overall design of a kitchen as they are in helping to save our planet's natural resources and so to keep pace, we have introduced Loft Oak to become the greener alternative to a solid wood kitchen. Able to satisfy on both look and feel, this new laminate door collection also responds to the return of warmer wood tones in 2023, as the kitchen and utility room adopt more earthy shades to emulate the great outdoors."

Taking natural timber to new levels of sophistication, the pictured Loft Brown Oak kitchen concept features the following innovations by Rotpunkt:

FSC® Certified: The Loft Oak doors are available in three high fashion finishes to offer varying degrees of natural oak — Loft Brown Oak, Loft Nature Oak and Loft Black Oak. The gold standard of eco-friendly kitchen



design, all elements in Loft Oak are FSC® Certified to offer a greener alternative for the UK homeowner without compromising on style.

Black Glass: Industrial Style K Black Glass doors feature an industrial frame, chimney glass and Venice lighting to create a run of cabinetry, which is edgy, minimalist and versatile. Inspired by the world's best commercial grade interior design, the new Industrial Style K Black Glass is available with either a 20 mm or 50 mm matt black frame and smart-ready LED lighting as standard.

Double stacked to increase storage space right up to the ceiling, the addition of black glass perfectly complements the canopy-style storage system, which helps to make use of the floors, walls and ceiling space. Ideal for keeping herbs and spices in easy reach of the chef, this innovative hanging storage suspends from the ceiling to create new planning options for the central island and built-in extractor unit.

XTend Island: The monolithic-style island concept is part of the XTend range by Rotpunkt, offering a range of different heights to better suit the individual. This island arrangement features the extra-tall 910 mm furniture, which increases the elevation by an extra 130 mm to provide a more comfortable working height and up to 16% more cupboard space when compared to standard base units.

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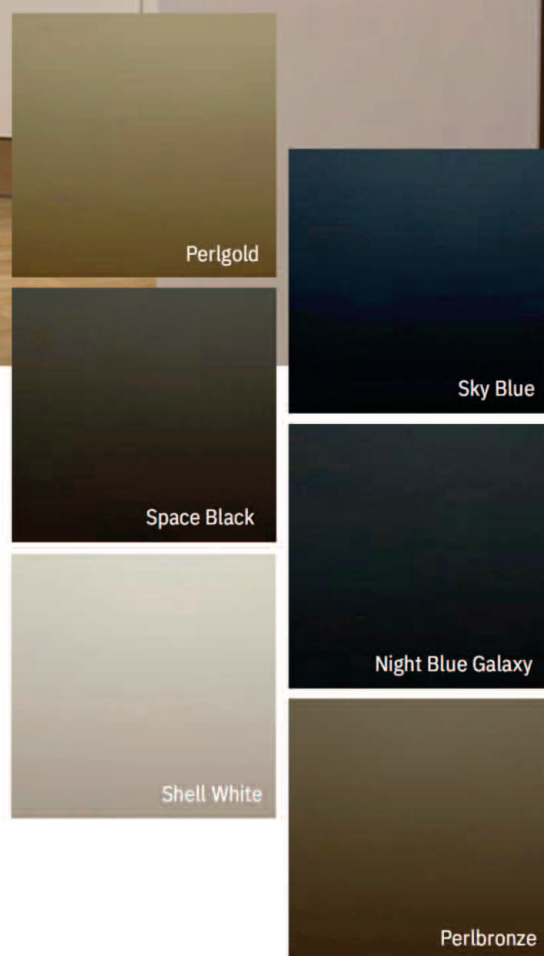




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Kebony wood decking enhances natural credentials of stunning residential project

HIDDEN within the treetops of a stunning forest estate, a private family home located near the seaside resort of Pyla-sur-Mer, France, has recently completed the renovation of a beautiful balcony terrace using sustainably-sourced Kebony wood.

After the previous terrace surface failed to withstand the regular spray and splash from the property's private swimming pool, local design studio Nid'Extérieur was tasked with sourcing an alternative decking material that, as well as offering greater dimensional stability, would not compromise on the intimate aesthetic connection between the terrace and the surrounding woodland.

Kebony, a global leader in the production of sustainable wood, was selected to provide the new decking material for this luxurious renovation. Following successful installation of Kebony, the redesigned terrace remains a platform reaching outwards from the main household, creating a large recreational space with stunning panoramic, 360-degree views of the forested canopy that stretches around the home.

The length-way arrangements of the wooden slats across the decking also provides an enhanced sense of open space. Light railing on the front and the terrace sides accentuates the only border between the terrace and the forest, with the space otherwise creating a seamless extension of the home in belonging with the neighbouring ecosystem.

Kebony is one of the world's most exciting technology companies, producing the most sustainable and long-lasting alternative to hardwood globally and helping the world reduce its CO₂ emissions. Through its patented dual-modification process, Kebony permanently transforms sustainable softwoods such as pine into Kebony wood — with features that are comparable, and in some cases superior, to those of precious tropical hardwoods, creating a dually-modified wood product that's made to last.

In addition to its innate sustainable qualities, Kebony wood is also weather resistant, requires little to no maintenance and, over time, depending on exposure to outdoor environmental elements like rain and sunlight, will transform from its rich brown colour to acquire a unique silver-grey patina. The ability for the terrace decking to maintain an attractive visual character, ageing in time with the surrounding woodland, was a key factor for the homeowners when commissioning the project, in addition to the absence of artificial resins or splinters in the new Kebony decking, which offers additional peace of mind for the safe leisure of the family's children, in and around the swimming pool.

Damien Dermont, co-manager of project designers Nid'Extérieur, commented: "The Neo-Basque aesthetic of this house offers a style that is placed within the natural environment. This project wanted to be respectful of the surrounding forest, while also providing a wood that could withstand regular interaction with the swimming pool. Kebony wood met these requirements for the family, in addition to being environmentally friendly, very stable and requiring minimal maintenance."

Nina Landbø, international sales manager at Kebony, added: "Across the world, Kebony continues to see a growing demand for home renovations built to maintain connections between property and the environment. We are delighted to see Kebony selected as the choice of decking material at this stunning project, and we wish the owners the continued enjoyment of a luxury home leisure facility enhanced by a resonant feeling of belonging within their natural surroundings."

Images: Dermont Damien
Kebony ● www.kebony.com



The laminate which more than washes its face

JAMES LATHAM, one of the UK's leading independent distributors of architectural decors adds Pfleiderer's premium Compact Grade (CGL) and High Pressure Laminates (HPL) to its signature Washroom Collection.

Available through James Latham in the UK and Ireland and perfect for any commercial, hospitality, leisure or education washroom project, Pfleiderer laminates are available in 40 different colourways, patterns, and textures, offering specifiers an incredible choice of visually appealing decors.

This exceptional level of style is also complemented by impressive performance attributes. Robust and durable, all laminates in the collection are able to meet the demanding, high-impact setting of a busy washroom.

Moisture, scratch and stain resistant, Pfleiderer laminates achieve a very hygienic surface that is easy to clean. This results in lower maintenance and longer-lasting surfaces, futureproofing the washroom by slowing down the refurbishment cycle.

Going further, the range also includes moisture resistant melamine faced chipboard (MR MFC) and the innovative melamine faced high density fibreboard (MF HDF) featuring a black core. This increased durability makes these two products particularly useful for high-footfall, frequently-used environments such as leisure centres and educational establishments.

And that's not all. These surfaces' inherent hygienic properties can be further enhanced with Pfleiderer's proprietary MicroPLUS® antimicrobial surfaces.

Available across the brand's entire laminate portfolio, this added protection means the range can be specified for specialist applications in sensitive environments including healthcare, pharmaceutical, and laboratory facilities.

For fabricators, Pfleiderer laminates are also incredibly flexible. Their availability in four core sub-

strates means they can be specified to the different performance requirements of myriad features across the washroom environment, from toilet cubicles and vanity units to IPS systems and lockers; all within one product range.

Produced in many different dimensions, sheets can easily be cut to size or applied in their entirety, according to the specification requirement. This variety of formats, including half size sheets, means you can maximise yields and reduce waste and, in turn, the project's carbon footprint.

Specifiers and fabricators are also making a sustainable material choice when they choose Pfleiderer laminates. Manufactured using recycled materials, all products have a circular lifecycle, delivering uncompromising results with minimum environmental impact.

Lathams ● www.lathamtimber.co.uk

www.lathamtimber.co.uk/products/washroom-collection/pfleiderer-



Modern materials for modern schools



A NEW €74 million 23,500 sq m school has been built in Freising, Germany as a showcase of how modern design and educational requirements can be designed in harmony to create a lively and vibrant learning space filled with space and light.

Designed by architects Fuchs and Rudolph Architecture, the combined primary and secondary SteinPark-Schulen school comprises 44 classrooms and ten specialist learning centres along with triple-field sports hall, auditorium, outdoor classrooms and playing fields.

Linked via a central atrium, daylight floods the interior through large windows. To control the acoustics and the problems of reverberated

sound from the large windows and hard floors, Trolldtekt's wood wool acoustic panels were specified across the ceilings in the classrooms, open spaces and dining halls to ensure optimal acoustic performance and to create a pleasant, relaxed learning environment for staff and students. Finished in a white 101 colour, the ultrafine panels complement the window frames and furniture of pale wood and the light-coloured floors.

Founded on the Cradle-to-Cradle design concept and recently attaining Gold certification, Trolldtekt's natural and inherently sustainable panels are available in a variety of different surfaces and colours and contribute positively to a building's BREEAM, DGNB and LEED ratings. In addition to their high sound absorption and tactile surface, they offer high durability and low-cost lifecycle performance.

Available in various sizes and in four grades, from extreme fine to coarse, the panels can be left untreated or painted in almost any RAL colour.

Samples, case studies and technical guidance are available from the company using the details below.

Photos: Olaf Wiechers, architect, MAA.

Trolldtekt
Tel 01978 664255

www.Trolldtekt.co.uk



From dated kitchen to welcoming family zone with SterlingOSB Zero

WHEN ARCHITECT Daniele Sini bought Ravensbourne House with his partner, he was unimpressed with the poorly constructed, dingy, single-storey kitchen rear extension built for the previous owners. "We have young children, so we set out to transform this part of the house into a family room," he explains.

The challenge for the family was that having spent most of their money on the house, they had very little left in the budget for remodelling the kitchen. To keep costs down, his practice, AU Studio, decided to retain the existing steel structure, added a new sliding door, new flooring and new external cladding.

When Daniele turned his attention to the interior finishes, he wanted something that would be robust and withstand the wear and knocks created by young children, while still looking good.

Daniele used West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero to provide a durable finish that would also add natural colour to the kitchen walls. The boards are 18 mm thick, making it easy to mitre the corner junctions. "I liked the texture of OSB and its warm colour variation; this is emphasised by the morning sun to give the space a warm glow," says Daniele. "I also liked that SterlingOSB Zero is robust, but primarily I liked it because we were looking for something that was cheap because our budget was so tight," he laughs.

To make it easy to keep the walls clean, the SterlingOSB Zero was sealed and finished with a coat of clear fire-retardant paint to prevent surface spread of flame.

SterlingOSB Zero has also been used to finish the part of the ceiling where it conceals sound-proofing fitted beneath the upstairs bathroom.

"It was a small project, but it involved a lot of thought to make the most of the space and exploit what we've got to the best effect," says Daniele.

"For me, this project was about using clever design to overcome the constraints in order to make the space fit our needs on a very limited budget." SterlingOSB Zero certainly helped Daniele achieve his objective.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921
<https://uk.westfraser.com/>
<https://uk.westfraser.com/resources/architect-support/>



Go handleless with a Rotpunkt laundry room

ROTPUNKT, leading designer and manufacturer of climate friendly German kitchen furniture, loves laundry in 2023, with the company's XGE handleless profile, which offers a super-tight insertion with sleek angular design.

For use across its Zerox furniture in all 26 colour options, this furniture concept with XGE profile means you can now bring the streamline qualities of the handleless kitchen into the modern laundry room, while fully optimising an extensive range of custom accessories.

Space-saving by design, the XGE handleless profile provides a deep, angled cut out for easy access to this lifestyle-oriented laundry room, which features an impressive arrangement of tall laundry units with an integrated laundry basket tray, waste bin, shoe storage, cleaning supplies tray and wooden racks for storing bottles.

Handleless: The XGE handleless profile creates a deep, angled cut out hidden behind the cabinet door for easy access to laundry furniture that typically demands easy operation, or is limited on space. Customers won't need to worry about their delicates getting caught on the door handles either, as the XGE rail presents a recessed gap that runs the full width of the chosen door or drawer for a stylishly safe, handleless furniture solution.

Versatile: Rotpunkt offers three tall unit designs in five available heights measuring 1,820 mm, 1,950 mm, 2,080 mm, 2,210 mm and 2,340 mm tall with a depth of 565-625 mm. Fully equipped with a range of interior elements and storage components for the laundry room such as adjustable and fixed shelving, doors with custom cubby holes, and special design features like angled baskets, pull-out deep drawers complete with laundry hamper, and even a built-under drawer unit with fully extendable shelf.

Ergonomic: Pair tall laundry units with a combi furniture solution for a

washing machine and dryer, specially designed at an ergonomic working height for ease of use. In fact, stacked or side-by-side laundry appliances are designed to create a clear separation of tasks, so customers can easily wash and dry clothes in a way that is more hygienic and far quieter, being housed outside of the main kitchen!

Climate friendly furniture: All Rotpunkt furniture is designed and created under the company's award-winning Together to Zero climate strategy to reduce carbon emissions at every stage of manufacture. The featured Zerox furniture in Nature Split Oak and Snow finishes are crafted from Greenline BioBoard Gen2, the sustainable, green and environmentally friendly alternative to traditional chipboards, which consists of up to 90% recycled wood without sacrificing on quality.

Matt Phillips, head of UK operations at Rotpunkt, says: "As today's lifestyle and love of open plan living continues to define how we cook and wash in the home, we are seeing the departure of laundry appliances in the kitchen. Now a key design consideration if space allows, relocating the washer and dryer is helping to prevent unwanted sound pollution in the main kitchen and better serve the busy working family answerable to essential daily tasks. Along with the XGE handleless profile, you can also introduce a laundry room into an open-plan kitchen space with our new access door, which opens in reverse. Embracing the possibilities of reconfiguring the ground floor, our access door provides discreet entry through a continuous run of tall units that when used, reveals a hidden room which is self-contained from the rest of the kitchen living space — ideal if a separate laundry room is required!

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Get clever with storage solutions from IronmongeryDirect



LEADING specialist retailer IronmongeryDirect has extended its diverse range of products to offer a wider choice of storage solutions, with new products added to the Elfa range offering further flexibility on home storage ideas.

A recent survey by IronmongeryDirect found 2023's most popular New Year's resolution was to reduce clutter and get more organised around the home (39.4%), with bedrooms and kitchens top of the list of areas earmarked for improved storage solutions.

Robyn Du Preez, category manager at IronmongeryDirect, said: "This need to de-clutter may well be a reflection of an uncertain housing market and cost of living fears, meaning homeowners are planning to be more cautious when it comes to moving or making major improvements. 2023 might therefore be the year that tradespeople are increasingly asked to help make the most of what their customers have already got — and being able to recommend and fit helpful storage solutions will be a valuable skill. Recognising this trend, IronmongeryDirect has geared itself up to offer the trade a broader range of components — all available with next day delivery."

IronmongeryDirect's wide range of storage solutions spans a number of trusted and exclusive brands including Elfa, Rothley and Altro, with a breadth of components that provides fitters with greater flexibility to provide a truly customised service. The Elfa brand in particular prides itself on helping create space in everyday life, with a range of brackets, drawers, hooks, racks and shelves that can be combined together to achieve ingenious storage solutions.

IronmongeryDirect has increased its extensive range of Elfa products, with components now available in even more sizes, an additional colour and new solutions for the laundry, shed and garage space. Elfa's new Décor design is now also in stock, which includes solid wood fronts, shelves and decorative fascias to create clean lines, all the while retaining the system's flexibility and airy feel.

From creating a storage wall in a bedroom, kitchen or garage, to a simple bookcase construction in either a domestic or commercial setting, IronmongeryDirect has it covered — with over 18,000 products in stock including hanging rails, cabinet and bookcase systems, bedroom and kitchen storage solutions and loft ladders. Customers can also choose from a range of flexible delivery options to meet the needs of their busy schedules, including same day delivery to postcodes in selected areas of London and the East of England, as well as click and collect from 6,500 pick up points across the UK.

IronmongeryDirect ● www.ironmongerydirect.co.uk/brands/elfa



Troldtekt acoustic panelling at Bath Archway

IN THE CENTRE of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the city of Bath, The Roman Baths and Pump Room is a site of international historical and archaeological significance and attracts over one million visitors each year.

As part of an impressive refurbishment, Bath & North East Somerset Council appointed architects Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for the new

Archway Project comprising a new World Heritage Centre and Roman Baths Learning Centre. The Learning Centre features three state-of-the-art learning rooms, break out space and a hands-on Investigation Zone set among real Roman remains.

For a learning space — created from the shell of a former warehouse — with its historic roof structure newly revealed, the architects specified

Troldtekt's acoustic wood wool panelling in a natural finish to complement the surrounding wood, minimise the sound reverberation and dampen the noise from large groups of excited school children.

Troldtekt is a perfect choice for this kind of application where its sustainable characteristics coupled with superior acoustic qualities provide a comfortable interior environment.

Founded on the Cradle-to-Cradle design concept and certified to Gold level, Troldtekt's natural and inherently sustainable panels are available in a variety of different surfaces and colours and contribute positively to a building's BREEAM, DGNB and LEED ratings. In addition to their high sound absorption and tactile surface, they offer high durability and low-cost lifecycle performance. Available in various sizes and in four grades, from extreme fine to coarse, the panels can be left untreated or painted in virtually any RAL colour. Troldtekt® panels with FUTURECEM™ absorb more CO₂ than they emit during production.

Samples, case studies and technical guidance are available from the company.

Photo: James Newton

Troldtekt ● Tel 01978 664255
www.Troldtekt.co.uk



Graphics grade surface makes SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus perfect for exhibitions and hospitality

DEMONSTRATING superior aesthetic qualities while containing no added formaldehyde, SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus has been introduced to the range from panel specialist, West Fraser, for use on exhibition stands, around trade shows, at hospitality events and for promotion work elsewhere. Crucially its ultra-smooth finished surface is ready to receive painting and graphics as well as print and marketing notices without jeopardising the fine detail desired for such applications.

The factory primed OSB3 boards are coated on one side, in either a

neutral white or grey, and are sealed on all edges. The sealed edges protect the boards against water ingress while, before they are painted, a UV-resistant putty layer is applied; this providing further protection against the weather as well as enabling and enhancing the ultra-smooth finish.

Being knot and void free due to the very precise manufacturing process, the panels are ready to receive the marketing messages or other promotional material immediately before being taken to site — avoiding costly storage or the inconvenience of waiting for layers of primer to dry.

David Connacher, marketing manager from West Fraser, said: "SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus is in our OSB range comprising the first UK-manufactured OSB with zero-added formaldehyde, which delivers health as well as a number of other technical benefits. This makes it superior to most softwood plywood.

"It really is an easy-to-use product, a blank canvas for the marketing sectors to showcase products and services to the very highest of standards."

SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus is CE marked and complies with the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) and BBA Agreement requirements. The boards are supplied in packs of 50 to cover a total area of approximately 150 m², with each measuring 1,220 mm wide by 2,440 mm long. Then at 18 mm thick, they are tough and durable, so can be used outdoors to withstand the harshest of British weather for advertising or to inform and direct visitors around often exposed showgrounds.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921

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

