

PANEL, WOOD & *Solid Surface*

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Timber frame construction survey

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Abode Pronteau supplies 55 homes in Slough, Berkshire



AS property developers nationwide respond to the need for safety conscious, urban renewal on brownfield sites, Abode, award winning designer and distributor of market leading kitchen sinks and taps, partners with leading property developer Langham Homes to bring its range of boiling water taps to Imperial Court, a premium five storey residential development in Slough, Berkshire.

Imperial Court comprises of 55 freehold one- and two-bedroom apartments developed by Langham Homes and sold to Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing as an affordable proposition for its new 'Rent to Buy Scheme'. Located within walking distance of the local amenities, mainline train station and Cross Rail to commute from Berkshire to Central London and Essex with ease, each apartment at Imperial Court features a designer kitchen with cooking and laundry appliances, free Wi-Fi, resident parking, and weekly housekeeping as needed.

As safety is at the forefront of Imperial Court, every aspect of the development was carefully considered, encompassing everything from initial planning and architectural layout to sustainable and durable product integration. Beyond the front door, residents benefit from a range of unique safety features like visual fire alarms and smoke-free policies through to a key fob entry system and video door entry phone to access each apartment. Residents can also take advantage of secure cycle storage and lifts to each floor for added convenience.

With each home specially designed to accommodate open-plan contemporary living, selecting the right kitchen components was essential. Abode's creative and innovative approach to water delivery and management aligned perfectly with Imperial Court, and its desire to offer fully equipped, serviced apartments, which are modern and clean. Considering this, all 55 designer kitchens were supplied with a Pronteau PT1130 Prothia Monobloc Swan 3 IN 1 boiling water tap in popular Chrome finish.

Providing a practical solution for occupants to enjoy hot drinks and speedy cooking with domestic hot, cold and 98° instant steaming hot water on tap, Abode kitchen taps meet all the requirements, as Pronteau is fully compliant with Part G (3) of UK building regulations.

The Pronteau Prothia 3 IN 1 boiling water tap is available in two styles of contemporary spout, swan neck and quad, along with five on-trend colourways to satisfy all types of interior design scheme: Chrome, Matt Black, Urban Copper, Brushed Nickel and Brushed Brass. Leading property developers also benefit from a toolless installation of the Pronteau Proboil.2X intelligent hot water boiler, which can be fitted quickly and easily in any style or size of kitchen base unit. All Proboil hot water products by Abode comply with LVD/EMC/ROHS standards according to CE and UKCA, which further reinforces the company's ability to design and make safe and stylish tap solutions.

Graeme Blythe, national contract sales manager at Abode says, "Regenerating our towns and cities for the next decade is an exciting challenge for builders and property developers across the UK, which is why everyone in the Abode family is proud to be future focussed to deliver water safely for the next generation and beyond with our range of versatile 3 IN 1 and 4 IN 1 taps. As a business, we are committed to supporting the UK building community and nurture our relationships industrywide, as we look to co-create more sustainable, greener building solutions. In fact, we worked closely with kitchen furniture manufacturer, Windmill Projects (formally HK Creations) on this project, who have used a number of Abode products across their project portfolio. We fully understand that decisions can come down to style and cost, so we're pleased that we could also tick extra boxes for safety and utility for the end user!"

Abode ● Tel 01226 283 43

info@abodedesigns.co.uk ● www.abodedesigns.co.uk

Laser curing for powder coatings

A PIONEERING partnership has been forged between AkzoNobel and IPG Photonics focused on applying laser technology for curing powder coatings.

The groundbreaking process involves calibrating the company's Interpon powder coating formulations for optimal results with laser curing solutions from IPG. This will offer a faster and more energy efficient alternative to conventional curing methods. The two companies have signed an agreement for the partnership to exclusively serve customers in the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) region.

The process involves lasers selectively heating the applied powder coating in a "cold oven". It means no heat escapes onto the factory floor and no energy is wasted heating the atmosphere or the curing enclosure. High intensity laser heating also enables curing times to be reduced to just a few minutes, compared with the 15 to 20 minutes that's currently required using traditional curing methods. The IPG Photonics process also enables curing to occur in less than half the space required by a traditional oven.

"This is a hugely exciting partnership which has the potential to offer customers game changing benefits in terms of process speed, efficiency and energy savings," says Jorrit van Rijn, global marketing director of AkzoNobel's Powder Coatings business. "It's yet another example of how our commitment to painting the future is driving our innovation so we can help make the powder coatings industry even more sustainable."

Adds Trevor Ness, senior vice-president, global sales and strategic business development at IPG Photonics: "We're delighted to partner with the EMEA powder coatings leader to accelerate market acceptance of our game-changing modular laser curing solutions. By aligning our laser innovations with AkzoNobel's Interpon powder coatings capabilities, we anticipate a shorter time to market and added value for our customers. Together, our companies will realize a new level of efficiency and value for the powder coatings industry."

Laser curing offers a number of benefits, including the ability to preferentially heat the actual coating, as opposed to the underlying substrate. It is suitable for temperature-sensitive substrates and eliminates the long cool-down waiting times evident in typical production lines. In a high volume manufacturing environment, customers could realize reductions of more than 50% in both investment and operational costs, while drastically reducing their carbon footprint and energy consumption.

Interpon ● www.interpon.com/gb/en



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Grooving in X Direction. Milling Spindles.
Workpiece up to 2500 x 850 x 60m/m.

For the full list contact:
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MKM appoints Dave Castle as chief operating officer

MKM Building Supplies, a UK builder's merchant, has appointed Dave Castle as its first-ever chief operating officer — a key move as the business continues to grow at pace.

Reporting to CEO Kate Tinsley, Dave brings over 20 years of experience in the building materials sector, most recently as group chief commercial officer and MD of BSS at Travis Perkins Group. His appointment signals the next step in MKM's ambitious growth journey.

The move follows a standout year for MKM. In 2024, the business outperformed the market with 6.4% revenue growth, reaching £986 million, opened 11 new branches, and made strong progress in areas like HVAC and tool hire.

Commenting on his new role, Dave said: "I'm thrilled to be joining MKM at such a pivotal time. What makes this business different is the unique mix of local, independent feel and national scale. It's a merchant that genuinely puts tradespeople first — and that's why it's winning.

"I'm looking forward to supporting our branch teams to keep doing what they do best: offering great service, fair pricing, and expert advice. Looking ahead, we'll keep expanding into new areas, embracing smarter ways of working, and helping customers stay ahead of changes in the market — whether that's environmental regulation or new product requirements."

CEO Kate Tinsley added: "Dave's a

fantastic addition to the team. His commercial experience, deep sector knowledge and leadership style are a great fit for MKM. As we scale up, his appointment reflects our focus on growing with purpose — investing in people, supporting branches, and staying true to our values."

MKM's growth plans include further branch openings in key locations, continued investment in operational improvements like smarter logistics and digital tools, and a sharper focus on sustainability — helping customers access more eco-friendly products and solutions.

Dave's leadership style is rooted in empowerment and trust. He's

passionate about protecting the independence of MKM's branches, ensuring teams have the tools, talent and support to succeed — and that customers always come first. Developing future talent is another key priority, with a focus on attracting new people to the trade and supporting career growth through hands-on learning and apprenticeships.

He added: "From day one, the energy, pride and commitment at MKM was clear. It's a business full of self-starters who care deeply about their customers and communities. I want to build on that culture, making MKM an even better place to work and do business — and keeping that local, personal service at the heart of everything we do."

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



SCM turnover reaches €900 Million

THE SHAREHOLDERS' meeting of SCM Group S.p.A. convened to appoint the new board of directors, the president, and the honorary president, as well as to approve the financial statements as of December 31, 2024.

The new board of directors is composed as follows: Enrico Aureli (president), Andrea Aureli (vice president), Giovanni Gemmani (vice president), Marco Mancini (chief executive officer), and board members Valentina Aureli, Luca Franceschini, and Martino Gemmani. The shareholders also appointed Adriano Aureli as nonorary president. The shareholders expressed their gratitude to the outgoing president Andrea Aureli and the outgoing

honorary president Alfredo Aureli for their valuable contributions during their respective terms.

The Group's consolidated financial statements were also approved, showing revenues of €900 million as of December 31, 2024.

"Once again, over the past year, the macroeconomic environment has remained highly complex and uncertain for our business sectors and for the manufacturing industry as a whole, due to well-known geopolitical and economic challenges," said Marco Mancini, CEO of SCM Group.

"Despite these critical issues, the Group continued to invest in expanding its presence in new business areas through two significant acquisitions: Tecno Logica, a specialist in the development of cutting edge, fully integrated, high-mix and high-productivity technological solutions, and Mecal Machinery, a leader in machinery for processing aluminum profiles."

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



From left to right: Martino Gemmani, Enrico Aureli, Marco Mancini, Valentina Aureli, Giovanni Gemmani, Andrea Aureli, and Luca Franceschini.

Makita doubles battery warranty

LEADING power tool manufacturer Makita UK is enhancing its standard factory warranty policy on batteries from one to two years. Since the 1st April 2025, any genuine Makita battery purchased will automatically qualify for a two-year standard warranty without requiring any product registration, and this applies to XGT, LXT and CXT battery platforms.

Makita offers an extensive collection of power tools, cleaning machines, landscaping equipment, and more. Developed using market leading battery technology, the Makita range provides professionals with the ability to work flexibly, and for long periods of time. The increase in the standard factory warranty offers further confidence to users in the quality and reliability of Makita batteries.

"Makita batteries are developed using the latest technology to ensure products are powerful and built for tough, long-term professional use," commented Tony Coleman, technical services manager at Makita



UK. "The new warranty applies to all genuine Makita batteries purchased in the UK from 1st April 2025 onwards and these batteries will automatically qualify without the need to register them. This is a clear indication of our confidence in the technology that underpins all of our products, as well as our commitment to supporting tradespeople across the UK."

Makita

www.makita.co.uk



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www.vollmer-group.com

City College Plymouth hosts the largest regional construction skills competition

CITY COLLEGE Plymouth proudly hosted the 2025 Regional Qualifier for SkillBuild, the UK's largest and longest-running construction skills competition, on Thursday 24 April.

Delivered by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and supported by Go Construct, SkillBuild brought together the most talented apprentices and students in the construction industry to compete in a series of practical challenges across a range of trades. Seventy five contestants from across the South West took part in categories including bricklaying, carpentry, joinery, painting and decorating, and plastering, all under the pressure of a timed, six-hour challenge.

Following the success of this year's event, the College has been selected to host the first round of regional qualifiers for the next four years, reinforcing City College Plymouth's reputation as a centre of excellence for construction skills training.

Held at the College's Kings Road campus, the one-day event showcased the technical abilities, time management and prob-



lem solving skills of some of the region's most promising future tradespeople.

Competitors were scored on industry-standard tasks by expert judges, including special guest Luke Mabbot, a trained construction worker and former Love Is-

land contestant, who brought both industry knowledge and a celebrity buzz to the event. The top eight highest-scoring students in each category will earn a chance to qualify for the SkillBuild National Final later this year.

The College was strongly rep-

resented with 20 of its own construction students competing. SkillBuild offers a powerful learning experience, giving students the chance to gain real-world insight into working conditions, learn from industry professionals and demonstrate their readiness for the next step in their careers.

Terry Such, curriculum lead & development officer for Construction & the Built Environment at City College Plymouth, said, "It's a privilege to once again host the SkillBuild regional qualifier. It shines a spotlight on the incredible talent coming through our workshops and gives students a real sense of what it's like to perform under industry conditions. There's a great buzz across campus when events like this take place, and for many of our students, it becomes a key moment in their training."

Hosting the SkillBuild qualifier highlights the College's focus on industry-aligned learning, high-level technical skills and preparing students for real employment opportunities in a growing sector.

City College Plymouth
cityplym.ac.uk



Combilift and CMETB celebrate 10 years of pioneering engineering traineeship



EARLY MAY saw a landmark celebration at Combilift's global headquarters in Monaghan, marking the 10th anniversary of the highly successful OEM Engineering Traineeship — a collaborative initiative between Combilift and the Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB). The event, which welcomed past graduates, current trainees and local educators, underscored the programme's evolution from a local skills initiative to a cornerstone of regional industrial development.

Launched in 2015, the OEM Engineering Traineeship was born from a shared vision to tackle the skills gap in engineering and manufacturing with an industry-led approach. Today, with over 150 trainees having passed through its doors to achieve a QQI level 5 qualification, and with job placement rates above 80%, the programme stands as a model for how industry and education can collaborate to mutual benefit.

Combilift, a global leader in materials handling solutions, has been central to this success. As the primary industry partner, Combilift has not only provided cutting-edge workplace experience but also ensured the course content remains aligned with real-world demands. "We wanted to create more than just a training programme — we wanted to build a pathway into meaningful careers," said Combilift managing director,

Martin McVicar. "This traineeship has delivered exactly that, time and time again."

The nine-month programme blends 26 weeks of classroom-based learning at Monaghan Institute with 12 weeks of hands-on work experience in Combilift. Over the years, the course content has evolved to reflect changes in the manufacturing landscape, now including modules in Hydraulics, Lean Manufacturing, and, more recently, Mathematics to prepare students for greater work or educational opportunities.

CMETB has played a vital role in coordinating and delivering the educational aspect of the programme. Their ongoing commitment to adapting the curriculum, securing government funding, and expanding the scheme to include other regional employers from 2025 reflects their strategic approach to workforce development. "It's about staying ahead of the curve," said Sinead McKenna of CMETB. "We've created a flexible, forward-looking course that equips learners with in-demand skills and supports local industry at the same time."

One of the most compelling aspects of the programme is its accessibility. Fully funded through Government and EU support, it removes financial barriers for participants and trainees are offered a weekly bursary during practical placements within Combilift. Trainees also benefit

from additional qualifications, including City & Guilds module in Hydraulics and a Lean Six Sigma White Belt.

The 10-year milestone was marked not only by reflection but by ambition for the future. Attendees at the celebration event heard first-hand from past graduates who have gone on to build thriving careers — many still with Combilift, some even progressing to degree-level study or engineering apprenticeships.

With enrolment now open for the September 2025 intake, both Combilift and CMETB are doubling down on their commitment to the next generation. As Martin McVicar put it, "The demand for talent in this sector is only growing, and we're proud to continue building that talent right here in Monaghan."

Combilift
www.combilift.com/training/



Liberon puts students' skills to the test

IN A BID to bring its woodcare products to the masses, Liber-on has challenged three sets of college students to create different food-facing projects, each using Liberon Pure Tung Oil with which to finish their pieces.

When finishing items that are going to come into contact with food such as chopping boards, salad bowls and wooden kitchen work surfaces a premium, natural Tung oil with no additives is the right choice in order to seal and preserve the wood. Liberon's Pure Tung Oil is hardwearing and provides a long-lasting matt finish. It can also be used externally on oak to help prevent black spots.

Burton and South Derbyshire College

This is the fourth year that Burton and South Derbyshire College has taken part in the initiative, which aims to teach students about



Pictured from left to right are winners Laci Trotter and Jeshua Doherty from Burton and South Derbyshire College with their cheese and wine themed competition entry. Credit should also be given to Brandon Salmon who was the third member of the winning team but who was away on the day the photograph was taken.

The competition winner at Newark College, Katie Reading (middle) with 2nd place winner Julian Davis (left) and 3rd place winner Harry Newton (right).

the specialist woodcare options available to them, while asking them to be applied on imaginative items they have made. This year, Liberon called on learners on the college's Level 2 Diploma in Bench Joinery course to take part.

Teams of students were given approximately eight teaching hours in total to complete the project. The winning team came up with the idea of producing a cheese and wine themed food platter, featuring a vertical section styled to look like a mouse's face. A horizontal section provided space for cheeses and other 'nibbles' while the back of the vertical mouse-shaped element offered areas for housing wine bottles and glasses. The project saw the team working with Red and White Deal, Poplar, Douglas Fir and a small amount of Oak.

Richard Bradley, UK head of marketing with the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "The students did exceptionally well this year. While the winning design is fabulous, I also congratulate the other teams in the work they did too. Good luck to all the students on the course in their future carpentry and joinery careers."

Course leader, Ian Vanes-Jones, added: "All the students did very

well in this year's Liberon competition. We asked the students to design, build and finish a project to a tight schedule, and they have succeeded admirably. The whole initiative showed off their skills on our new CNC machine and how well they can handle the lathe. I'm a fan of Liberon's Pure Tung Oil, which is just right for food-facing items, and this competition has highlighted the great effects the oil can achieve. All in all, this is a skills test of which the students and the college can be proud."

The entries were judged by staff at the college who agreed that the standard of work was high and that making a choice had not been an easy decision. The three members of the winning team each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon.

Newark College

Students at Newark College took part for the second year running in Liberon's competition to test their carpentry and joinery skills. This year, learners on the college's Furniture Making course designed, made and finished a food bowls, finished using Liberon Pure Tung Oil. The competition resulted in one winning student plus second and third place winners.

Richard Bradley, UK head of

marketing at the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "It's great to see what the students have come up with. Clearly, they have taken great trouble over their designs, and I'd like to congratulate the winners and wish the other students all the very best in their future careers."

Course leader, Richard Preece, added: "The students produced some excellent bowl designs. They were each given Beech with which to work as this timber is naturally anti-bacterial. The project has been a good means of testing the students' bowl-turning skills on the lathe, plus shaping abilities using the requisite hand tools. In addition, the competition looked at the students' wood finishing techniques using Liberon's products."

The entries were judged by staff at Newark College, and the winner, runner-up and second runner-up each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon. The bowl produced by Katie Reading, the competition winner, featured a beautiful, raised pattern on its outside rim, and was finished to a very high standard.

Walsall College

Students at Walsall College's Level 2 Bench Joinery course also took part this year. Course leader, Charles Jones, came up with the idea of asking students to create food chopping boards.

Students were given free rein to come up with a design, mostly using hand tools and working with rough-sawn Oak. They also

had access to new equipment recently purchased by the college, including a band saw, CNC router and planer thicknesser. The latter is used to machine timber down to accurate, consistent thicknesses.

The winning design by Hayley Pitcher featured two parallel stripes of contrasting wood tone and was judged to have beautifully rounded corners and an excellent level of finishing. Two runner-up designs were also agreed by judges, which belonged to students Sulieman Rafi and Brody Garmston.

Richard Bradley, UK head of marketing with the competition sponsors, Liberon, says: "Congratulations to Hayley and the two runner-up students. The chopping board designs showcase perfectly the great effects that can be achieved using our Pure Tung Oil. I wish the students well in their future careers."

Course leader, Charles Jones, added: "This competition has not only tested the students' ability to set out accurately, but also to come up with creative designs. In addition, it's been a great initiative to stretch their skills in using hand tools and push them into trying new equipment and processes. Using jigsaws, for example, and applying chamfers all add up to a good learning experience."

The entries were judged by staff at the college, and the winner and two runner-ups each won a £25 Amazon voucher provided by Liberon.

Liberon ● liberon.co.uk



From left to right from Walsall College are Brody Garmston, winner Hayley Pitcher and Sulieman Rafi.

Stanmore launches Stanmore Design House

STANMORE Contractors, a leading UK specialist contractor, has recently announced the launch of Stanmore Design House, a new division that will provide RIBA Stage 4 and onwards technical design services to its clients — alongside integrated procurement and construction advice.

The new division, which will serve developers, contractors, housing associations, as well as the wider industry, launches at a time of significant regulatory change in the sector.

The new Building Safety Reg-

ulator (BSR) regime requires that, alongside submitting technical designs (RIBA Stage 4), developers must now begin tendering, contractor engagement, and preparing detailed contractor designs (RIBA Stage 5) ahead of BSR Gateway 2 submission.

Stanmore Design House will offer clients a fully integrated suite of technical design consultancy, procurement services, and contractor led advice to prepare for BSR Gateway 2 submission in a single place, removing the need to engage a separate, standalone technical design house whose

outputs are later passed to contractors for RIBA Stage 5.

Stanmore Design House will provide clients with the full suite of RIBA Stage 4 outputs, including elevation drawings, section and plan details, subframe layouts, wind load assessments, thermal analysis, and supplier coordination. Stanmore will also apply its contractor expertise to the design process, ensuring all technical designs are practical and buildable.

The new technical design service will be paired with comprehensive procurement and construction support and guidance, including providing multiple supplier options across different price points, assessing material availability, ensuring QA through early factory visits, and considering site logistics and construction needs during the design phase.

This end-to-end support will help minimise the risk of late-stage design changes that could trigger BSR resubmission and cause delays.

The offering is designed to streamline planning, reduce risk,

and ensure designs are ready for real-world construction.

Founded in 1958, Stanmore is one of the UK's leading specialist contractors, with expertise in drylining, facades, glazing, and metalwork. With offices in London, the South West, and the North West, the business has delivered major projects for clients including The Guinness Partnership, Bouygues UK, Wates, and St James.

Raj Manak, managing director at Stanmore, said: "With the new BSR framework, it's more important than ever to integrate procurement and construction insight into the technical design stage as early as possible. Stanmore Design House will offer clients exactly that kind of insight led support."

"Our ultimate aim is to make technical design seamless, efficient, and effective. We want to reduce risk, save costs, and deliver solutions that work in practice and not just in theory."

Stanmore Contractors
www.stanmore.co.uk



Selco hits spectacular fundraising peak — with more to come

THEY HAVE WALKED the distance of Land's End to John O'Groats, climbed the height of Mount Everest four times and cycled the equivalent of five Tour de Frances.

The colleagues, customers and suppliers of Selco Builders Warehouse are celebrating scaling the fundraising heights by breaking through the £500,000 barrier for Cancer Research UK.

The leading builders merchant passed through the milestone after just two-and-a-half years of raising funds for the charity and is continuing to support Cancer Research UK throughout 2025.

As part of the fundraising, Selco's colleagues have achieved some incredible statistics by completing a range of daunting challenges.

These include collectively climbing more than 38,000 m, walking 1.7 million steps and cycling over 11,000 miles.

All the money raised by Selco over the period has been donated to Cancer Research UK to help fund vital research by scientists, doctors and nurses in the quest to help beat cancer.

The fundraising has seen Selco colleagues, customers and suppliers take part in a host of in-store events, golf days, runs, bike rides and ab-seiling challenges, amongst other activities.

Colleagues and customers also donated more than 1,000 bags of clothes and household items to Cancer Research UK to sell in its outlets across the country in 2024, an initiative which is also continuing this year.

Selco chief executive Frank Elkins said: "It's been a phenomenal effort from the entire Selco family.

"For everyone to join forces to raise such an incredible amount of money is testament to how much the charity has been taken to the hearts of all associated with Selco.

"All of us have, in one way or another, been touched by cancer in our

lives and the work Cancer Research UK does to find a solution to this horrible disease is inspiring. We are honoured to have played a part in providing the funding to allow the doctors, scientists and nurses to continue their outstanding work — and we look forward to carrying on with our support throughout the rest of this year."

Selco's donation of £500,000 can be invested in numerous different routes by Cancer Research UK.

Such a total can be used to support Dr Marco Bezzi for three years as he works to understand how prostate cancer evolves to develop resistance to treatment and designing therapies to tackle it.

Alternatively, the money could be used to fund the work of Prof Richard Grundy in Birmingham, leading a major trial to improve survival for children with a rare type of brain tumour known as ependymoma.

Jayna Kawa, relationship manager at Cancer Research UK, said: "Selco have been wonderful supporters of Cancer Research UK and to achieve a fundraising figure of £500,000 in two-and-a-half-years is phenomenal. We are thrilled that the partnership is continuing in 2025.

"Selco received a Special Commendation in our recent Flame of Hope Awards and that recognition couldn't have been any more deserved as they have been one of the most impactful corporate relationship partners across Cancer Research UK.

"Everyone associated with the company approaches the fundraising with complete commitment and we are hugely grateful to the support Selco provides which will make a massive difference to the work and research our teams can carry out."

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

Selco ● www.selcobw.com



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Daring bungee jumpers help Cancer Research UK

DARING colleagues from the Slough store of one of the UK's leading builders merchants took the plunge by completing a heart-stopping bungee jump for charity.

A group of 10 members of the team from the Selco Builders Warehouse store, based on Slough Trading Estate on Farnham Road, took part in the thrilling adventure at Bray Lake Water-sport Centre in Windsor.

There were more than 50 years between the oldest and youngest jumpers, ranging from 69-year-old shopfloor assistant Richard Howton to checkout operator Elizabeth England who is 18.

The group raised more than £650 for Cancer Research UK, which is Selco's official nominated charity.

Tim Howard, store manager at Selco Slough, said: "It was a great day and one that everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed.

"I didn't do the jump personally but have great admiration for all those that did.

"There were a few nerves amongst some of the bungee jumpers before they took part but everyone came away at the end saying how much they had enjoyed the experience.

"It was fantastic to see a good



All smiles at the end for 69-year-old Richard Howton.

The full bungee group.

number of fellow colleagues and customers present to cheer on those who did the bungee jump and to be able to raise a good amount of money for Cancer Research UK was fantastic.

"The build-up to the bungee jump, and the day itself, have been enjoyable and it's created a lot of excitement and a great spirit amongst the team."

Selco has raised more than £500,000 for Cancer Research UK over the last two years and is continuing to support the charity in 2025.

All the money raised by Selco over the period has been used to help fund vital research by scientists, doctors and nurses in the quest to help beat cancer.

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

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

Selco

www.selcobw.com



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STEFANI M: EDGEBANDING EXCELLENCE

Stefani m is the new industrial edge bander with all the latest solutions for panel edgebanding. **It offers high quality processing thanks to the “electronic touch”** of the servo units and exclusive edge gluing technologies.

Highly productive - **up to 1500 panels per 8 hour** - with **speeds up to 25 m/min** and automatic setup of operations, it is the ideal edge bander for companies that need to produce a **large number of panels**, and **requiring quick changeovers**.

Stefani m meets your edgebanding needs to boost competitiveness.



DISCOVER MORE



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scm
woodworking technology

is more

Combilift launches two groundbreaking solutions for timber handling at Ligna 2025

TIMBER YARDS, panel product suppliers, and sawmill operations face ever-increasing pressure to handle long and heavy loads more safely, more efficiently, and with less environmental impact. At Ligna 2025, Combilift unveiled two major innovations designed specifically with these industry challenges in mind: the new Combi-FSE 8000 and the Combi-Xtender.

Combi-FSE 8000 —

Heavy-Duty Electric Sideloader for Long Loads

The latest addition to Combilift's four-wheel electric sideloader range, the Combi-FSE 8000, offers an 8-tonne lift capacity — ideal for handling structural timber, packs of sawn wood, panels, or engineered wood products in confined indoor or outdoor environments.

Key timber-focused benefits include:

- **Powerful, Emission-Free Operation:** Twin 18 kW drive motors provide the torque and responsiveness required for heavy packs, with all-electric performance suited for indoor timber stores.
- **Patented Traction and Steering:** Designed for year-round reliability in muddy or uneven yard conditions.
- **Unrivalled Operator Visibility:** The under-deck battery position and expansive glazing allow operators a clear line of sight, especially when reversing in narrow racking aisles or busy sawmill loading areas.

- **Quick Battery Change:** Ideal for multi-shift operations in busy timber yards.

Fleet managers also benefit from Combi-Connect, Combilift's advanced telematics system for real-time machine performance tracking and maintenance planning.

Combi Load Xtender —

Game-Changing One-Side Loading for Timber Yards

Unveiled alongside the sideloader, the Combi Load Xtender is a new pantograph-style load extender that enables complete loading and unloading of trailers or rail wagons from a single side — a major advantage in timber yards where space is tight or trailer access is limited.

For timber operations, the Xtender delivers:

- **One-Side Access:** Load full packs of timber from one side only, removing the need to move trailers or access both sides.
- **Ultra low mechanism height:** Its ultra-compact design ensures smooth movement and full functionality below standard trailer height without interference.
- **Enhanced Safety:** Operators can load securely against the far closed side of the trailer, reducing the risk of products falling and keeping personnel out of busy traffic zones.





Purpose-Built for the Timber Industry

"These new solutions were developed in direct response to what we're hearing from the timber sector," said Martin McVicar, CEO, CombiLift. "Customers need to move larger loads in tighter spaces with greater safety and lower emissions. The FSE 8000 and Combi Load Xtender do just that — and they're backed by CombiLift's proven track record in long-load innovation."

Both products are now available for order, with live demonstrations run throughout Ligna 2025.

CombiLift

FSE

<https://combilift.com/fse-8000/>

Xtender

<https://combilift.com/combi-load-xtender/>



Altendorf Group impresses at LIGNA 2025: innovation, connectivity, and strong partnerships

AT LIGNA 2025, the Altendorf Group presented not just machines but an entire ecosystem for the modern workshop. The spotlight was not only on technological advancements but also on close collaboration with customers, dealers, and partners worldwide.

At the same time, the new management team used the opportunity to introduce themselves in this new formation and outline their strategic goals for the years ahead.

Product Highlights at a glance

Partners, end customers, and visitors experienced the following innovations and solutions live at the Altendorf Group's over 600 m² booth:

Altendorf F 35: The new sliding table saw was presented in several configurations, each tailored to specific use cases such as panel processing or solid wood applications. It features high ease of use, precise cutting results, and smart functions.

Designed with a robust build and future IIOT connectivity, the F 35 delivers consistent performance and efficiency — perfectly



adapted to the needs of tradespeople.

Hebrock F next and K next Series: The popular edgebanding machines have undergone a comprehensive facelift. A new design, optimized control systems, and more powerful units ensure outstanding quality, user

comfort, and maximum efficiency. Visitors at the booth were able to experience firsthand the many improvements in usability and productivity.

Altendorf Group NEXUS IIOT Platform: This new central solution for real-time machine data, remote support, software

updates, user manuals, and diagnostics ensures future-proof production. At the booth, NEXUS was presented for the first time as a preview and is now entering the pilot phase with selected test customers.

Altendorf HAND GUARD: The world's first and only certified,





AI-powered safety assistance system for sliding table saws. HAND GUARD detects hazards in real time and proactively prevents accidents. It was featured in hourly live demonstrations, showing how it helps reduce injury risks.

New Online Configurators: Visitors were able to configure machines individually at the booth using the new online configurators. Different configurations could be combined live and adapted to specific needs — from panel to solid wood processing. The tool showcased how intuitive, flexible, and user-friendly the process is.

Strong Connections for a Strong Future

“True innovation comes from strong connections — between people, machines, and digital networks. Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. Only through close collaboration can we create solutions that truly advance the craft and support long-term business success,” explains Vit Kafka, CSO of the Altendorf Group.

Positive Feedback and Valuable Conversations

Numerous visitors and intensive conversations with customers and partners highlighted LIGNA

2025 as a vital platform for exchange and shaping the future of woodworking together. The positive feedback and wide range of impulses Altendorf received through direct dialogue with the market provide a strong foundation for further development and a successful continuation of the current fiscal year.

Altendorf

www.altendorfgroup.com/en/

ALTENDORF® GROUP



SCM: outstanding results and new technological frontiers at Ligna 2025

SCM REPORTED excellent results at the 2025 edition of Ligna, welcoming thousands of business customers and visitors from more than 100 countries and achieving significant success in terms of deals, contacts, and opportunities across several international markets, especially in the DACH region, Northern and Eastern Europe, and North and South America. Alongside the overall show attendance (78,000 visitors), these results reflect a dynamic industry that remains open to innovation despite global macroeconomic challenges.

With over 3,300 square metres of exhibition space, SCM reaffirmed its role as a strategic business partner at every stage of the production process, showcasing the integration of technology, services, and digital innovation. From the very first glance, the stand in Hall 13 embodied a forward-thinking vision that goes beyond machinery to offer integrated solutions designed to maximize process efficiency, product quality, and reduce operating costs.

Ligna also provided a valuable networking opportunity: 350 SCM experts and more than 100 dealers welcomed customers with the warm hospitality typical



of "Made in Italy." The commercial network also responded enthusiastically to the pre-show meeting held on May 25 at SCM's stands.

New solutions on display: engineering, stand-alone, and more

Significant interest was recorded for SCM's engineering solutions, including the exclusive edge-banding innovation from Tecno Logica. Stand-alone innovations also drew great attention, particularly in timber construction, surface treatment, and solid wood processing.

"Despite the complexity of the global scenario, we came to Ligna with tangible, high-value innovations for our customers," stated Pietro Gheller, SCM division director. "We invest 7% of our turnover in R&D and after-sales services, which have become the true key to supporting our customers' business growth."

Digital services and systems: the power of connectivity

SCM showcased the next step in its digital evolution, revealing how connected machines can

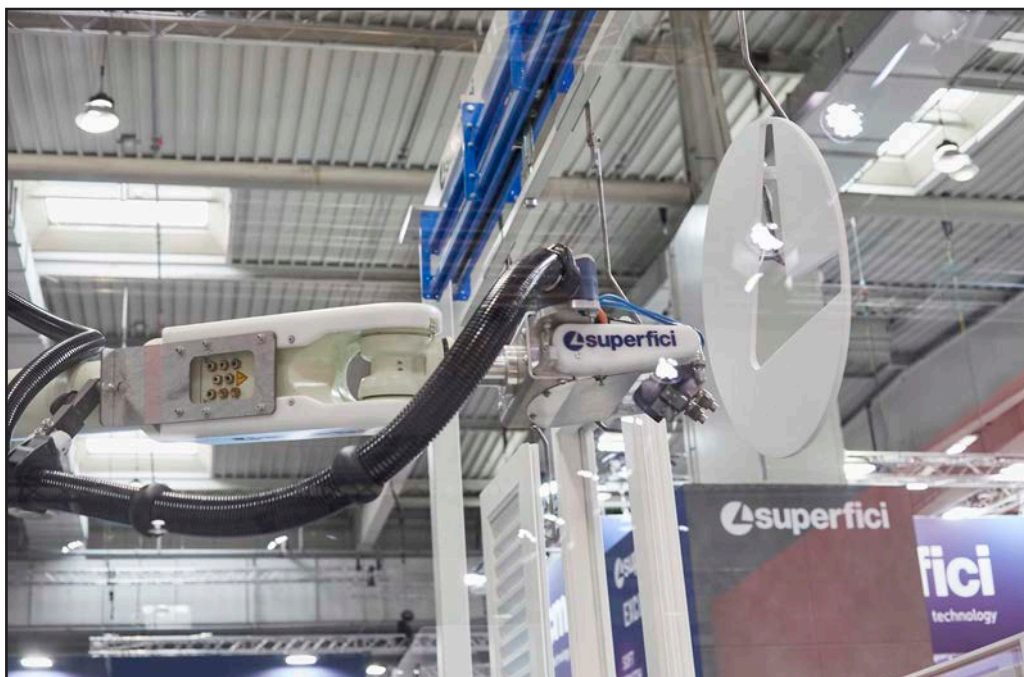
unlock a whole new model of customer support. By collecting and analysing data in real time, SCM enables proactive services that anticipate issues before they cause downtime, boosting productivity and ensuring seamless, uninterrupted operations.

Among the key innovations presented by SCM, the spotlight was on WinMES, SCM's factory management system that acts as the digital brain of production.

WinMES connects machines, people, and materials into a single, integrated environment. By delivering real-time data, it enhances traceability, streamlines coordination, and supports faster, data-driven decisions through advanced analytics dashboards.

Building on the capabilities of WinMES, SCM presented a range of integrated solutions to support every phase of the production and service experience:

- MyPortal, the latest version of SCM's digital platform, simplifies daily operations with fleet-wide machine monitoring, energy consumption tracking (to calculate cost-per-piece), access to documentation and maintenance cards, tool life management, and integrated service ticket handling.
- Cybersecurity solutions specifically designed to protect the machine's PC, meeting the increasing demand for IT security in industrial environments.



- Smart Spindle, a predictive technology that processes real-time sensor data to prevent anomalies in spindle or tool behavior and optimise machining performance.
- Solutions Library, a conversational knowledge base built on SCM's technical expertise, making it easier for users to find and apply valuable insights.
- Technical training portal, offering e-learning, webinars, and digital twin interaction to accelerate onboarding and empower both operators and maintenance personnel with greater autonomy.

All these innovations are part of SCM's modular service bundles, customizable solutions that support customers from initial start-up to full-scale production and preventive maintenance, helping to minimise downtime and maximise operational reliability.

SCM and Tecno Logica: a new paradigm in industrial automation

Ligna visitors experienced SCM's strong focus on automation as a response to the shortage of specialised labour. A major highlight at Tecno Logica's stand was the RO-TEC X6 edgebander, one of the show's most groundbreaking innovations. This multifunctional work centre features a rotary table and introduces a whole new automation concept for the furniture industry — already established in the automotive sector — with a multi-station carousel configuration that enables vertical part processing.

Another standout was the engineering solution at SCM's stand: an integrated, scalable, and modular cell system for the furniture industry, capable of processing up to 1,200 furniture components per shift. The line includes a gabbiani a2 angular panel saw with a flexstore hp automatic panel storage system at the infeed, an anthropomorphic robot at the outfeed, an automatic labeller, a stefani cell E flexible edgebanding cell with automatic panel return system, and a morbidelli fx100 drilling cell — making its Ligna debut — designed for batch-one processing.

Timber construction and CLT

Making its Ligna debut was the new oikos xs 650, developed to offer greater productivity and flexibility when processing beams of cross-section up to 650 x 310 mm. The new machine is equipped with the updated Maestro lab beam&wall software, which enhances the functionalities of the current programming software, to the advantage of the machine performance and the operator's user experience.

Another innovation for sustainable building and timber construction was the celaschi xl, a high-performance double-end profiling machine specifically designed for CLT processing.

Surface treatment: from sanding to finishing

SCM also showcased its comprehensive finishing solutions, featuring products and services designed to deliver exclusive, on-trend surfaces.

A crowd favourite was the dmc system tc automatic sanding-calibrating machine, equipped with an exclusive CO₂ laser engraving unit for 3D scorings on parquet, wooden elements, MDF panels to veneer, fiber cement and solid surfaces of any length.

The Superfici finishing range presented major upgrades, including:

- maestro: painting robot specialised in coating applications for windows and doors, equipped with a new, highly advanced software suite;
- mini: automatic spraying machine now featuring a new integrated colour change system;
- valtorta f1: a roller coating machine equipped with a new exclusive roller system for impeccable application even on unusually shaped surfaces.

Nesting: morbidelli x50 cnc machining centre

The machine was displayed in its new Pro-Space version, featuring SMS — Spoilboard Management System software for easier spoilboard panel hand-

ling, a worktable with High Grip Vacuum technology for unmatched hold — even on the smallest pieces — and SCM patented spoilboard panel, which allows for 90% consumption reduction compared to standard wood ones.

CNC drilling and routing machining centres: accord 500 upgrade

New features for furniture manufacturers and asymmetric machining areas like the Optizone patented system connected to the Maestro lab software which requires just one click to establish the size of the two work areas as early as the programming stage based on the pieces to machine. Also being highlighted is the new chain tool changer, Quadro 35 which can always ensure a variety of tool stations are on hand in a limited space.

Beam saw: new gabbiani pt95

A highly efficient solution suitable for both batch one and mass production. It offers all the higher-end functions and options most valued by the market for the SCM panel sizing. These include the Flexcut unit for side-by-side bars up to 600 mm, blade motors with power up to 18.5 kW, led indicators for both front and rear loading, led device for guided positioning of movable air floating tables and angular cutting device.

Stefani m industrial edge bander

Highly configurable and customizable industrial edge bander, designed to ensure reliability and machining quality both in standalone mode and within integrated cells. The "electronic touch" of the electronic working units is easy to use even with the most complex machining on delicate, state-of-the-art materials. The machine's completely automatic set-up guarantees repeatability, quality and precision of the production processes.

Topset xxl throughfeed moulder

Increased working sections, spindle speeds of up to 12,000 rpm, customisable compositions and feed worktables with micrometric settings for optimal tooling set-up, are just some of the innovative features of this new machine.

Evocut 350i, nova si 4 and minimax si 4 circular saws

The new "evocut 350i" stands out for its compactness, excellent machining quality and high level of safety. The machine features the performance of a circular saw in a small footprint, allowing the cut of panels or solid wood up to 46° tilting; all this through a simple and intuitive programming carried out by the new "eye-S" control panel.

New "nova si 4" and "minimax si 4" circular saws come up as the most versatile circular saws in their category, thanks to the new highly reliable sliding carriage, guaranteed for 10 years; and the possibility to customise the machines depending on customer's demands: for example, the new optional "Quick Lock" squaring frame that enables the quick set-up change of the fence in a few seconds.

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Leitz at Ligna 2025: A strong presence with a lasting impact



The strong visitor response and consistently positive feedback confirm that Leitz's trade fair appearance was a complete success (Photo: Leitz).



At Ligna 2025, Leitz presented innovative new products and intelligent advancements — specifically tailored to the requirements of wood and plastic processing (Photo: Leitz).

AT THE world's leading trade fair, Ligna in Hanover, Leitz presented itself as a global leader in precision tools for solid wood and wood-based materials processing with a visionary trade fair appearance that set new standards in many respects. The newly designed exhibition stand impressed with a modern layout that visually and functionally combined openness, dialogue, innovation, and sustainability. This created a space for exchange and inspiration, with a clear focus on the customer and their processes.

A presence with a clear message: "We shape the future"

With this year's trade fair concept, Leitz emphasized its role as a technological pioneer and forward-thinking partner in the wood and wood-based materials



A special highlight were the exhibit tables, custom-made in-house by Leitz specifically for LIGNA (Photo: Leitz).

processing industry. Interactive presentation areas showcased practical solutions and process innovations in a vivid manner. Visitors were able to experience firsthand how modern tool technologies and integrated service concepts contribute to greater efficiency and quality. Leitz was particularly praised for not only presenting products, but for placing a spotlight on holistic solutions and processes. A visual and craftsmanship highlight were the new exhibit tables, specially designed and manufactured in-house by Leitz for Ligna. Crafted with high artisanal precision, they impressively combined functionality, design, and brand identity. They symbolise the company's commitment to the highest quality standards in every detail — from tool technology to presentation.

Sustainability made visible: "We Care"

Leitz also made a strong statement in terms of sustainability. The trade fair presentation was designed with resource conservation and material reuse in mind. Wood — as the central material — gave the booth an authentic character. Many components of the stand, including the custom

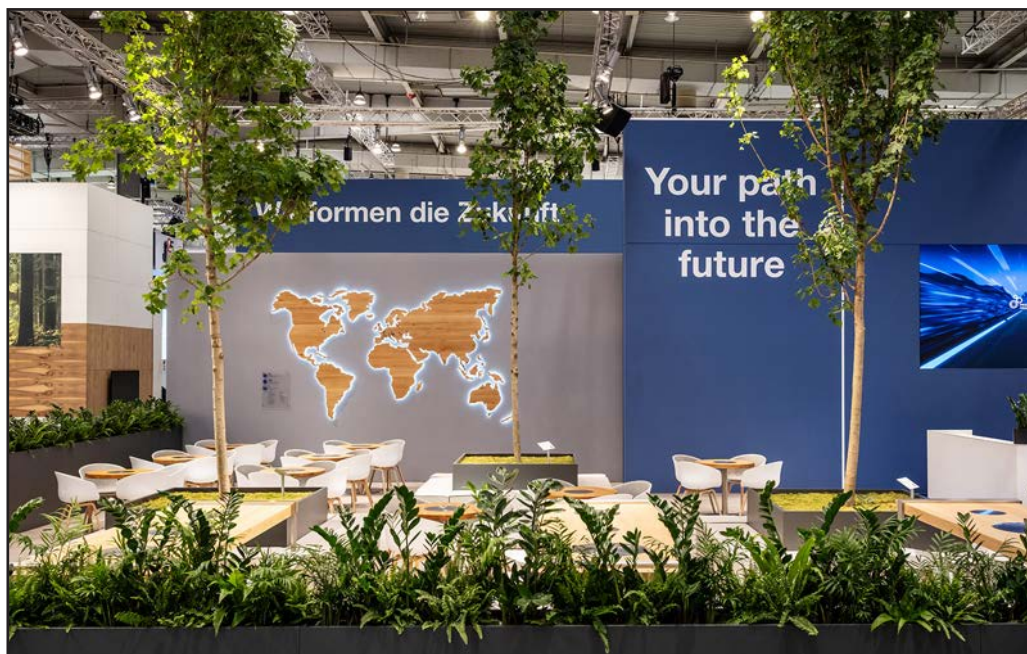
made tables and structural elements, were built in a modular way and are intended for further use in the company's presentation center in Oberkochen. In this way, sustainable action is not only communicated, but actively lived.

The high number of visitors to

the Leitz booth and the consistently positive feedback confirmed that the trade fair appearance fully met — and in many areas even exceeded — expectations. CEO Jürgen Köppel summed it up: "Ligna 2025 clearly demonstrated that our process-oriented ap-

proach is the right path. Together with our customers, we are shaping their successful future — and this allows us to look toward upcoming challenges and opportunities with confidence."

Leitz
www.leitz.org/en/



With its newly designed exhibition stand, Leitz presented itself as a technological pioneer and forward-thinking partner – featuring a modern design characterized by openness, dialogue, innovation, and a strong commitment to sustainability (Photo: Leitz).

Huntsman launches bio-based I-BOND® resins for composite wood products at Ligna 2025



HUNTSMAN, one of the leading global companies in the development of polyurethane-based resins for the manufacture of composite wood products, exhibited at Ligna 2025 in May and unveiled two new bio-based products at the world's leading trade fair for wood-working and wood processing technology.

Developed to reduce the carbon footprint of composite wood products by up to 30%*, the new binders incorporate up to 25% bio-based content, without compromising the quality or performance that can be achieved in resulting panels.

I-BOND® PB BIO 1025 resin and I-BOND® OSB BIO 1025 resin have been developed for use in the manufacture of oriented strand board (OSB) and particleboard (PB), offering bio-based content solutions that support the industry's sustainability ambitions.

Closely aligned with market and customer requirements, the new products form part of a wider range of non-added formaldehyde fast-curing I-BOND® resins that Huntsman offers to enable the production of high quality, durable composite wood products.

Developed to offer similar quality characteristics and performance capabilities to standard I-BOND® resins, while maximizing bio-based content, the new resins are capable to enable compatibility with existing manufacturing processes and can allow manufacturers to easily switch materials according to requirements. They can also help composite wood manufacturers meet panel specification requirements in terms of emission standards.

Explaining more, Bart Singulé, sales manager composite wood products Europe, said (speaking before Ligna): "At Huntsman we are always looking for innovative solutions that can help drive sustainability forward. With the launch of our bio-based resins for OSB and PB, we are

helping panel producers maximize bio-based content in their boards — helping them to meet their sustainability ambitions without compromising the quality or performance of their products. These innovations are an essential step in helping the industry transition to more sustainable production methods and we look forward to discussing the benefits they can deliver with Ligna attendees."

Typical properties of Huntsman's new bio-based resins include:

- A reduced carbon footprint: Integrating bio-based content, and with attributed mass-balanced MDI options available, the resins can help contribute to a lower carbon footprint.
- High performance: The resins can deliver the strength, durability, and moisture resistance needed for typical composite wood product applications in furniture and construction.
- Aligned with emissions standards and containing non-added formaldehyde: The new resins can help create a safer, cleaner working environment for manufacturers and improve air quality for consumers.
- Versatile: The new products are suitable for a wide range of composite wood applications, including furniture, cabinetry, flooring, and interior panelling.

At Ligna, Huntsman's theme was 'Inspired by Nature, Breathing & Building Quality', highlighting the team's focus on providing the market with innovative technologies to help drive a low carbon future.

Huntsman's I-BOND®
polyurethanes_eu@huntsman.com ● www.ibondwood.com

*Comparison with Huntsman incumbent technologies. Preliminary internal LCA study performed in 2024. IPCC AR6 GWP100 including biogenic CO₂ calculated at cradle-to-gate.

Simply Titus: engineering simplicity on show at Interzum 2025

AT INTERZUM 2025, Titus showcased solutions that make furniture assembly easier, faster, and more reliable. With a focus on Consumer Assembly Friendliness (CAF), the company ensures effortless installation, intuitive functionality, and repeatable performance.

By simplifying assembly and improving efficiency, the precision engineered solutions help furniture manufacturers optimise workflows, reduce costs, and stay competitive. Simply put, it's Titus — removing complexity, enhancing reliability, and delivering excellence at every step.

Expanding the T-type hinge family, the new T-type PressTo introduces tool-free hinge cup fixing, enabling effortless and quick installation with a simple press-in action.

With an audible click confirming secure attachment, it ensures confident and repeatable assembly, reducing installation time and enhancing productivity. This evolution, paired with the 3Way snap-on hinge-to-plate mounting, is claimed to set a new standard for quick and reliable cabinet assembly.

Also featured in the T-type range is T-type Noir, combining discreet aesthetics with premium functionality, and T-type-i 170°, designed for tall doors with exceptional stability and a zero-protrusion wide opening angle, ideal for interior drawer application.

The Quickfit TL5 'Full Metal Jacket' dowel is believed to be the only high-performance solution engineered to reliably engage in 5 mm dowel holes. This innovative technology ensures a strong and durable joint in MDF, chipboard, and solid wood while offering tool-free insertion for faster cabinet assembly.

Complementing this, System 6.2 introduces a next-generation square-shaped connector, providing enhanced stability, easy knock-in insertion, and a contemporary aesthetic that aligns with modern furniture designs.

Perfectly suited for modular closet systems, walk-in wardrobes, and shelving units, System 6.2 offers a robust and stylish solution tailored to the evolving needs of modern interior spaces.

The Slimline+ drawer system represents the latest evolution in effortless drawer installation and adjustment. Featuring a three dimensional front adjustment mechanism, it ensures precise alignment and enhanced user convenience.

A colour-coded adjustment panel is positioned at the front, providing easy and intuitive access for quick and accurate fine-tuning.

Titus continues to lead in precision-engineered damping solutions, delivering smooth, controlled motion across diverse applications. At the



Slimline+ Drawer System

core of this innovation is Adaptive Response Technology (ART), which fine-tunes damper performance by automatically adjusting to door weight and closing speed. This ensures consistent, rebound-free motion, prevents slamming, reduces wear, and extends product lifespan.

- Effortless operation: Low opening force makes doors and drawers easy to open.
- Versatile application: A single ART damper adapts to various door weights.
- Extended durability: Protects components, ensuring long-term reliability.

By dynamically responding to movement, ART embodies Simply Titus — removing complexity and ensuring effortless, precise motion control. Titus' latest damping advancements further reinforce this philosophy:

- Cold/hot applications: Reliable damping from -30°C to 150°C, ideal for home appliances, automotive, and commercial interiors.
- Slidix range: Advanced soft-close solutions for sliding doors, delivering silent, controlled operation across multiple applications.
- Multi-purpose push-to-open technology: Enhancing handleless furniture with consistent performance and an effortless user experience.

With ART and cutting-edge damping innovations, Titus ensures that motion is always smooth, predictable, and engineered for excellence.

At Interzum 2025, Titus also showcased technologies that enhance furniture manufacturing, making assembly quicker and more reliable.

Titusonic® is transforming cabinet assembly by utilising ultrasound welding instead of traditional adhesives, creating a stronger, more durable bond while verifying structural integrity in real time.

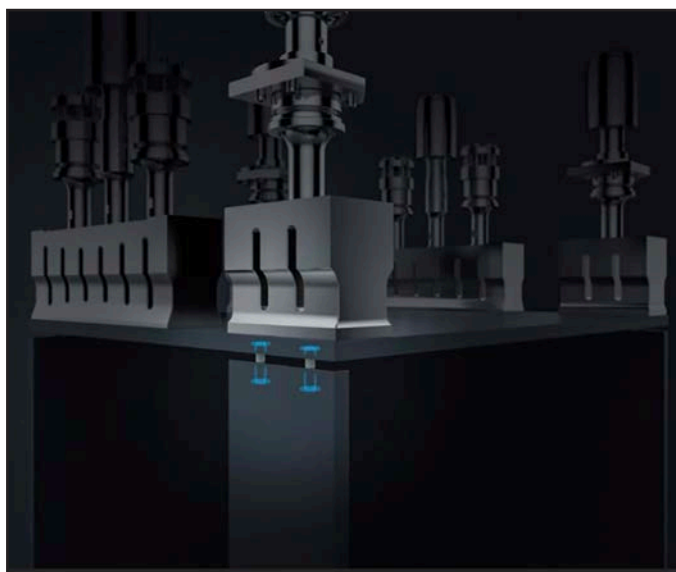
FastFit supports the RTA industry by streamlining factory pre-insertion of Quickfit dowels, ensuring faster assembly, improved CAF scores, and enhanced consumer satisfaction.

These innovations reflect the company's commitment to efficiency, precision, and reliability — helping manufacturers optimise their processes and deliver superior products.

At Interzum 2025, Titus continued to reinforce its commitment to ease of assembly, efficiency, and reliability in furniture manufacturing, reaffirming its statement: Engineered for Purpose. Every solution is designed to make assembly intuitive, ensure performance consistency, and provide long-term durability.

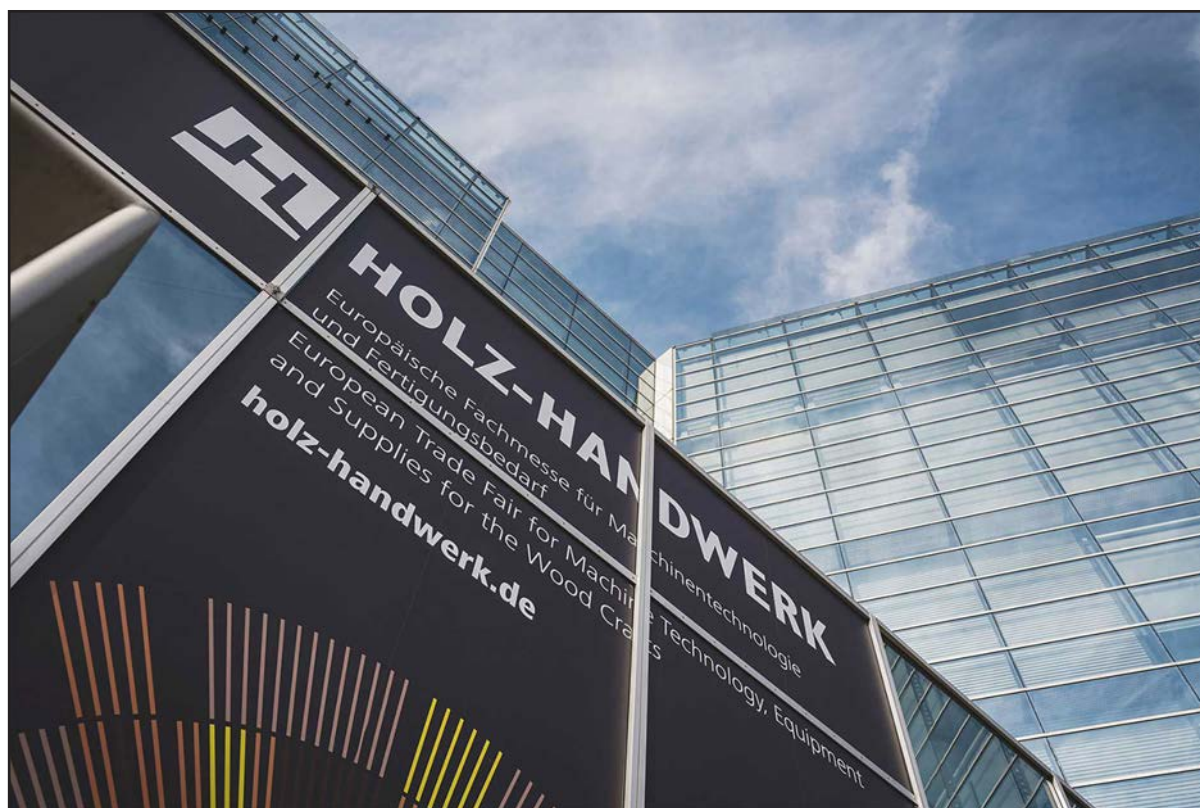
Visitors experienced first-hand how Titus simplifies complexity with smartly designed, effortlessly installed, and built-to-last products.

Titus ● www.titusplus.com



Cabinet assembly technology from Titus

Looking forward to Holz-Handwerk 2026



“DISCOVER. EXPERIENCE. DO.” Under this motto, HOLZ-HANDWERK will once again open its doors to carpenters, joiners and cabinetmakers from 24 to 27 March 2026, as usual co-located with FENSTERBAU FRONTALE.

The registration phase for exhibitors is already underway. Numerous exhibitors from 2024 and previous years are showing their loyalty to the leading European trade fair for machine technology, equipment and supplies for the wood crafts. Important key players will be making their comeback in 2026.

Stefan Dittrich, Director for HOLZ-HANDWERK, is delighted with the strong response: “The foundations have been laid for a successful HOLZ-HANDWERK 2026. We are very pleased with the return and loyalty of our exhibitors. With their innovations and new products, they make a visit to the trade fair a unique experience and actively help shape the industry. It is important and trend-setting that we look to the future together with the community, exchange ideas and network with each other.”

“As VDMA, we are very proud that German and European machine and tool manufacturers have made a clear commitment

to participate in the upcoming HOLZ-HANDWERK, adds Dr. Bernhard Dirr, managing director of the VDMA Woodworking Machinery Association.

“We assume that the investments made by the German government’s economic stimulus package will help to significantly improve the framework conditions for 2026.”

An initial overview of the ex-

hibiting companies at HOLZ-HANDWERK 2026 is now available at the website. A strong presence from the machinery, software, power tools and suppliers/fittings sectors is already apparent.

Companies still have the opportunity to register their stand space. An extensive supporting program is also being finalized. The new HOLZ-HANDWERK Arena will be a multifunctional area pro-

viding space for get-togethers, presentations, discussion panels and best practices.

“We want to offer the industry a stage with an experiential character,” says Stefan Dittrich. “The HOLZ-HANDWERK Arena will create ideal conditions for presenting forward-looking trends and technologies.”

HOLZ-HANDWERK
www.holz-handwerk.de/en



XYZ WARDJet UK Open House

XYZ WARDJet, a global leader in innovative CNC router and waterjet cutting systems, is excited to announce its UK Open House and CNC Manufacturing Expo, taking place 16-17 July 2025 at its Telford headquarters.

Following a hugely successful run in Ontario, Canada, this event brings the latest in smart manufacturing technology to the UK — offering live machine demos, hands-on experiences and direct access to CNC experts.

With over 30 years of experience and a reputation for engineering excellence, XYZ and its sister brand WARDJet are known for building versatile, high-performance systems that power manufacturers across a broad range of industries — from signage and woodworking to aerospace, automotive, plastics and stone processing. The UK Open House offers a rare opportunity for professionals to see this technology in action and explore real-world applications tailored to their specific production needs.

“At XYZ and WARDJet, we’re not just evolving CNC — we’re redefining what productivity looks like. This event gives UK manufacturers a first-hand look at the tools shaping the next generation of efficient, smart and safe production” says Chris Arend, managing director at AAG Tailored Cutting Solutions.

What to Expect:

Two Days of Innovation, Insight and Interaction

This is more than just an open house — it’s an interactive tech showcase



designed to help businesses stay ahead in an increasingly competitive and automated manufacturing landscape. The event will feature:

- **Live CNC Router & Waterjet Demos** — Witness machines cutting a wide range of materials, including aluminium, acrylic, foam, wood, stone and composite
- **High-Speed 40,000 rpm Spindles** — For twice the output and ultra-clean edges
- **New Wire-Free Automatic Loading System** — A game-changer in CNC automation, streamlining loading without messy cables
- **On-Machine Sheet Loader** — Reducing footprint and increasing efficiency in material handling
- **10-Position Automatic Tool Changer** — Fast and seamless tool transitions
- **WOODWORKER X Router** — Purpose-built for high-precision, high-speed woodworking
- **Expert Consultations** — Application engineers available to answer questions and run live demos based on your own parts or files

Join AAG for a day of innovation, automation, and hands-on demonstrations designed to help you get the most from your visit — on your own schedule.

AAG has curated a light schedule throughout the day, allowing you to explore at your own pace:

10:00 am-11:30 am: Live Routing & Waterjet Cutting. Experience the high-speed spindles and WARDJet waterjets in action. Watch real-time cutting of materials and witness the precision that powers production.

11:30 am-1:00 pm: Automation in Motion. Discover how AAG’s wire-free loader and on-machine sheet handler can streamline your workflow. See smart, seamless automation tackle heavy lifting with ease.

1:00 pm-3:00 pm: Personalised Demos & Application Talks. Bring your parts, files, or production challenges — AAG’s experts will provide live, tailored demonstrations and talk through real-world solutions.

Whether you’re stopping by for a quick look or staying the full day, you’ll leave with new insights and ideas to bring back to your factory floor.

New for 2025: Smart Safety Technology

Safety takes centre stage with the debut of new machine safety innovations, including:

- **Laser Scanners** — Creating adjustable safety zones for safer machine interaction
- **AI-Driven Cameras** — Providing intelligent threat detection and real-time operator monitoring

Whether you’re exploring new CNC solutions, water jet cutting or looking to automate your workshop, or simply curious

about the latest advancements in manufacturing, the XYZ WARDJet UK Open House is a perfect opportunity to engage with the technology and the team behind it. With hands-on demos, expert insights and industry-leading innovations all under one roof, this is an event not to be missed for anyone serious about staying competitive. AAG is excited to welcome visitors from across the UK — and the company looks forward to seeing you there on July 16–17 in Telford.

This event is free to attend, but registration is encouraged to ensure time with engineers and personalised demonstrations.

AAG Tailored Cutting Solutions
www.axyz.com

Band of Builders dry marker at Jewsons

THE TRADE'S favourite Dry Marker just got even better. Hultafors Tools has teamed up with Band of Builders to launch a special edition version of its bestselling Dry Marker, now available in over 300 Jewson branches nationwide. For every marker sold, 50p goes straight to Band of Builders — a charity dedicated to supporting tradespeople and their families going through tough times.

Built with the same features that make it a must-have tool on site, including a grip-friendly body, built-in sharpener, and easy-to-change lead, the marker comes in striking Band of Builders branding, making it more than just a tool, but a statement of solidarity across the industry. This is a first-of-its-kind partnership between one of the trade's most trusted tool brands and a charity that's changing lives. Hultafors is kicking off the collaboration with a £9,750 donation and is fully committed to raising both money and awareness for Band of Builders.

"Band of Builders does incredible work for tradespeople facing illness, injury, or hardship; a community of people that are often overlooked," says Nicki Hickman, marketing manager hardware UK at Hultafors Group UK. "The Dry Marker was the obvious choice, as it's always in demand on-site. Now every time you purchase one, you're helping someone in the trade get back on their feet."

Since its launch in 2016, Band of Builders has delivered nearly £2 million in community projects across the UK, powered by a network of volunteers and industry partners. The charity's practical, financial, and emotional support makes a real difference for those who need it most.

"This partnership means a lot to us at Band of Builders. The new Dry Marker is more than just a useful tool — it represents real support for construction workers going through tough times," says Gavin Crane, CEO of Band of Builders. "We're proud to put our name on something that's made for tradespeople and backed by people who care about the trade."

The project has been made possible with the help of Toolbank and Jewson, ensuring that this limited-edition marker is easy to find and ready to use on jobs across the country. With more projects already in the pipeline, this initiative is just the beginning for Hultafors Tools and Band of Builders as they kickstart their partnership to support the trade, one tool at a time.

Hultafors ● www.hultafors.com/en-gb ● www.bandofbuilders.org



Supporting mental health — every day — at West Fraser

KEEN to prove that mental health is important all year around, West Fraser is shining a light on mental health resources and promoting a positive workplace environment.

The permanent support systems available to all staff across the worldwide sites to support the teams' wellbeing include the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and the trained Mental Health First Aiders. West Fraser's Cowie site has seen its first nine employees complete their mental health first aid course. They will act as a point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue, who can be offered initial support through non-judgemental listening and be signposted to support services.

To promote positive mental health during May's mental health week, the North America teams took part in green-themed activities to bring everyone together in support of mental wellness. In addition, European employees were encouraged to join a company-wide step challenge alongside the North American counterparts, where, throughout the month, sites were working together to complete a virtual route connecting all West Fraser mills within their continent; all designed to promote not only physical activity but also teamwork and a shared focus on well-being.

Reminders on how the teams can look after their mental health were circulated:

- Volunteering.
- Swapping the car for walking; or parking further away.
- Drinking at least seven glasses of water a day has a significant impact on mental clarity.
- Doing exercise increases endorphins and reduces cortisol; dance classes, park runs, or gentle runs.

- Sleeping; and switching off the 'electronics' at least two hours before bed.
- Eating more fruit and vegetables.
- Giving yourself mental rest breaks through the day is proven to have a significant impact on mental health.
- Gardening and feeling the benefits of the great outdoors.

West Fraser ● Tel 01786 812 921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>



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Sustainable growth with MKM

MKM Building Supplies (MKM), an independent UK builder's merchant, is stepping up its sustainability game — cutting carbon, boosting energy efficiency, and backing greener building solutions across the board. It's all part of their commitment to doing things the right way — for customers, communities, and the planet.

The company's newly opened Cheltenham branch — its first to have the entire shell structure built to BREEAM Excellent standards — marks a major milestone in MKM's wider sustainability journey. It is designed as an all-electric site including: a roof-mounted solar PV array, air-source heating systems MVHR, movement controlled LED lighting systems and intelligent energy management systems. Some 42% of the total annual electricity consumption will be provided by the PV system and with a REGO certified grid supply the building achieves an operational carbon net zero status for its energy use. The branch also deploys electric forklift trucks, EV charging points and will shortly include an electric delivery vehicle. Cheltenham sets a new benchmark for future branches.

However, this is just one part of a much larger effort to make MKM's entire business more sustainable.

MKM's environmental strategy goes beyond branch-level improvements, reflecting a long-term commitment to cutting carbon and improving energy efficiency across the business. As a builders' merchant operating in a traditionally high-emission sector, MKM recognises the challenges it faces — but it isn't shying away from them. Instead, the company is taking a practical, proactive approach, backed by tangible initiatives that aim to drive real change throughout its operations.

"We know that construction has a significant carbon footprint, and we're not pretending we have all the answers," said Rachel Constable, head of ESG at MKM. "What we do have is a clear and measurable plan to improve. We're working within our own operations to cut emissions, and we're helping customers make informed choices about sustainability. Cheltenham is a great example of what's possible, but it's just the start."

One challenge MKM faces is that most of its branch buildings are leasehold properties. This means the company must work closely with landlords to implement sustainability improvements. However, attitudes are shifting, and landlords increasingly recognise the long-term benefits of investing in energy-efficient properties — not only to comply with regulations but also to enhance the value of their assets.

"We don't own all of our sites, which means we have to collaborate with landlords to make changes," said David Shaw, head of special projects at MKM. "But we're seeing landlords engage more actively in sustainability initiatives. Greener buildings are more attractive to tenants and investors alike, and this aligns with our drive to operate more efficiently and responsibly. From that point, it's up to us to make as many appropriate decisions as possible — choosing energy-efficient systems and operational best practices — to ensure the entire building is as sustainable as possible."

MKM's sustainability progress has also been recognised externally. In April, the business was awarded a Silver EcoVadis Medal, placing it in the top 15% of companies assessed for sustainability globally. The rating reflects strong performance across key areas including environmental impact, labour and human rights, ethics, and sustainable procurement. It's a clear sign of MKM's commitment to keeping things moving in the right direction — for people, the planet, and the trade.

- Air Source Heat Pumps and associated products, helping builders and homeowners transition to low-carbon heating.
- Solar PV solutions, enabling renewable energy generation.
- Advanced insulation options, including external wall insulation systems and hemp-based insulation to improve energy efficiency.
- Permeable paving and drought-resistant landscaping materials, supporting sustainable water management.
- Biodiversity-focused materials, such as bat boxes, brick bird boxes, and bee bricks, encouraging environmentally friendly building practices.
- Future Homes Standard-ready products, ensuring compliance with upcoming regulations for energy-efficient construction.

The drive toward sustainability isn't just coming from MKM — customers and suppliers are also pushing for greener solutions. Trade professionals are actively seeking Future Homes Standard-compliant materials, while homeowners are investing in energy-saving products. At the same time, MKM's long-standing suppliers are evolving their own sustainability commitments, ensuring the supply chain supports a lower-carbon future.

"We're responsible for our Scope 1 and 2 emissions which includes electricity, gas, biomass, and diesel, but we know from our Scope 3 emissions work, that the biggest impact comes through our supply chain," said Rachel. "Our suppliers are stepping up — offering more sustainable materials, reducing their own emissions, and embedding sustainability into their operations. We see ourselves as the link between these suppliers and our customers, ensuring that demand for greener construction is met with the right solutions."

Several MKM branches have created dedicated in-store displays featuring low-carbon heating solutions from leading manufacturers such as Grant, Samsung, and Bosch. These initiatives are further strengthened by MKM's acquisition of Oceanair — an award-winning HVAC distributor specialising in air-to-water heat pump solutions and training. Through Oceanair and its specialist platform Oceanashp.co.uk, MKM now offers access to technical support, system design expertise, and accredited training, reinforcing its commitment to helping customers transition to more sustainable, future-ready heating technologies.

"As a builders' merchant, we rely on our fleet to deliver for our customers, and it would be naïve not to acknowledge that transport remains our largest source of emissions within scope 1 & 2. But that doesn't mean we can't make improvements," said Rachel. "We're rolling out technology to help us track fleet emissions at a branch level and making strategic investments to lower our impact. We recently introduced our first electric crane and we're transitioning our forklift fleet, with close to 50% now fully electric and expansion planned across additional branches. We've also adopted Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) HGVs where infrastructure allows, with a growing number now operating in our logistics network."

"Our focus on sustainability isn't just about compliance—it's about doing the right thing and leading the way in the industry," said Rachel. "We're committed to embedding sustainability across our business as we progress towards our net zero targets."

MKM Building Supplies
www.mkm.com



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Why now is the time to back British timber in construction

Neil Horton, Sales Director at BSW Timber

"THE CONVERSATION around sustainable construction is continuing to get louder — and rightly so. At BSW Group, we believe that the relaunch of the UK Government's Timber in Construction (TiC) Roadmap is not just timely, it's essential. We have a clear opportunity to reshape our built environment using British timber as a cornerstone of low-carbon construction.

"For years, our focus has been on securing the timber supply chain. Now, with global timber pricing and supply increasingly volatile, the logic for using homegrown timber is stronger than ever. Prioritising British wood isn't just an environmental choice — it's an economic and strategic decision.

"The TiC Roadmap provides the kind of direction and ambition our industry has been asking for. It charts a path toward greater self sufficiency, laying out plans that will crucially involve an increase in the planting of productive softwood trees and scale up domestic timber production. These are not just targets — they are imperatives for reducing our reliance on imports, which currently make up a huge 80% of UK timber usage (worth £9 billion).

"Timber is one of the most effective tools we have to reduce emissions in construction. Larger buildings can store up to 400% more carbon when built out of engineered timber products compared to when



built with concrete. And with 25% of UK emissions coming from the built environment, that's a game changer. Additionally, the economic case for homegrown timber is undeniable with in Scotland alone, forestry contributes £1.1 billion to the economy, supporting more than 34,000 jobs.

"At BSW Group, we are proud to play a leading role in this transformation, as the UK's largest integrated forestry and timber business, our operations span the entire lifecycle of timber.

"This starts from producing 35 million saplings annually through Maelor Forest Nurseries and planting over a billion trees via Tilhill Forestry, all the way through to manufacturing a wide range of sustainable British timber products.

"And through Scott Pallets and the pioneering Pallet LOOP, we're tackling wood waste head-on, making reuse and recycling a core part of construction logistics.

"This is about more than business. It's about building a more resilient, sustainable future. Every time a customer chooses British timber, they're doing more than completing a project — they're making a statement. They're investing in British jobs, supporting local businesses, and reducing our collective carbon footprint.

"We've never been more optimistic. The TiC Roadmap signals real momentum, and with sustained collaboration across government and industry, we're confident that homegrown timber will become the rule, not the exception. At BSW Group, we're ready to lead the way."

BSW Group
bsw.co.uk

Timber frame construction survey

RESULTS of a new survey of UK timber frame manufacturers, published recently by MEDITE SMARTPLY and the Structural Timber Association, reveal a sector with growing pressure on its shoulders — and diminishing clarity about how to meet it. The full report of results, 'Framing the future: The state of timber frame construction', is available now on the MEDITE SMARTPLY website.

The survey captures responses from over 80 timber frame manufacturers working across residential, social housing and education. Although there is a clear desire to meet higher performance standards, many respondents pointed to a disconnect between policy ambition and the practical realities of delivery.

The urgency of net zero targets adds to the complexity. UK law requires net zero emissions by 2050, and homes currently account for 20% of all emissions. The Future Homes Standard (FHS), set to be introduced by 2025, will require new-build homes to incorporate low-carbon heating and energy efficiency. The expectation is that homes built to the FHS will produce 75–80% fewer carbon emissions compared to previous regulations (Approved Document L 2013), with a strong focus on airtightness and high-performance building fabric — including walls, floors and roofs.

Chief among the concerns



is the confusion surrounding Pre-Manufactured Value (PMV), a metric central to many Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) funding models. Nearly half of all survey respondents declined to disclose their PMV score, pointing to unclear definitions, a lack of relevance to smaller-scale operations or uncertainty about how the figure is even calculated. While Homes England and other government programmes incentivise high PMV through funding — such as capital grants for developments achieving 55% PMV or more — there remains no

standardised industry process for calculation.

Compounding this is the perception that policy frameworks like the Future Homes Standard are increasingly geared toward volume developers. This is leaving smaller manufacturers, many of which are already building above-regulation, struggling to see where they fit into the picture.

"The industry isn't short on innovation or intention, but a lack of clarity is knocking confidence," said Roly Ward, head of business development at MEDITE SMARTPLY. "We're hearing a clear message

from the sector: manufacturers are being asked to move fast without clear footing. That's not sustainable.

"Fire safety is a prime example. It remains the number one challenge for almost half of respondents, yet testing regimes aren't clearly defined and insurers still lack confidence. That's a risky bottleneck. If we want MMC to scale, we need regulatory clarity, joined-up standards, and products that simplify the compliance journey, not complicate it further."

The survey also highlights broader systemic pressures. 73 percent of manufacturers are facing skilled labour shortages, with concerns raised about the availability of apprenticeships, local training pathways, and the general appeal of construction careers to younger workers. This presents a serious challenge as demand for low-carbon housing rises.

Despite the concerns, product development needs show an industry still striving for innovation. 81 percent called for OSB panels with integrated fire resistance, with 43 percent naming fire performance as their number one challenge. Many manufacturers also expressed interest in multi-functional solutions that reduce the need for layered materials and on-site adaptations by streamlining compliance across airtightness, thermal performance and buildability.

MEDITE SMARTPLY
<https://mdfosb.com/en/products/medite-mr>



West Fraser's CaberMDF in the house

FROM FURNITURE to architectural mouldings, and radiator covers to panelling, MDF can be seen, or unseen, in many places around the modern home. When it comes to consistency, quality and ease of use, West Fraser's CaberMDF leads the way with its legendary performance and popularity; the brand was first produced in 1966.

CaberMDF is designed as a cost-efficient, versatile alternative to hardwood, without the inherent knots or grains. Stable and dense, the panels have a high-quality surface, are strong, resist impact and accept fasteners securely. They are easy to work and can be sawn, drilled, shaped, and routed cleanly with minimum fuss, using hand or machine tools. When it comes to appearance, quality finishes are easily achieved, and the

smooth surface of the panels is ideal for painting, veneers or paper foils.

CaberMDF can be used to form architectural features, fascias, shelves, fitted units, wardrobes and kitchen and bathroom furniture — including door and drawer fronts as well as carcassing.

West Fraser's comprehensive five-strong CaberMDF range allows the perfect matching of panel to application. For general purpose use, CaberMDF Trade is a versatile, lightweight board, which is ideal where weight is a factor. CaberMDF Trade MR offers the same benefits but with the added advantage of moisture resistance for wet or humid environments.

Where there is a need for premium quality and detailed working, CaberMDF Pro provides incredibly consistent density, ensuring cutting and routing need minimal finishing. CaberMDF Pro MR offers the further benefit of moisture resistance.

The ultimate product in the range is CaberMDF Industrial which is moisture resistant and designed specifically for the production of high-grade furniture and fittings. It is ideal for deep routing and its consistent close-grained texture ensures clean edges and surfaces that will take advanced finishing techniques.

Beyond the advantages and practicalities of using CaberMDF, the materials and processes used to manufacture the product offer the reassurance of being sustainable. West Fraser's range of board products is available in a wide selection of sizes to minimise waste. All timber used is responsibly sourced and FSC certified. The panels are manufactured in the UK from locally grown timber and are net carbon negative. Additionally, all of West Fraser's UK mills have obtained the coveted ISO 14001 environmental accreditation.

West Fraser

01786 812921 ● Uk.westfraser.com



Photograph courtesy of Unsplash.

Why should builders choose SterlingOSB Zero over plywood?



WEST FRASER'S SterlingOSB Zero, is often seen in restaurants, exhibitions and retail outlets where the theme is "natural", "eco", and "earthy". It is also commonly used as a hoarding panel for building sites, or for boarding up broken windows.

The fundamental engineered panel is, most commonly however, used in most new and refurbishment building projects. It's a precision-engineered square edge, and tongue & groove board, which is used in flooring, roofing and offsite cassette or timber frame manufacturing. Plywood can probably do the same job; but OSB excels for both practical and economic reasons and is more aesthetically pleasing. The Zero refers to the fact that there is no added formaldehyde in the formulation which is important for the health of contractors and building occupants. As a bonus, zero formaldehyde resins are made of bio-based feedstocks rather than petroleum-based alternatives which gives them a lower carbon footprint.

While OSB is really popular in terms of technical benefits, in these days of environmental awareness and Net Zero, SterlingOSB Zero is assisting the construction industry to cut carbon emissions. The board is manufactured from a natural product which in itself locks in CO₂ from the atmosphere, with the myriad strands of softwood coming from forest thinnings and sawmills' off-cuts. Plywood, on the other hand, needs the peeling of much larger tree trunks taking longer to grow.

And, of course, West Fraser's timber comes from responsibly managed forests, mainly in the UK, so all chains of custody are known meaning stocks are conserved by replanting and carefully planned cropping. There is a new rail system being developed adjacent to the Inverness plant where only renewable electricity for the sites is used and the drying process now uses biomass in the place of gas power.

After leaving the factory gates, because SterlingOSB Zero is precision-made, there is less waste on building sites or in modular building fabrication, so the associated costs of disposal to landfill are significantly mitigated. Contractors also report lower waste in handling because SterlingOSB Zero is more resilient to damage than rival products like plywood and is much easier to align when used for tasks like sheathing or laying floors. The accuracy of manufacture is especially good for producing SIPs panels with no need to "size" boards in the factory or suffer misalignment during installation.

West Fraser ● 01786 812921 ● Uk.westfraser.com

Perfect structures for rustic wooden façades: The new Leitz Hydro planer cutterhead

RUSTIC timber façades with a characteristic 'rough sawn' look are increasingly trendy — especially in modern timber construction and in the creation of high-quality façade constructions. In order to realise this look with consistently high quality, precise four-sided processing of the solid wood is essential. Leitz presents the new Hydro planer cutterhead for textured surfaces, a tool that has been specially developed for this requirement.

The 'rough-sawn' look is created through targeted planing. The new planing cutterhead with profiled, back-serrated knives enables a defined rough surface. The special geometry of the cutting edges ensures a high degree of dimensional accuracy.

Another advantage: The knives can be easily resharpened — a standard sharpening process on the back of the knife is sufficient. Additional, time-consuming profile sharpening is not necessary. This not only saves time and money, but also increases operational readiness in daily use.

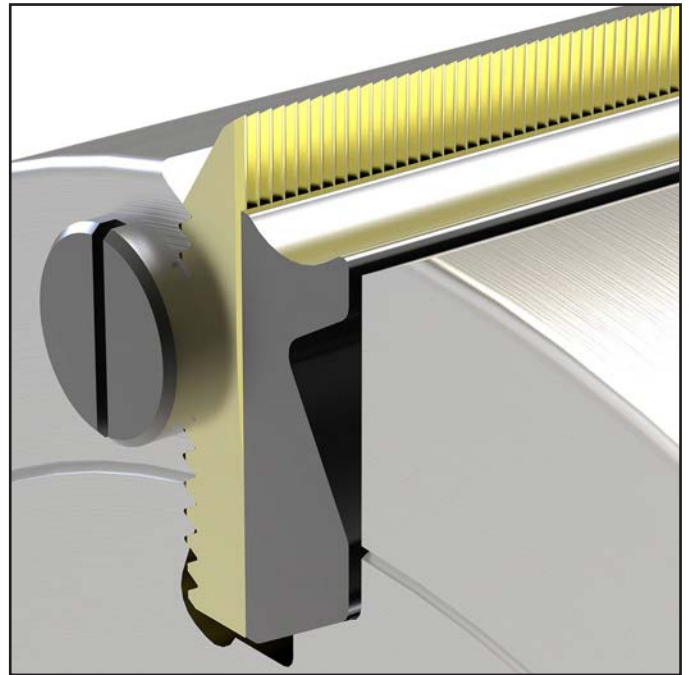
This type of machining is often carried out at high feed rates.



Precise concentricity of the tool is essential to avoid unwanted knife marks and the resulting ripples on the finished surface. This is ensured by the fact that the knives can be ground directly into the tool body.

Maximum performance thanks to customisation

The new planer cutterhead is available in various diameters between 140 and 300 mm and can be optimised to meet specific production requirements. It has a robust design and is optimised for use on standard four-sided planing and profiling machines — perfect for a wide range of solid wood types, from soft to hard woods. In combination with the tried-and-tested Leitz Marathon knives, the tool achieves



a tool life that is up to six times longer than that of conventional HS planer knives. At the same time, resharpening costs and machine downtimes can be reduced by up to 80 percent.

Sustainability meets precision

In addition to its high productivi-

ty, the new planer cutterhead also impresses with its durability.

The special surface treatment of the sleeve prevents sticking on the spindle and ensures permanently high concentricity — guaranteeing consistent machining results over the entire life cycle.

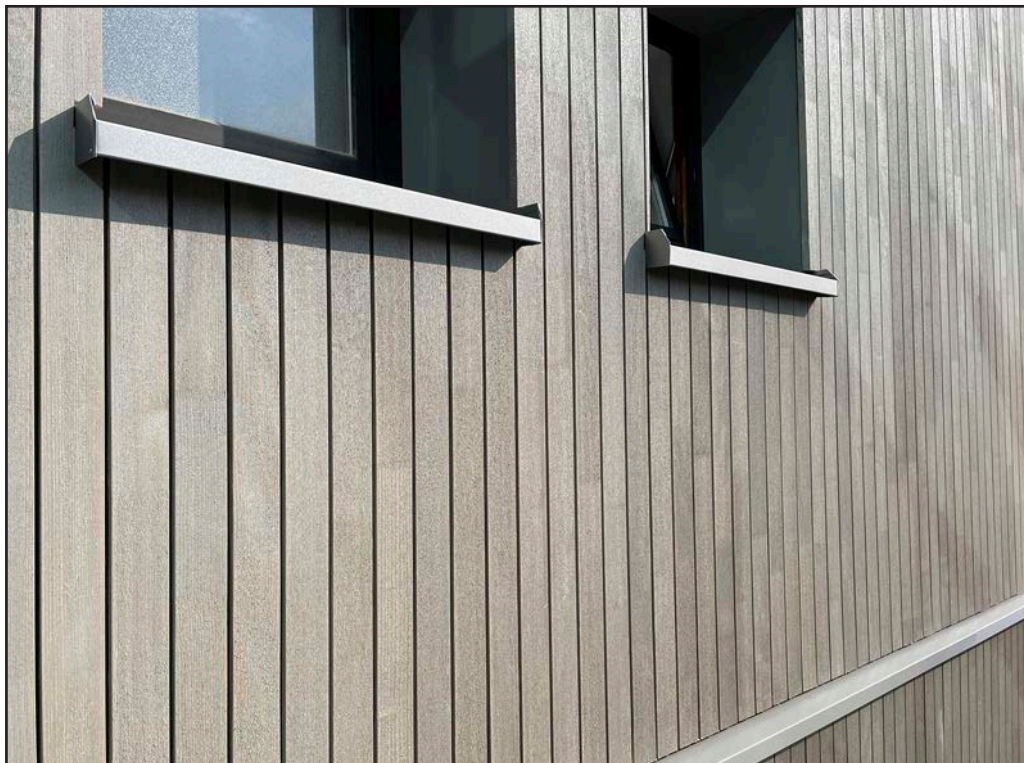
The intelligent utilisation of cutting materials also helps to conserve resources.

Attention has also been paid to maximum user friendliness in everyday use. Access to the grease nipples is possible both radially and axially — this makes maintenance easier and increases operational safety at the same time.

With the new Hydro planer cutterhead for textured surfaces, Leitz offers a powerful and economical solution for companies that want to realise rustic wooden façades in high quality and with minimal maintenance.

The tool combines precision, efficiency and sustainability — and once again emphasises Leitz's technological claim as a reliable partner to the woodworking industry.

Leitz
www.leitz.org/en/



James Latham steps up to the next level

Premium Shinnoki makes a statement in award-winning Channel Islands residential renovation

SITUATED in the North of Guernsey, Puddleduck is a testament to innovative green design and architectural transformation. Conceived by the award winning DLM Architects, this striking two-storey home sets a benchmark in sustainable living.

What was once a dilapidated and damp 1950s bungalow has been reimagined into a low carbon, visually captivating residence, overcoming a number of inherent challenges, including poor insulation and an inefficient layout. The project has turned an outdated structure into a modern, open-plan family home with high-end finishes and four spacious bedrooms, seamlessly blending style, comfort, and sustainability.

From the moment lead architect Simon Cottell and the DLM project team set eyes on Puddleduck, they knew it was a chance to break new ground. Inspired by the home's Channel Islands setting and coastal backdrop, they set out to develop a dwelling with a clean, minimalist aesthetic blending elegance and simplicity.

James Latham, a leading UK independent distributor of timber, panels and decorative surfaces, played a pivotal role to help bring this vision to life, supplying Decospan's luxurious Shinnoki veneer for the second-floor extensions fitted-furniture and feature walls.

A majestic materials makeover

The selection of Shinnoki is a great example of where a highly prescriptive design brief dictates the selection of the material, and arose when DLM started to consider the project fixtures, fittings and features. In line with the brief, the team knew they had to specify products which were not only stylish and sustainable, but strong enough to withstand every spill, scratch and knock of continuous occupancy.

They also wanted to use lighter hued materials that reflected the client's preferred palate of subtle white, cream and grey punctuated by elements of varnished timber and calacatta marble.

Step-by-step, premium materials were selected for interior finishes across the length and breadth of the property. However, when it came to choosing the timber for the fitted furniture and statement walls, DLM realised it needed a product which balanced form and function. In a busy family home, solid timber would quickly stain, scuff or dent, losing its visual appeal. Furthermore, with floor to ceiling windows, letting in considerable amounts of sunlight, there was a risk of bleaching, detracting from the intended look and feel.



© Peter_Landers_Photography



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Asking the experts

To find the perfect solution they consulted longtime contracting partner Jame Allez Carpentry & Construction, which approached distributor James Latham for support. The latter's experienced specification team was impressed with the project's unusual, forward thinking yet highly prescriptive brief. Seeing it as a welcome challenge, it suggested an engineered timber solution compiled a shortlist of which a clear winner quickly emerged: Shinnoki

Shinnoki has become a go-to for luxury fitted furniture, cabinetry and wall finishing, a perfectly fitted the meticulous brief. Manufactured by Decospan, one of the world's most innovative brands of high-quality interior décors, it uses real wood veneers with the tactility of the surface maintaining the feel of solid timber to the touch. This authenticity, the robust MDF core and its low-waste production stood out for DLM, balancing the holy grail of style, strength and sustainability they were looking for.



The variety of lighter-shaded boards was also a key selling point, with the architects selecting understated, yet visually compelling Milk Oak and Bondi Oak boards. Used across the upstairs area, its use helped the architects achieve the desired 'spare and fair' atmosphere. Not only did the Shinnoki complement the space's minimalist look, it also helped the finished interiors achieve a soothing and tranquil atmosphere, perfect for rest, relaxation and family life.

This small, yet significant, contribution helped DLM neatly meet the design brief's core specification criteria by delivering stylish, sustainable and hard-wearing finishes which surpassed client expectations.

According to project lead, DLM's Simon Cottell, "We chose Shinnoki as it's not only very attractive, particularly the long grain of the veneer, it's really easy to work with to book match to achieve visual consistency. Furthermore, its tactility, some might say irresistible to touch, combined with its impressive durability meant it delivered a realistic solid timber look with added resilience.

"It's made a big contribution in bringing our vision to life and acts as a unifying force, bringing all Puddleduck's interior elements and features together. We're really grateful to James Latham and Jame Allez Carpentry & Construction, whose expertise and advice directly contributed to making Puddleduck's interiors so visually striking."

Shinnoki from James Latham

<https://www.lathamtimber.co.uk/products/veneered/shinnoki>

James Latham

<https://www.lathamtimber.co.uk>

© Peter_Landers_Photography



MEDITE SMARTPLY launches a highly durable timber cladding solution

MEDITE SMARTPLY is pleased to launch MEDITE TRIMAX — a durable, sustainable and low-maintenance external cladding solution made from MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME. Designed to enhance the look of both new builds and renovations, this quality timber cladding is available in primed or fully finished options, ensuring a hassle free installation with a flawless, long-lasting finish. Projects can be completed using MEDITE TRIMAX fascias and soffits, available as standard in white.

Perfect for houses, garden rooms, sheds, and leisure homes, MEDITE TRIMAX presents an easy and durable solution to upgrading the aesthetics of a new or existing building with a product that is guaranteed to stand the test of time with minimal maintenance.

Jack Scanlan, product manager at MEDITE SMARTPLY, commented: "We are proud to join forces with SAM Mouldings to bring to the market this innovative cladding solution — durable, sustainable and easy to maintain. While the partnership between the two companies is founded on a solid reputation, MEDITE TRIMAX is rooted in advanced engineering. It gives end users peace of mind that, with proper maintenance, the cladding will last the lifespan of the building. Furthermore, the sustainable appeal is achieved by using fast-growing trees that lock up carbon during their lifespan — a significant benefit as the construction industry strives to reduce its carbon footprint."

The primary objective of the cladding is to protect the building from weather elements such as rain and wind, so durability is of the utmost importance. Manufactured with acetylated wood fibre, MEDITE TRIMAX is a groundbreaking cladding solution with the highest durability for timber in the market. It is also resistant to rot and fungal decay. The

panel exhibits outstanding stability, allowing it to be used in applications once limited to products such as composite panels, fibre cement, hardwood, softwood or PVC.

The softwoods are sourced from sustainably managed, FSC-certified forests. By using fast-growing trees, MEDITE TRIMAX offers a sustainable alternative to conventional solutions while providing longevity beyond standard timber cladding.

MEDITE TRIMAX cladding comes primed or fully finished, offering versatility to suit a range of project needs. With easy and infrequent maintenance, users can simply sand and paint the cladding to keep it looking great. Enhanced stability and durability extend the coating's service life, and any damage to the coating will not affect the core. A 50-year warranty on the base panel ensures performance throughout the building's lifespan.

Available in several colours, these cladding panels make it simple to transform the aesthetics of a house and achieve the desired look.

"An important function of cladding is to enhance the building's aesthetic appeal," says Paul Lavery, joint managing director at SAM Mouldings. "As the UK's leading manufacturer of MDF mouldings and a trusted partner of MEDITE for many years, we're proud to lend our expertise to MEDITE TRIMAX. Featuring superior finishing, the cladding is also lightweight and easy to install. The solution is a cut above the rest. Undeniably, one of the main factors in that is the neatness, uniformity and crisp look you can achieve with MEDITE TRIMAX cladding."

The cladding solution is available in double shiplap or double tongue and v-groove profiles and is easy to install with stainless steel fixings.

MEDITE TRIMAX ● www.meditetrimax.com





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From little acorns ... with James Latham

VERY OCCASIONALLY, a material that seamlessly balances style, substance and sustainability comes onto the market. Decospan's Querkus, a luxurious oak-veneered panel, is one such product.

Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in a recent, groundbreaking architectural project, Taigh na Coille — meaning 'House of the Wood' — a strikingly modern holiday home in the Northernmost wilds of Sutherland, Scotland, where Querkus was used across almost the entire interior. The perfect celebration of this astonishing décor's unique attributes it's, perhaps, the largest specification of Querkus on a UK residential project.

Crucially, it was also a material which helped the project team overcome almost every challenge associated with an unusual and highly specific brief, to deliver a modern and ultra-stylish modular building with a seamless interior, located in an incredibly remote location.

Available from James Latham, a leading UK independent timber, panels and decors distributor, Querkus has become a firm favourite with specifiers aiming to achieve the look and feel of solid timber, yet with a smaller carbon footprint, extra strength and higher resistance.

As Thomas Fitzgerald, from WT Architecture (WTA), which designed Taigh na Coille explains, "The requirements were as ambitious as they were challenging. We had to deliver a low-carbon building in an extremely remote location that felt contemporary and rooted in its context. Right from the beginning, we and our clients agreed that the building should feel almost entirely built and finished in sustainable timber.

"The project had other unique stipulations, from being built as a modular, easily demountable structure to avoiding wet trades. We considered using solid oak planks throughout the interiors, but the associated costs and installation time in such a remote location meant using this

material was not an option. Discovering Decospan's Querkus gave us the ability to create the warmth and feel of solid timber boards in a more sustainable and practical format. A supply solution came through our contractor, Spey, who introduced us to their long-time materials distribution partner, James Latham."

Achieving on every level

When the James Latham Panels Team was taken through the unusual requirements by WTA, they had a lightbulb moment, instantly recommending Decospan's Querkus Natural Vivace S1 Veneer as the best solution. The project team was immediately captivated, realising that this decorative finish would achieve the best of all outcomes, from visual appeal to required resilience whilst leaving a very small carbon footprint.

As James Latham's Veneer Product Champion, Ed Latham, says, "It was love at first sight for WTA, and I can understand why. Querkus is a truly outstanding product, with veneers manufactured from sustainably harvested European white oak and reclaimed oak timbers, significantly reducing its carbon footprint.

"Bonded to an MDF core, cutting-edge manufacturing techniques mean the panels successfully evoke the timeless beauty of natural wood in a lower-carbon format. Not only that, it's also sturdy, robust and low-maintenance, suitable for finishing and furniture in busy, regularly used interior environments. Simply, it's one of those rare materials that delivers on every level."

Getting bold with the fold

WTA also liked that the boards were machine-matched, so could be easily cut to specific shapes without losing aesthetic consistency, enabling them to get really creative when it came to designing Taigh na Coille's internal look and feel.

As WTA's Thomas Fitzgerald continues, "To emphasise the modular make-up of Taigh na Coille, we wanted to create an almost 'origami'-like effect inside as if the occupant was sitting within a folded sculpture. Querkus enabled us to do this, as it is machine-matched, giving the whole space an interesting dual atmosphere of continuity and incongruity. It also possesses a strong dialogue with the building's other structural and decorative elements. It really brings everything together across the interior, which is why we used it almost everywhere."

The architects also appreciated the ability to treat the surface with specialist coating, to achieve pockets of striking tonal contrast across the interiors, making certain features, including cabinetry and window seats, stand out by staining them inky black.

Achieving the perfect match, every single time

The results are visually outstanding and a testament to the ingenuity of all those involved in bringing this project from a far-reaching brief on paper to a sustainable, and structurally-ingenious reality.

Looking beyond design and build, the recommendation and use of Querkus for Taigh na Coille also perfectly encapsulates James Latham's unrivalled reputation for achieving the 'perfect match' between project brief and specified materials.

As Angus Reid-Evans, principal contractor at Spey Building and Joinery, concludes: "James Latham's recommendation of Querkus was an inspirational one, and demonstrates a deep understanding of material performance and how it always goes the extra mile to make recommendations which actually fit the brief. From my perspective, the veneer and the consistency of the surface grain simplified the construction process. The panel structure helped us achieve the modular objective, ensuring the building can be easily dismantled and rebuilt if needed. It's a fantastic material and it played an integral role in the project's success."

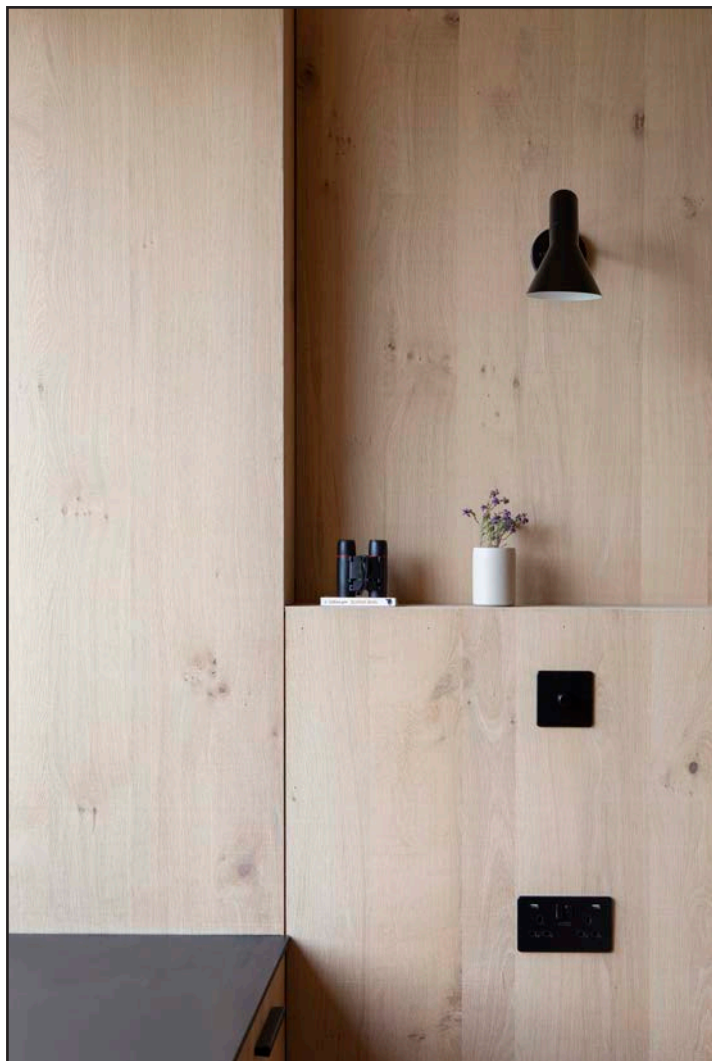
Querkus and Decospan

www.lathamtimber.co.uk/products/veneered

Spey Building and Joinery Ltd

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James Latham ● www.lathamtimber.co.uk

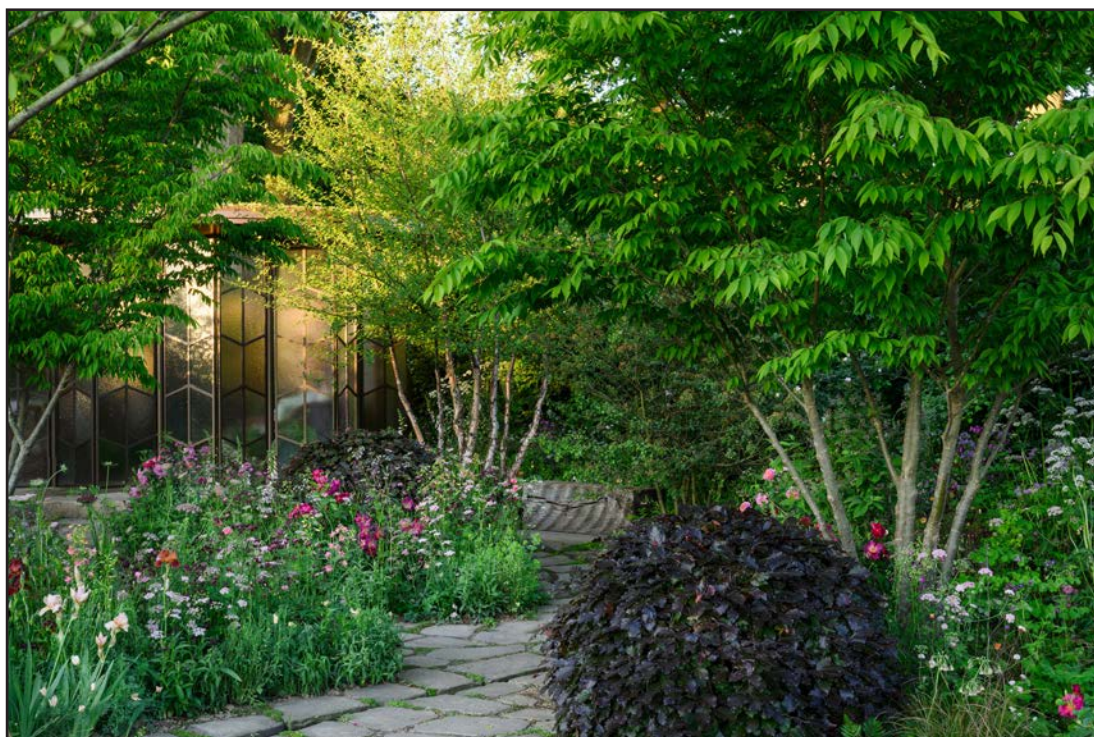




*Above and below:
Landmark architectural project at Taigh na Coille, Sutherland, shows why Decospan Querkus
has become one of the UK's most sought-after premium veneers.*



MEDITE SMARTPLY at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2025



The Glasshouse Garden designed by Jo Thompson. Image © Jason Ingram.

MEDITE SMARTPLY, a leading manufacturer of sustainable wood-based panels, proudly supported two celebrated gardens at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2025, highlighting the power of innovative materials in transformative landscape design.

Demonstrating the versatility, durability and aesthetic appeal of its panels, MEDITE SMARTPLY collaborated on the Gold Medal-winning Glasshouse Garden and the Silver Gilt Medal-winning Hospitalfield Arts Garden. These installations showcased the use of SMARTPLY SITE-PROTECT, MEDITE TRIMAX and MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME across bespoke architectural and design features.

Transformative design with social impact

The Glasshouse Garden celebrates the transformative power of second chances through horticulture. Created by award-winning designer Jo Thompson, led by Nadine Charlton as project lead, and installed by Ryan Alexander Associates, the garden highlights the work of the Glasshouse programme — a social enterprise supporting women nearing the end of prison sentences with horticultural training, employment, and resettlement support. This immersive and sensorial space, set to be relocated to a women's prison in the South of England, features a translucent pavilion surrounded by richly textured planting and a tranquil water rill.

Key MEDITE SMARTPLY materials used include SMARTPLY SITE-PROTECT for boundary screening, coated in bespoke Dulux colours, and MEDITE TRIMAX for the functional storage structure. These products were selected for their superior visual appeal, excellent weather resistance and suitability for premium exterior applications.

"We're immensely proud to contribute to a garden that not only delivers visual impact but offers a long-term legacy rooted in rehabilitation and opportunity," said John Harrup, head of marketing at MEDITE SMARTPLY. "This collaboration perfectly represents our values: design freedom, performance and purpose."

Coastal inspiration, creative expression

The Hospitalfield Arts Garden, designed by Nigel Dunnett and installed by Landform, draws on the sand dune landscape of Scotland's east

coast. Featuring a central 'artist bothy' studio and dramatic topography, the space is designed to support creative practice, contemplation and education. It is not only the setting for art practice, but also a place in which artists can garden.

MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME — a high-performance MDF panel — was chosen for parts of the garden boundary and key sculptural dune features. Coated in an iron-filled stain to reflect the natural geology, its exceptional durability and dimensional stability made it the perfect material for this exposed setting. After the show, the garden will be relocated to Ladyloan Primary School in Arbroath, Angus.

"Seeing MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME integrated so seamlessly into such an expressive and dynamic garden was truly inspiring," added Mr Harrup. "Its specification here demonstrates how sustainable materials can enable bold design while meeting performance expectations."

Versatile materials for standout outdoor design

Designed for long-lasting performance in challenging environments, MEDITE SMARTPLY products offer a sustainable and visually compelling alternative to conventional materials like concrete, plastics or metal.

MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME is a high-performance MDF panel ideal for creative and architectural outdoor applications. With up to 50 years' guarantee above ground and 25 years in ground, MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME offers unrivalled durability. It is made using a resin with no added formaldehyde and acetylated wood, which is resistant to fungal decay and rot.

SMARTPLY SITEPROTECT is a robust OSB panel coated with a smooth, heavy-duty, cross-linked polymer on both sides, making it ideal for premium applications in high-profile locations.

MEDITE TRIMAX is a durable, sustainable and low-maintenance external cladding solution made from MEDITE TRICOYA EXTREME. It features a Class 1 durability rating, perfect for long-life exterior installations requiring low maintenance.

MEDITE SMARTPLY ● [mdfosb.com](https://www.mdfosb.com)

MEDITE TRIMAX ● [meditetrimax.com](https://www.meditetrimax.com)