

# PANEL, WOOD & *Solid Surface*

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## Extractly & Ecogate do the double at MAFS



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# IronmongeryDirect adds leading tool brands to its range

**LEADING** specialist supplier, IronmongeryDirect, has recently introduced an extensive range of tools and tool accessories to help tradespeople working on every kind of project.

Over 400 additions from renowned brands OX Tools, Timco and Prodec such as hand saws, screwdrivers, tape measures, spirit levels, chisels, hammers, tool storage, as well as PPE and more are now in stock for next day delivery.

## OX Tools

Offering superior engineering and reliability, the OX Tool collection now available at IronmongeryDirect spans over 200 tools. The range includes the OX Pro Hand Saw which is a staple for every kit bag. Its blade comes with an integral angle stop for 45° and 90° degrees which are built into the handle for enhanced precision, whilst the robust build of the saw provides improved stability when making precise cuts.

Also in stock is the Ox Pro Heavy Duty Bar Clamp with various length options available. The steel clamp boasts exceptionable durability thanks to its heavy-duty construction and a high clamping force of 150 kg.

In addition, TPR (Thermoplastic Rubber) jaw pads protect surfaces from damage.

## Timco

A further 150 construction tools have been brought in from specialist brand Timco. Offering high quality essentials, the range includes the Bevel Edge Wood Chisel Set featuring three chisels with 12 mm, 19 mm and 25 mm blade widths.

Also available are Timco's 8" Cable & Wire cutters, featuring hardened

Cr-V jaws they are ideal for cutting copper and aluminium cables. Plus, they have ergonomic soft-grip handles for ease of use and to reduce slipping.

## ProDec

For decorating projects, IronmongeryDirect now stocks over 80 products from ProDec, such as the unique Ice Fusion Synthetic Paint Brush Set. Featuring three brushes which provide mark-free finishes, this set is considered ideal for high precision painting jobs. Also in stock is the

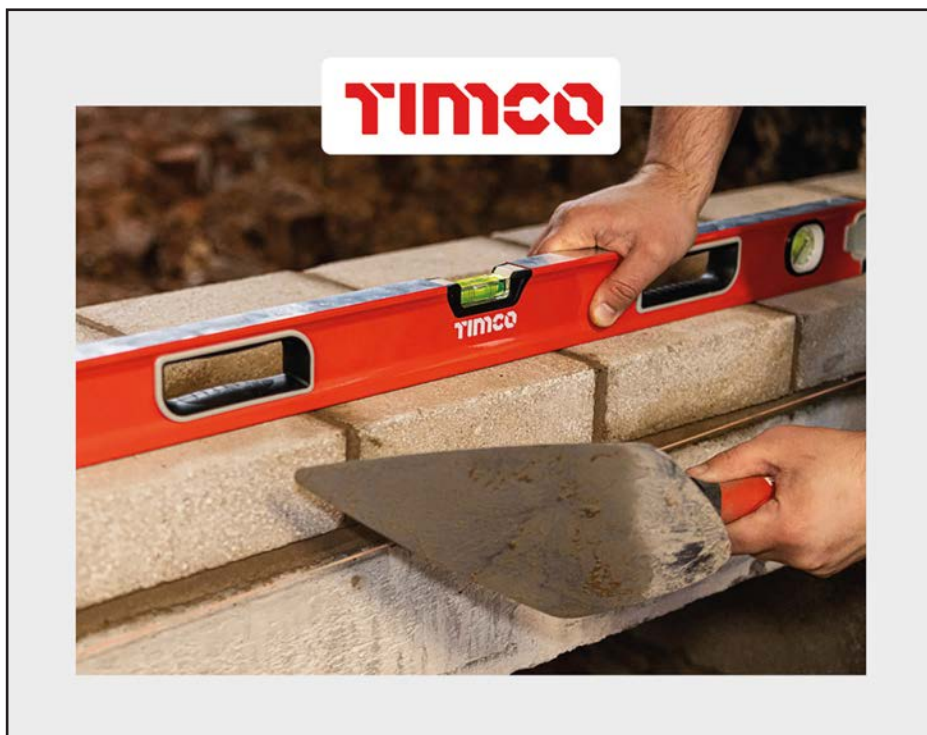
Twin Head Mini Paint Roller & Tray Set, considered ideal for achieving rapid coverage in awkward to reach spaces such as behind radiators and pipes; the mini rollers give a superb, trade quality finish for emulsion, gloss or satin paints on interior surfaces.

The useful Step Ladder from ProDec is also available, which can hold a maximum weight of 150 kg. A compact and lightweight alternative to bulky ladders, it is foldable for easy storage whilst offering an ideal height to reach most modern ceilings.

Carrie Earl, Category Manager at IronmongeryDirect said of the new additions to its range, "We are pleased to add these exciting new lines to our portfolio of over 18,000 products.

"This is our first collection of tools which we have specially selected to offer our customers key essentials to help them deliver projects from start to finish. The new range is in stock for next day delivery and all part of our commitment to provide the trade with a huge choice of quality products from leading brands they can trust."

**IronmongeryDirect**  
[www.IronmongeryDirect.co.uk](http://www.IronmongeryDirect.co.uk)





# Leading developers call on Government to 'kickstart a timber revolution'

**LEADING low-carbon developers called on the next Government to 'kickstart a timber revolution' at the UK Timber Design Conference in London in late June.**

More than 200 developers, local authorities, insurers, engineers, architects, contractors and manufacturers gathered at Timber Development UK's (TDUK) inaugural UK Timber Design Conference to hear from industry leaders.

Opening the event, Richard Walker OBE (pictured), executive chairman of Iceland Foods and chairman of innovative developer Bywater Properties, said timber's critical role in decarbonizing construction must be recognised — and accelerated — with the support of the next Government.

"The need for us all in prop-

erty to do more and at pace to tackle the climate emergency is urgent. But we can't do it without the help of government: the next government must kickstart the timber revolution that'll be absolutely critical in delivering carbon reductions."

In particular, Richard highlighted the need for a new Government to take bold action to unlock sustainable development with a planning system which supports rather than inhibits those choosing to build the low-carbon, efficient buildings we need today.

Richard said businesses have a critical part to play in creating a positive impact on people, places, and the environment. This has been a passion of his across both his roles; in retail and in property development — where embracing sustainable timber is an active

choice. "Conviction-led moments of passion like Bywater moving into timber — or Iceland banning palm oil products — are pivotal moments for an entrepreneurial business. We need to seize those opportunities and nurture them."

Bywater Properties were among a range of developers at the conference discussing their efforts to decarbonise construction — along with Related Argent, developer of Brent Cross Town, and Human Nature, developer of Phoenix in Lewes.

David Hopkins, chief executive of TDUK, agreed with the sentiment — restating the importance of partnership between industry and Government to reshape how we build in the UK, and to embrace the many incredible businesses already delivering low-carbon construction.

"The speakers we had across the conference, and every indi-

vidual in the room, demonstrated an ambitious and dynamic industry ready to lead construction to a more sustainable future — using existing solutions to overcome our housing and climate crises.

"Embodied carbon, which could account for up to 40% of the carbon emissions of construction between now and 2050, is completely unregulated.

"The high-carbon, low efficiency methods which dominate England today will cause us to fail to meet our net zero targets.

"We need change now. The next Government must signal — from day one — they are willing to take on the challenge of building low-carbon today by bringing forward legislation — like Part Z — to begin measuring and reducing these carbon emissions as a top priority."

**Timber Development UK**  
<https://timberdevelopment.uk>



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# Extractly & Ecogate do the double at MAFS



**DUST AND fume extraction specialists Extractly Ltd, along with the award-winning 'extraction-on-demand' Ecogate® system, were highly visible to potential customers who attended the inaugural Materials and Finishes Show, and gave visitors a double opportunity to meet the team and see the products in action.**

As well as displaying equipment and meeting visitors on their own stand, Extractly also supplied, installed and maintained the dust extraction system for the show's Demo Zone. The centrepiece of the demonstration area was a modular filter unit, powered by an 18.5 kW fan, to provide a total extraction capacity of 10,500 m<sup>3</sup>/hour. With Nordfab QF ductwork neatly connecting everything together, including a non-return valve, all dust and woodwaste was safely removed from the working machinery. Perhaps not quite as noticeable to most visitors watching the machine demonstrations, but making a big impact all the same, was the energy-saving Ecogate® technology that Extractly had included in the system.

Although Ecogate® was first introduced to the UK market 14 years ago, at the W10 exhibition, and despite the countless successful installations featured in the woodworking press since then, this is the first time an audience has had the opportunity to see it operating in public, under realistic working conditions. Ian Rayner, UK sales manager for Extractly & Ecogate, commented: "With MAFS providing what was, as near as practicably possible, a real working environment for the live demonstrations, it was the perfect opportunity for us to showcase Ecogate's capabilities and versatility to a much wider audience."

Technical director, William Keyon, was in complete agreement: "The setup at MAFS allowed us to demonstrate to everyone involved in the woodworking industry that Ecogate® technology can cut your electricity

bills by at least 50%... whether you've got just a handful of machines, or a large factory with dozens of machines, the same formula for achieving significant savings can be applied across the board."

The Demo Zone at MAFS had just four operational machines but, as in the majority of manufacturing facilities, they were rarely all in operation at the same time. However, the total extraction capacity had to match the requirement of all the working machines combined, so the system was designed to extract up to 10,500 m<sup>3</sup>/hour if required. In reality, since an Ecogate® greenBOX Nxt Controller was managing the system's operation, although extraction was fully operational throughout the demonstrations, fan speed was continually varied, in real-time, to exactly match the extraction demand.

Without Ecogate® technology optimising extraction the fan would have been running at full power during each demonstration period, consuming around 17 kW for every hour of operation, and Ian Rayner was keen to emphasise the fact that: "With Ecogate® installed, the reduction in energy usage for the working demonstrations effectively reduced the show's carbon footprint and, an additional bonus appreciated by neighbouring exhibitors as well as the audience, the lower fan speeds meant less noise!"

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Right, central to the Demo Zone was Extractly's 'Ecogate-optimised' extraction system.



Below, and on page 4, opening day visitor interest was clear to see around Extractly's informative stand.





# Makita launches new battery powered brushless router

**MAKITA has launched an all-new high-power cordless router. The RP001G 40VMax XGT ½" Brushless Plunge Router provides an excellent combination of high efficiency and lightweight design, with the ability to cover 80 m of MDF on a single charge, and has an outstanding plunge cutting capacity of up to 60 mm.**



Compact and lightweight, the new RP001G is ergonomically designed to enhance comfort and ease of use, weighing only 4 kg (with a 5.0 Ah Li-Ion battery) with a compact height of 294 mm.

The brushless design of the motor reduces friction to increase run-time and performance to provide a power output of 1,900 W, ensuring the user can work for extended periods at a time.

The RP001G is also designed with soft start and electronic brake, limiting recoil to prevent damage, whilst its constant speed control reduces the chance of a drop in cutting speed, maintaining a clean cut on the workpiece.

Its three-stage depth stop allows the user to quickly switch between pre-set depths for efficiency whilst working and the micro cutting depth can be adjusted in 1 mm increments, ensuring the cutting depth remains precise and accurate.

The tool also features useful twin LED job lights to provide improved illumination when working on detailed projects.

The RP001G features Makita's AWS Bluetooth technology and can be wirelessly connected to Makita's AWS enabled dust extractors to ensure work environments remain clean and safe. The router is compatible with a 12 mm or ½" collet chuck.

Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita commented: "We are delighted to announce the launch of our new 40VMax XGT Plunge Router, which has an outstanding power performance to ensure user efficiency, whilst also offering accuracy and precision on detailed projects.

"This powerful new addition to our XGT range offers an innovative alternative that eliminates the need for inflexible corded alternatives and enables woodworkers to achieve even greater levels of precision."

**Makita** ● [www.makitauk.com](http://www.makitauk.com)

# Carnival float motoring thanks to Selco

**CINDERELLA will go to the ball this summer — or at least eight carnivals across Essex — thanks to the support of a leading builders merchant.**

Wickford Town Carnival Team has opted for a Cinderella carriage theme for its float this year and members are participating in a whistle-stop tour of Essex carnivals during the summer.

To help ensure the float is looking as impressive as possible, the Chelmsford branch of Selco Builders Warehouse has provided around £400 worth of building materials such as plywood, paint and sheet fixings.

Sean Ellis, chairman of the Wickford Town Carnival Team, said: "It's always an extremely busy time of the year as we work to get the float ready for the summer season and then take it on the road.

"Selco have been fantastic in their support, having helped us last year when we created an Alice in Wonderland theme and then doing likewise this time around.

"Having them provide the materials takes a lot of pressure off and ensures we can focus on making the float is as interactive and engaging as possible as it goes in front of thousands of Essex residents."

The Cinderella float made its first appearance at Braintree & Bocking Carnival in June, will appear at its 'home' Wickford Carnival on September 14 and also visited other local events including in Witham, Basildon and Clacton.

Lee Powling, manager of the Chelmsford branch of Selco Builders Warehouse which can

also be found in West Thurrock and Basildon, said: "We are committed to supporting the communities in which we operate and to be able to provide the Wickford Carnival Team with the products and materials to make their float look as impressive as possible.

"Carnivals are a real focal point of communities during the summer and we are delighted to play a small part in helping Wickford entertain the crowds from across the whole of Essex."

**Selco** ● [www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)





# Pasquill to boost capacity with investment in automation



**WORK is underway at Pasquill's Redhill site in Surrey, in readiness for the installation of the Randek AutoEye automated truss manufacturing system. Pasquill is one of the first UK truss rafter brands to invest in Swedish company Randek's AutoEye and the installation of the new system will help to increase capacity at Pasquill and improve safety on site.**

The £4 million investment will see the installation of the AutoEye system, which will boost the capacity of trusses manufactured from the site while allowing more complex trusses to be produced in significantly less time. While the system itself won't be installed until November, work is underway now to prepare the ground-works ready for the machinery.

The AutoEye system helps to streamline the production process by visually identifying the joints in the truss, then picking, placing, positioning and pressing the nail plates with the required force, which is determined by the machine. The AutoEye system will offer up to a 50% time saving during manufacturing, which will support demand during peak periods.

Its semi-automated setting process will ensure the quality of Pasquill's trusses remains high, as human interaction is still required during the early stages of manufacture. However, with a long-standing construction skills shortage in the UK, it is hoped that automating the truss production process will free up workers at the Redhill site, allowing them to continue with other projects in the business.

Until now, Pasquill's Redhill site has been operating at full capacity, but the introduction of the AutoEye technology will see the site significantly expand its capabilities, allowing for approximately double the output for the same amount of labour.

The introduction of the AutoEye will also increase safety within the factory, as it will reduce the amount of manual labour required by the Pasquill team, with the bulk of the truss production process controlled by the AutoEye Truss System. With zero manual set-up required, trusses produced from the Redhill site will be more accurate and will be manufactured well within the recommended tolerances.

Its automated plate placement

and pressing, combined with a nailing bridge system removes the need for working at height, further increasing safety for the Pasquill site teams.

With the system being located at Pasquill's Redhill site in Surrey, it is ideally situated to minimise transport costs to the South East of England, saving time and money for both Pasquill and their customers.

As part of the £6 million overall investment, Pasquill's Stoney Stanton site in Leicestershire has received production of Posi-Joists and JJI Joists, which have been moved from the Redhill site to create space for the AutoEye machinery. This further diversifies the Midlands-based site's product offering, allowing for increased output and productivity.

Chris Powell, sales and design director at Pasquill, says of the investment: "By investing in this level of automation, Pasquill are proving their commitment to delivering higher quality products which are cost-effective to both the business and our customers.

"We are proud to be the first business in the UK to receive the Randek AutoEye Truss system. It will allow us to boost our capaci-

ty without the need for additional manpower, which is crucial as we continue to see a shortage of skilled workers in construction. We look forward to the installation of the automation system, and seeing the benefits it brings to us as a business, our customers and the wider house building industry."

Gordon Young, Randek UK director, says: "Return on Investment (ROI) is of paramount importance, both in the short and long term. The true savings become evident when you consider that the AutoEye has the highest accuracy and consistent output on the market, minimised production downtime, and zero set-up time due to the reliability of a Randek line.

"In order to maintain a leading position in the roof truss production market, Pasquill allocated a substantial amount of funds for a new automated truss production line. In their investment decision, they prioritised output and safety, and selected Randek.

"With years of industry experience, we understand that inexpensive quick solutions rarely yield worthwhile returns."

**Pasquill**  
[www.pasquill.co.uk](http://www.pasquill.co.uk)

# Hiteco invests in production efficiency and R&D to continue along its growth path

**ON 14 JUNE Hiteco inaugurated its new premises in Rimini.**

Hiteco is an SCM Group company, specialising in the development and production of hi-tech mechatronic components for machine tool manufacturers.

Established in Villa Verucchio (Rimini) in 1977 as an in-house department, to provide components (electro-spindles, bi-rotational heads, drilling heads and aggregates) for the group's machines for machining wood and other materials, Hiteco has grown steadily over the last few decades, aided by a constant growth in exports.

A progressive growth which reached a turnover of around €40 million at the end of 2023, and which has made Hiteco one of the main global manufacturers in the sector for high-tech components for numerically controlled machines used to machine a wide range of materials like wood, plastic, composites, glass, stone and metal.

The new headquarters in Rimini covers an overall area of 9,000 square metres compared to the previous 3,000 at the plant in Villa Verucchio, of which more than 7,000 is set aside for production. The investment will allow Hiteco to increase its workforce, as well as improve its production



efficiency (100% Made in Italy) and its R&D work. The projects specifically concentrate on the development of new digital services, IoT services and intelligent products complete with AI algorithms, as well as an expansion of the range in the stone, glass and metal machining sectors and Industry 5.0.

More space and greater competitiveness on Italian and foreign markets also translate into more steadfast collaborations with schools, universities and professional training organisations and

greater opportunities for growth for its co-workers, thanks in part to the training provided by SCM Group's Campus for Hiteco and all the companies in the group.

"This investment is the crowning achievement of the continuous progress recorded over the years as well as a new starting point for continuing to increase the innovative level of our products and services", commented the director of Hiteco, Massimo Benvenuti.

"Our industrial components are the added value, the tech-

nological heart of any machine that defines its quality in terms of performance, power, precision and reliability over time. Yet another reason for adding increased quality to the solutions produced which, in the case of Hiteco, are continually evolving to meet the wide range of demands from its customers".

The market responds with a more than positive trend. In recent years, Hiteco has further consolidated its own leadership in Asia, a market which currently records the highest level of exports for this company and which, at the end of 2023, saw order growth reach into double figures. In Asia, Hiteco has a direct presence with a team of experts who guarantee all the necessary sales support and technical assistance.

Furthermore, the incidence of turnover in the European and North American markets is on the rise: for the "old continent", an after-sales development is foreseen while across the Atlantic Hiteco already opened a sales outlet in 2020 in Atlanta, Hiteco North America, to provide direct, capillary and on-time support for clients and the sales network.

From a technological innovation point of view, all the products make their mark thanks to the use of sensors, in line with Industry 4.0 and a strong focus on keeping down the machinery's electricity consumption.





In terms of Industry 5.0, ERS (Energy Recovery System) makes its mark, a new applied system which allows for the recovery of 14.5% of the energy generated by the component, for subsequent machining work.

In terms of digital transformation and AI — Artificial Intelligence, Hiteco has developed new digital services linked to the Hiteco connect IoT system: thanks to the intelligent sensors applied to the electro-spindles, it is possible, in real time and at any time, to monitor their state of health and performance, as well as subsequently analyse all the data from the same component to optimise its use and required maintenance.

In more general terms, research and development which has been Hiteco's jewel in the crown for years, continues to be their mission. "We have a specific team within the company that deals with R&D, aimed at creating flexible, state-of-the-art technological solutions in continuous evolution. The entire production path is rigorously controlled during key stages of the process. All the controls and end testing are done using the most advanced instruments that have been properly certified and are constantly updated. All our investments focus on increasing the quality and durability of our products and, as a result, the performance of the customers' machinery".

Production is entirely made in Italy, and all the most important parts of the spindle are manufactured internally. That's not all: every one of Hiteco's products



are conveyor belt assembled: this ensures complete control over all the assembly work and, as a result, the customer can be assured maximum quality.

An exclusive strong point which, together with extensive availability in the warehouse, dramatically cuts delivery times.

"The real strength behind our products" — continues Mr Benvenuti — "lies in the people who passionately dedicate themselves each day to their development and production."

"This is the added value of important, steady growth that we continue to see year after year and this is the spirit with which we look to the future, focusing on further updating our range and

in winning over new markets".

Present at the Grand Opening of Hiteco's new premises were some authorities from the Emilia-Romagna Regional Council, with the councillor, Vincenzo Colla (economic development and green economy, work training and international relations), the President of the province and Mayor of Rimini, Jamil Sadegholvaad, the Superintendence for Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the province of Ravenna, Forlì-Cesena and Rimini and different institutions present from the world of business and further education.

"This new investment confirms the desire to continue to compete globally at a high level, proud to

produce top-quality products that are always technologically advanced and sustainable" — explains the regional councillor Vincenzo Colla. "At the same time, the relationship with the local community is consolidated, something that is a prerogative for businesses in Emilia-Romagna, not just boosting high employment but opening up to training and cultural events that benefit the entire area".

The President of the province and Mayor of Rimini, Jamil Sadegholvaad, added: "When a company invests, it gets stronger, it expands its horizons and it does so through research and innovation, something that is of added value to the community. The impact and importance are not measured solely in the narrow perimeter of a leading business, but on a wider scale of the social life of the local area."

"The opening of Hiteco's new premises is confirmation of its propulsive role in industrial investment which allows it to compete globally. But there is something else: an awareness that the quality and 'being one step ahead of the others' are elements that define an excellence which then spreads well-being, work and widespread future opportunities for hundreds if not thousands of people. A healthy business, a business that invests is a community asset. There is no doubt about that".

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# TIMCON warns of supply chain cost pressures

**THE Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON) has warned pallet manufacturers are facing significant increases in the cost of raw material costs passed onto them, pushing prices up for uses — in spite of a currently depressed market.**

The organisation, which represents pallet manufacturers and repairers in the UK and Ireland, has advised of several variables which are causing these increases — none of them related to demand. These include:

- A depressed construction industry — particularly in the housing building sector — which has seen sawmills cutting back on production and subsequently labour.
- Increased prices charged by Scandinavian mills to counter the previous year's poor trading.
- Issues with the availability of EU logs due to recent increased felling volumes to combat a bark beetle outbreak.
- Lower volumes of Canadian timber as the result of forest fires last year and this year, which has had a knock-on effect on supplies from the US.

TIMCON Secretary General Stuart Hex said: "TIMCON's members have reported significant hikes in the price of pallet wood over recent months. The recently published pallet timber index for Q2 shows a further increase of 4.4 per cent for homegrown wood, following on from the 0.3 per cent reported in Q1 — this is the first time we have seen two successive quarters of increase since Q2 2021 and Q3 2021. We have also seen an 6.5 per cent increase in imported timber from the Baltics, the first reported increase since Q3 2021.

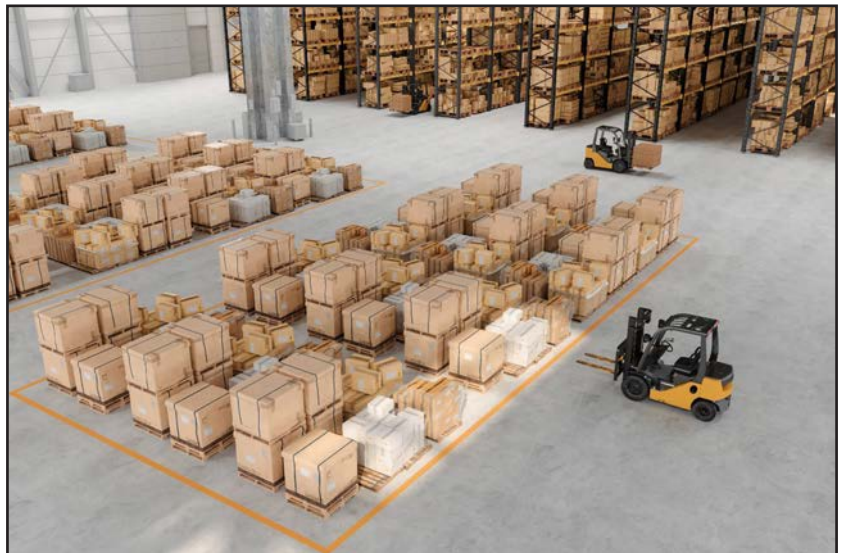
"Since December the UK index has reported a total increase of 4.2 per cent. While this is significantly lower than the 20.1 per cent reported in the German HPE in-

dex over the same period, the UK monthly index is clearly showing that prices are continuing to rise in the UK."

Mr Hex added that, with the UK second only to China as a wood fibre importer, "TIMCON applauds the work that CONFOR is doing to push for increased tree planting."

"With some predictions suggesting the country won't see a recovery in the house building sector until 2025, we hope the newly elected government will introduce measures to stimulate an uplift sooner rather than later," said Mr Hex.

**TIMCON** ● [www.timcon.org](http://www.timcon.org)

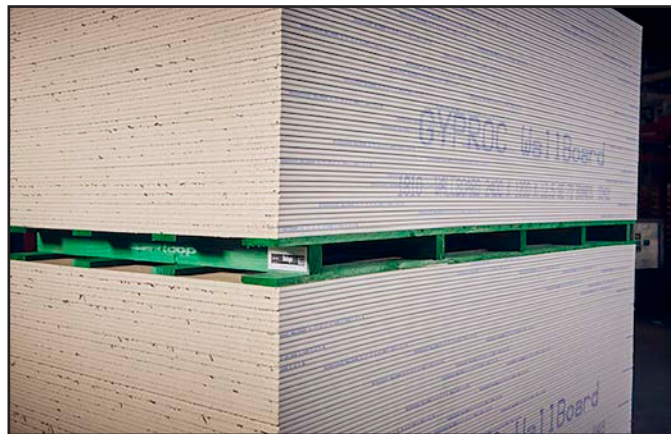


## Reusable pallets from The Pallet LOOP

**THE NEXT STEP in the roll out of more than 1.6 million green-coloured, circular economy pallets across UK construction has started with the introduction of a second reusable pallet specification by The Pallet LOOP — a member of BSW Group. British Gypsum is now using The Pallet LOOP's 2400 x 1200 mm two-way entry pallet for the distribution of its plasterboard products.**

More than 40,000 of LOOP's distinctive green reusable plasterboard pallets were shipped to British Gypsum throughout July. The pallets are now being processed through British Gypsum's Sherburn, East Leake, Kirkby Thore and Robertsbridge plants. Once loaded with plasterboard, the distinctive green pallets will be transported to distribution centres, builders' merchants, principal contractors and house-builders nationwide, with tens of thousands more set to follow in the months ahead.

The launch of The Pallet LOOP plasterboard pallet follows the



successful roll out of the company's returnable bagged plaster pallets in early May. In just three months, The Pallet LOOP — in conjunction with its manufacturing partner Scott Pallets — has issued around 100,000 of its standard construction pallets to British Gypsum — and is now starting to receive green pallets back from recipient businesses keen to claim the up to £4 PayBack available for each one put back in the LOOP.

Steve Ottaway, Head of Operations at The Pallet LOOP said:

"Twelve weeks in and The Pallet LOOP is now starting to really motor along. With the number of green pallets in the market now increasing by around 20,000, week on week, we're reminding companies to sign up for LOOP. We're already starting to see pallets coming back from distribution centres, merchants and principal contractors nationwide. This is incredibly exciting and has meant at this early stage that we've already been able to put around 3,000 LOOP pallets back

through the supply chain, for the second time — a first step towards pallet circularity that will have a positive impact on the sector's carbon, timber usage and waste numbers.

"We look forward to the number of returned pallets growing significantly over the coming months — to ultimately go back into the LOOP. In the meantime, our message to businesses that receive pallets, en masse, is simple. When you get green LOOP pallets, don't put them in a skip. Stack them up and get in touch with The Pallet LOOP. We'll get you signed up for collections, come and take away any pallets you have and give you money back. We can also pick up white pallets too."

Part of the BSW Group, The Pallet LOOP is a circular economy pallet reuse scheme for the construction sector, founded on the principles of recover, repair, reuse.

**The Pallet LOOP**

[setmeup@thepalletloop.com](mailto:setmeup@thepalletloop.com)  
[collections@thepalletloop.com](mailto:collections@thepalletloop.com)  
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# Whatever your LEV demands **Extractly** will tick all the boxes

## When it comes to dust and fume extraction, Extractly delivers the complete package...

From the wide choice of filter types and technologies available, we source the most appropriate and cost-efficient system to meet your requirements and, from initial consultation and design, all the way through to installation and commissioning, we will be with you at every stage of the process.

The wealth of practical experience within the company, together with an extensive range of proven products, allows Extractly to offer extraction systems which are individually tailored to customers' specific needs.

Whether you need a small mobile extractor, or a high-capacity modular filter unit, an energy-efficient shredder or briquette press, or perhaps a modern spray booth or enclosure... from simply adapting ductwork to suit a new machine installation, to commissioning a complete waste-to-energy system, Extractly's experienced engineers deliver the optimum solution.



Extractly is the Master UK Distributor and Installer of the Ecogate® energy-saving system, and an Authorised Dealer and Installer of Nordfab Quick-Fit® ductwork



Dust & Fume Filtration



Shredding & Briquetting



Energy-Saving Technology



Control Panel Engineering



Service, Maintenance & LEV Testing



Spray Booths, Enclosures  
and Curing Ovens



LEV... **extractly** as it should be



Extractly Limited  
has achieved  
SafeContractor  
Accreditation



**Extractly Ltd**  
**info@extractly.co.uk**  
**01924 520462**

# Built for quality with Rotpunkt Memory RI kitchen

**ROTPUNKT, an award winning designer and leading manufacturer of climate friendly German kitchen furniture celebrates the art of self-expression, as its iconic vertical groove door range, Memory RI, is commissioned to create a lifestyle friendly kitchen for a beautiful villa in Kolding, Denmark.**

For more than 14 years, modern homeowner Julie Rytter from Denmark has been buying, restoring, and renovating old houses — and always with a great attention to detail. Julie lives with her husband Kevin and their three daughters in this beautiful villa in Kolding. The Rotpunkt kitchen forms the centre of family life in the home thanks to the statement island that creates an integrated area to sit, dine, and work from home in complete comfort.

"When we were thinking about the interior design of our villa, there was only one yardstick for us: quality, quality and more quality. That is exactly the reason why we chose Rotpunkt Küchen," says Julie.

The Memory RI door front by Rotpunkt is designed with an oak veneered front, which features a contemporary reeded structure with distinct vertical grooves. Each groove creates added texture,



which is further accentuated by the natural raw beauty of the fine textured wood grain and warming characteristics of oak. Designed on a 19 mm base panel with solid wood edging, Memory RI is placing new emphasis on timber finishes and iconic features, which move away from the slab door to welcome modern

in-frame and vertical fin design options.

Memory RI is paired with extreme matt, high pressure laminate Clay Dark doors which are hard-wearing to offer a resilient, anti-fingerprint surface that is silky smooth, easy to clean and able to naturally extend the life of kitchen furniture. To complete

the look, Rotpunkt coordinates the furniture with matching Clay Dark and Memory RI end panels and flush-fitting plinths, for a truly flawless finish.

For added comfort when working from home, the XTend 910 mm high island unit ensures a comfortable working height when preparing meals and the 780 mm high low-level cutout forms an integrated table solution with plenty of surface space and seating for up to four people.

All Rotpunkt furniture is designed and made under the company's award-winning Together to Zero climate strategy in order to reduce carbon emissions at every stage of manufacture and create 100% climate-friendly kitchens that do not compromise on style or quality.

The featured project images show Rotpunkt Memory RI vertical groove furniture in New Forest Oak paired with Zerox furniture in extreme matt Clay Dark for a beautiful villa in Kolding, Denmark. Built in 1908, the property offers a view over the fjord; a 10 km long, deep body of water between Kolding and Little Belt.

**Rotpunkt**  
[matt.phillips@rotpunktuk.com](mailto:matt.phillips@rotpunktuk.com)  
[www.rotpunkt.co.uk](http://www.rotpunkt.co.uk)  
[www.rotpunktuechen.de/en/](http://www.rotpunktuechen.de/en/)





# Abode supplies 50 new build family homes in Derbyshire

**ABODE, an award-winning designer and distributor of market leading kitchen taps & sinks, Pronteau instant hot water taps, bathroom taps & showering solutions is delighted to be working with JT Ellis and Honey Homes on a sustainable new build development at Lees Lane, South Normanton, near Alfreton in Derbyshire.**

Just eight miles from Mansfield and a short drive from Derby and Nottingham, a new community in South Normanton combining the very best in style and sustainability is taking shape. Amber is an exclusive development of two, three and four-bedroom homes which is close to the open countryside and a short walk from the village shops. An inviting show home is open now for visitors to explore and the site is underway. Houses are available to buy off plan with a completion date expected this autumn so homeowners can begin a fresh chapter and celebrate their first Christmas in their new homes.

Graeme Blythe, National Contract Sales Manager at Abode says, "Building new homes in rural locations is hugely important in our regions and requires local knowledge, attention to detail and careful integration into the existing infrastructure and community. As the ethos at Amber is very similar to our own ESG policy at Abode in terms of delivering quality, style and sustainability in the home, we were delighted to be involved."

"We collaborated with kitchen furniture manufacturer and supplier, JT Ellis, on the design and supply of all sinks and taps. As the Amber development is within an hour of our head office in Barnsley, I am enjoying seeing the progress on site as the blueprints come to life," he adds.

To complement the stylish high specification of this development, Abode supplied its bestselling R15 Matrix single bowl stainless steel sink (AW5122) and option for homeowners to upgrade to a Pronteau Prostream 3 IN 1 instant hot water tap (PT1104) also by Abode. The Pronteau Prostream is WRAS-approved and supplied in contemporary Matt Black finish. Its swan neck and dual lever monobloc design ensures that end users can enjoy the convenience of domestic hot, cold and 98° instant steaming hot water, and each model is supplied with a Proboil.2X intelligent hot water boiler, which can be fitted quickly and easily with best-in-class toolless installation.

The bestselling Abode R15 Matrix 1.0 bowl stainless steel sink ensures that homeowners can take care of food prep and home hygiene with ease. The very latest pressing technology has been used to create a very precise shape to the sink with almost square radiuses to ensure that the kitchen planning team could make the most of the available worktop space without compromising on style. The R15 Matrix sink can be installed undermounted or as a low profile



inset option, and is available in both a left hand and right-handed option.

Honey Homes was established in 2022 and like Abode, its culture is grounded in excellent customer service, innovation, quality and creativity with products which deliver on both style and substance. The company builds modern homes with a unique approach to design, space and sustainability throughout Yorkshire and the Midlands. The leadership team believe that all homes should have added value as standard and seeks to deliver aspirational, high specification homes for a new generation of property owners. Taking a refreshing approach to housebuilding, Honey creates homes where smarter designs create more interesting spaces thanks to better features, functions and specifications to reflect the personalities of the residents.

For example, the Amber development includes boutique-style bathrooms, rear garden views through bi-fold doors and L-shaped modular kitchens which make a statement. Abode worked closely alongside

the kitchen furniture manufacturer JT Ellis and the senior commercial team to choose products which were in keeping with the Honey Homes ethos. The final selection was competitively priced with the perfect finish to complement other fixtures and fittings including — a suite of appliances by Hotpoint, black door hinges, black bathroom brassware and shower frame.

Images shown, feature the Abode PT1104 Pronteau Prostream 3 IN 1 instant hot water tap in Matt Black and AW5122 R15 Matrix large single bowl sink, finished in contemporary stainless steel and installed at Lees Lane, South Normanton, Alfreton, Derbyshire.

**Abode**

**Tel 01226 283434 ● Email [info@abodedesigns.co.uk](mailto:info@abodedesigns.co.uk)  
[www.abodedesigns.co.uk](http://www.abodedesigns.co.uk)**



# Branching out with Combilift

**FOLLOWING** the launch of five new models in its 25th anniversary year in 2023, Irish materials handling specialist Combilift has already announced the premiere of yet another innovation. The Combi-CLL (Container Log-Loader) was recently exhibited at EXPO Richmond 2024, one of America's leading trade shows for the forest products industry.

The concept and operation of the Combi-CLL is based on that of

the Combi-CSS (Container Slip Sheet), which has been successfully deployed across numerous industries for the mechanised loading of long products such as packs of timber or steel into containers.

This not only reduces the risk of accidents to the workforce and product damage but is incredibly fast compared to other methods — a 40' container can be fully loaded by one operator in under six minutes.

The 30 t capacity electro-hydraulically powered Combi-CLL offers the same benefits when it comes to speed, safety and product integrity.

It was designed to address the requirements of exporters of softwood and hardwood logs, the nature and shape of which make them much trickier to handle than palletised or packed products.

Logs can be individually lifted and pre-loaded into a robust, high-sided metal "tub" before the patented push-pull mechanism powers the tub into the container. Once inside, the hydraulic drop-down hatch is closed and locked into position to hold the logs securely in place, and the tub is retracted to allow the logs to settle within the container.

Once again, Combilift has come up with a customer-led solution that also has potential for applications beyond the forestry and timber industries.

**Combilift**

<https://combilift.com/combi-css-log-loader/>



# Ruby® laser software by Trotec

**FROM** the idea to the realisation of a lasered product, it is not only the speed of the laser machine that plays a vital role, but also the efficiency of the laser software. Ruby® Laser Software takes a key role in this process, revolutionising the entire workflow with an intelligent and profitable workflow. Thanks to an intuitive user interface, Ruby® combines processing and design functions in one platform that offers laser users an ideal solution for their projects.

Ruby® software features a self-explanatory user interface that seamlessly integrates the entire process from editing to design. Users can effortlessly import files from a variety of programs and process them directly in the software, including formats such as pdf, cdr, ai and dxf. This universal program compatibility saves valuable work time by eliminating cumbersome steps through printer drivers or customer queries regarding alternative file formats.

In addition, Ruby® allows minor customisation directly in the software, which increases flexibility and reduces the need for multiple correction loops. Another advantage is that no additional, costly software licenses are required. With an improved work process, Ruby® ensures accurate processing without delays.

Ruby® allows users to manage multiple jobs, machines and users safely and effectively. The software connects all devices such as lasers, extraction systems, PCs and materials in one central system. This enables efficient work anywhere, anytime, supported by a dashboard for intelligent machine monitoring and predictive maintenance.

"Our software enables control of all laser machine functionalities with a single click, resulting in

industry-leading performance in cutting, engraving and marking," says Alexander Schikowski, Head of Product Management at Trotec Laser GmbH.

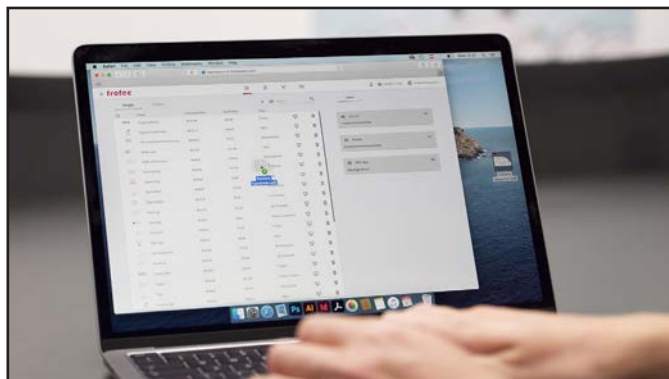
Seamless connectivity is also ensured through collaborative working. Several different users can work simultaneously on the same network anytime and anywhere, whether on Apple or Windows. Jobs can be prepared by one user and produced by another. "Thanks to Ruby, as a boss I always have a complete overview of all remaining jobs, all machines with their current status and the pending orders that have not yet been processed," emphasises Stefan Serrer, owner of the laser engraving store "Laser Tattoo".

The intuitive user interface of the Ruby® laser software provides a clear overview of the functions, uses understandable terms, symbols and abbreviations as well as concrete explanations. In addition, free Trotec video tutorials enable Ruby® training in less than 60 minutes. Thanks to the minimised training requirements and a material database, anyone can get started immediately. With personalised access permission, Ruby® offers increased security and prevents unauthorised changes.

Ruby® is a powerful laser software that prepares companies ideally for future requirements. As a universal software solution, Ruby® is compatible with almost all Trotec laser machines. This allows companies to efficiently manage their entire machine park and maximize production capacities. From small workshops to industrial production — Ruby® offers customised solutions for every requirement.

**Trotec**

[www.troteclaser.com/en-gb/](http://www.troteclaser.com/en-gb/)





# Fix it with West Fraser's CaberFix range

WITH the CaberFix floor fixing range, West Fraser promises exceptional value and easy application for a simple and safe on-site experience.

Offering six different products, the CaberFix range provides a variety of choice. Each floor fixing product is fully BBA-approved, guaranteeing 42 days of exposure to weather and on-site construction when used with CaberDek. Having undergone comprehensive independent tests, the CaberFix range has been specifically developed for use with West Fraser's flooring products.

Products in this range include CaberFix D4 (solvent-free, one-component polyurethane adhesive for use with West Fraser's CaberDek and CaberShieldPlus. It's ideal for bonding flooring boards to both joists and tongue and groove joints, and for sealing the board edges.), CaberFix Joint&Joist (a PU adhesive and sealant) and CaberFix tape (a polyethylene-coated cloth tape for sealing CaberDek perimeters to walls).

For those harsh winter conditions, West Fraser also offers CaberFix X-Treme Tape, a highly-durable, scuff resistant acrylic tape. Its super strong acrylic adhesive means it bonds well in damp conditions and does not lift when wet.

West Fraser is one of the world's leading manufacturers of engineered wood-based panel products. All products are FSC®-certified (C012533) and used extensively in the construction, DIY and furniture sectors. West Fraser's brands, SterlingOSB Zero, CaberFloor and CaberMDF and are well known and are commonly specified by architects, national housebuilders and specifiers.

From 24 August 2023, all professionals and industrial users must complete training before using products containing more than 0.1% of monomeric diisocyanates, information on training and the new regulations can be found at the website below.

**West Fraser ● 01786 812 921**

<https://uk.westfraser.com/safe-handling-training-for-pu-adhesives/>



# Timber Development UK launches new EPD database

**ARCHITECTS, engineers, contractors and other built environment professionals can now easily access Environmental Product Declarations (EPD) for the most common timber products with Timber Development UK's new EPD database.**

The database provides easy referral to EPDs developed by TDUK members, including UPM, Moelven, Jordsen Timber, Setra, Sodra Wood, Steico, Metsa, Swedish Wood, Vida, James Jones & Sons Limited, Stora Enso, Riga Wood Limited, BSW Timber, Forest Industries Ireland, Donaldson Timber Systems, and Wiehag Timber Construction.

"EPDs are essential to achieving net zero in our built environment, helping architects, engineers and other specifiers to make sustainable decisions on material selection as early in the design process as possible," says Charlie Law, sustainability director Timber Development UK.

"The timber industry has made significant investments into producing EPDs which support designers to make accurate estimates of the whole life carbon of their projects. This data is increasingly expected by clients and is a requirement for many major developers — particularly on large-scale projects.

"One of the core missions of Timber Development UK since it was formed is to accelerate a low-carbon future. Together with

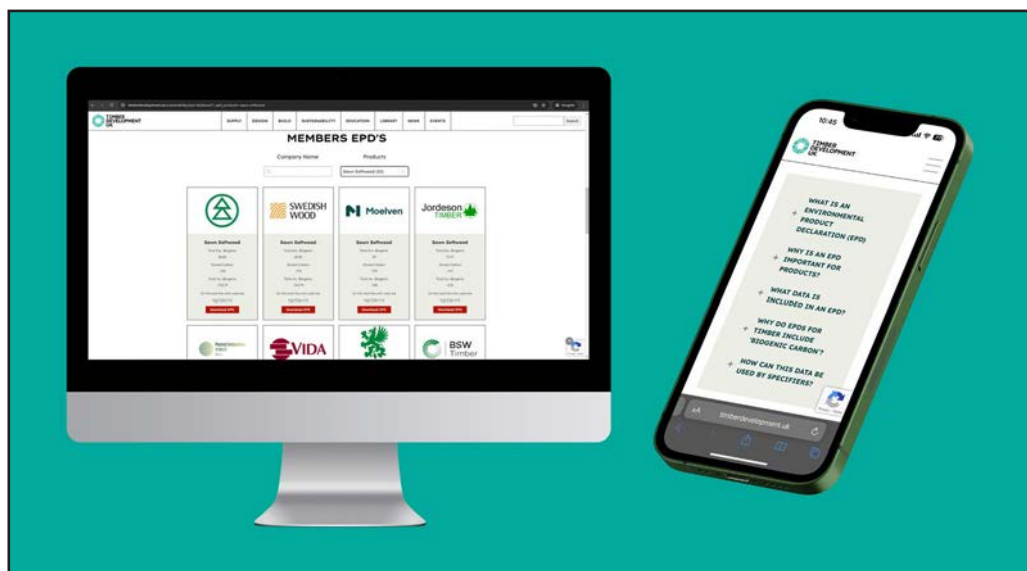
our members, we are working hard to ensure that our built environment is on track to achieve net zero by 2050.

"The EPD database follows on from our work at the beginning of this year to make available weighted average embodied carbon figures for 95% of timber supplied in the UK. We are providing all of these data and tools completely free for the use of anyone interested in building sustainably."

**Timber Development UK**

[info@timberdevelopment.uk](mailto:info@timberdevelopment.uk)

<https://timberdevelopment.uk/sustainability/epd-database/>



# Strathallan School Perth and XYZ routers in education



**STRATHALLAN School, located approximately 30 miles north of Edinburgh, is a boarding and day school for boys and girls aged 5-18. Known for its commitment to fostering creativity and innovation in education, Strathallan School embarked on a journey to enhance its educational offerings through the integration of XYZ routers.**

## **Adoption of XYZ Machines: A Thoughtful Decision**

In the summer of 2022, Strathallan School made a significant investment in an XYZ INNOVATOR router. The decision to invest in XYZ routers came after an exhaustive four-month consultation period. Strathallan School aimed to ensure that its picturesque location and facilities could seamlessly accommodate a machine of this calibre. The CNC purchase repre-

sented a forward-thinking move, aligning with the school's commitment to providing cutting-edge educational experiences and this decision was driven by the desire to introduce modern CNC technology to their educational setting.

## **Choice of XYZ as Preferred Supplier: Building on Past Success**

Strathallan School's choice of XYZ as the preferred machine supplier was grounded in positive past experiences. "I had previously installed a similar machine back in 2018 at a previous school, Yarm in North Yorkshire," explained Ian Barrett, head of design technology. This familiarity with the brand's reliability and performance was very much a positive influence on the selection, cementing confidence in the XYZ router range.

## **The Machine and its Core Use at Strathallan School**

There are five models in the XYZ Routers range, all with their own unique options and versatility to cross over infinite markets. The newest routers are controlled by AAG's control interface MOVE™, claimed to be industry leading, that drives all machine tasks and is designed to optimise the operation of the CNC machines, perform tool changes, set up work offsets, call up a new file or optimise the cutting speed. MOVE™ is designed to make machine operation easy and intuitive.

The INNOVATOR Router offers standard Option Ready Installation Packages, allowing the operator to expand the capabilities of the machine as one's needs or business grows.

With its advanced technology and cutting-edge features, this

machine is claimed to be the ultimate choice for educational establishments or businesses looking to take their operations to the next level.

The XYZ INNOVATOR is optimised for prototype, signs and graphics, woodworking shops and educational institutions. It is equipped with powerful integrated servo motors, an optional tool changer and standard helical rack. Choose from two standard sizes that fit the most common sheets sized for this market. The INNOVATOR has a robust design using high-quality components.

This includes a welded steel frame, integrated servo motors and helical rack & pinion. This design ensures the router can deliver an excellent quality of finished product.

The INNOVATOR uses XYZ's highly intuitive Smart Console





and A2MC CNC controller. These machines integrate with the most popular CAM software and automatic tool changer making it easy to switch tooling without stopping production.

The INNOVATOR is able to process plastics, woods, foams, and non-ferrous metals. This versatility, combined with a compact footprint, makes it ideal for R&D labs, schools and universities. XYZ also offers an education curriculum which can be taught with this machine.

The Innovator is designed to be upgraded whenever the user is ready. For example, one can add productivity with an optional automatic tool changer or versatility with a high-speed knife cutter. This allows the machine to keep up with the company or establishment growth.

Strathallan predominantly utilises the Innovator machine to manufacture furniture designed by students for their exam projects. The machine efficiently handles materials such as Birch-faced ply, MDF and laminated decorative boards.

"The XYZ INNOVATOR machine at Strathallan School primarily handles profiling, pocketing and occasionally skimming tasks. These capabilities are vital for creating components used in various projects, including the popular resin river tables", said Ian Barrett.

## Impact on Productivity, Efficiency and the Education Syllabus

The implementation of the XYZ router has had a profound impact on productivity and efficiency at Strathallan School. The introduction of CNC technology has not only streamlined the manufacturing process but has also significantly affected the education syllabus.

The INNOVATOR router has been tailored to meet the specific needs of the curriculum. This capability has empowered students to turn their design concepts into tangible, high-quality products. By utilising CAD designs directly for cutting, the school estimates a remarkable 75% reduction in making time, providing an additional 50 hours of teaching time.

## Initial Challenges and Solutions

The integration process, overseen by experienced personnel who had prior knowledge of the XYZ machine, proved to be relatively straightforward. Any challenges faced were swiftly addressed with the assistance of Chris Perry from XYZ, providing guidance on installation logistics, room layout and power requirements.

## Cost Savings, Creativity and Expansion

While cost savings have been realised through reduced material waste and fewer errors, the adoption of XYZ machines has

led to an interesting dynamic. The students' growing confidence and creativity, fuelled by the possibilities the XYZ machine offers, have resulted in a potential increase in material usage. However, the overall impact on efficiency, creativity and educational value remains substantial.

## Quality Improvement in Projects

The quality and accuracy of finished projects at Strathallan School have been elevated and it can safely be said have reached industry standards, leaving parents impressed with the high-calibre and professional-grade outcomes created by their children.

## User-Friendly Experience and Benefits:

### Simplifying Operations

Operated by the department staff, the XYZ machine's user-friendly operation has simplified the manufacturing process. "With minimal glitches, the machine's introduction has provided tangible benefits, in terms of simplicity and efficiency, making it an integral part of the educational landscape", said Ian Barrett.

## Student Involvement and Educational Purpose: A Hands-On Approach

Students actively participate in every stage of the process, from the setup of materials to programming cutting operations. While they may not physically press the button, their involve-

ment in planning and executing tasks ensures a hands-on learning experience that goes beyond theoretical knowledge.

## Maintenance and Future Plans

An introductory two-year maintenance plan was included with the purchase. Given the relatively light usage, biennial site visits are sufficient to ensure optimal machine performance. While currently exploring the existing XYZ machine's capabilities, Strathallan School remains open to future CNC expansions.

In conclusion, the collaboration between Strathallan School and XYZ showcases how advanced technology can enhance educational experiences and practical outcomes. This integration has enriched students' creative and educational endeavours, providing hands-on skills, creative confidence, and additional teaching time. The ongoing partnership between Strathallan School and XYZ demonstrates the profound impact technology can have on the present and future of learning.

### XYZ

**Tel: 01952 291600**

**Email: [enquiries@xyz.com](mailto:enquiries@xyz.com)**

**[www.xyz.com](http://www.xyz.com)**

**<https://cncshop.com>**

# Trade apprentice competition receives Selco backing

**A LEADING Dudley builders merchant has supported the West Midlands tradespeople of the future in their quest to become the top trainee in the UK.**

The Dudley branch of Selco Builders Warehouse, based on Coneygree Road, donated hundreds of pounds of materials for the regional heat of SkillBuild.

The top young tradespeople in the UK put their skills to the test in different disciplines, including bricklaying, carpentry, joinery and plastering, to compete for a place in the national final.

The materials donated by Selco — which has 75 branches across the UK — included concrete blocks, Thermalite Blocks and engineering bricks.

Alison Wong, head of communications and sustainability for Selco Builders Warehouse, said: "We are delighted to have supported SkillBuild through materials which enabled the competitors to showcase their skills.

"It's a platform for the next generation of tradespeople to shine and make a name for themselves

by reaching the national final. We were happy to play a small part in helping the regional heat of this prestigious competition run smoothly."

The donation is the latest support provided by Selco to young tradespeople following a partnership with six colleges across the UK supporting students on trade

and construction courses with materials and visit to branches to learn more about how a builders merchant works.

SkillBuild, delivered by Construction Industry Training Board, is the largest multi-trade competition in the UK for construction trainees and apprentices.

Rob Smith, of Dudley College,

said: "We are extremely grateful for Selco for the support they provided to our Dudley regional heat.

"The competition is very much appreciated by all young tradespeople eligible to compete, but we are only able to stage such a high-profile event with the support of companies such as Selco.

"It's vital that we continue to have the next generation of tradespeople coming through the ranks to ensure the UK continues to benefit from specialist trades and competitions such as this are vital in achieving that."

With hundreds of trade brands always in stock, Selco's 75 UK branches are firmly focused on helping tradespeople complete their jobs as quickly and effectively as possible. As well as offering trade services, Selco also has a strong digital presence including Click & Deliver and Click & Collect services and a new app — as well as a 'Dial & Deliver' telephone service — to make life as convenient as possible for tradespeople.

**Selco**  
[www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)



*Front — Joe Revell and Callum Pearson, both from Selco.  
Back — Craig Bradley (tutor), Gary Reynolds — (lecturer) and Mitchell Pye (instructor).*

# West Fraser's commitment to the young is vital for the future

**WEST FRASER has a long-standing commitment to its local communities and has forged close relationships with schools and colleges in the Inverness and Cowie areas to provide the best possible start to young people's working lives through the provision of Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) engineering apprenticeships.**

The comprehensive four-year programme prepares apprentices for a career at West Fraser, with opportunities for future leadership roles. And the apprenticeship scheme not only addresses immediate skills needs but also nurtures talent for future leadership, contributing to the company's growth and sustainability. By integrating education with practical experience and offering clear progression pathways, the company ensures apprentices are well-prepared to contribute effectively and advance within the organisation.

West Fraser's apprenticeship opportunities are promoted through advertising on social media and through outreach to educational institutions and local job fairs.

With an annual intake, candidates attend interviews in early June with offers being made by the end of June to allow for on-site orientation before college starts in August.

As is common with apprenticeships, new starters can expect on-the-job training combined with day release to a local college. Those joining the company straight from school take part in

an on-site familiarisation, followed by a year at college focusing on practical and theoretical training leading to a national certificate. New starters joining from college immediately engage in on-site work while attending college one day a week to further enhance skills and knowledge.

Gordon McArthur, Engineering Manager at Cowie, recognises the value of the apprenticeship programme, having started in the company as an apprentice, and now overseeing the latest recruits.

"The programme has served us incredibly well over the years" said Gordon. "Apprentices who have come through the system now make up over 40% of the maintenance/engineering workforce and many go on to supervisory roles".

Gordon explained that the programme provides the opportunity to train apprentices to work with confidence on the complex systems and processes on site and is the ideal answer to the challenge of recruiting staff with the exacting skill set and experience required in such a specialist industry. For Gordon "the best part of the programme is seeing the change in the apprentices as they grow in confidence and skill level over the four years".

After completing the four-year apprenticeship and obtaining satisfactory examination results, over 90% are offered permanent contracts.

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





# Next generation of Exeter tradespeople



**EXETER'S tradespeople of the future are being backed in the next steps of their careers by one of the UK's leading builders merchants.**

Selco Builders Warehouse has donated thousands of pounds of materials to college students carrying out trade and construction courses around the country. Amongst the beneficiaries have been students of Exeter College who have also been invited to Selco's branch in the city, based on Filmer Way in Marsh Barton, to learn more about how a builders merchant operates and the relationship it has with tradespeople.

Each college has also received £3,000 worth of materials to use in the classroom as part of the studies. West London College, Leeds College of Building, Bournemouth and Poole College and Birmingham Metropolitan College are amongst the education establishments partnering with Selco on the scheme.

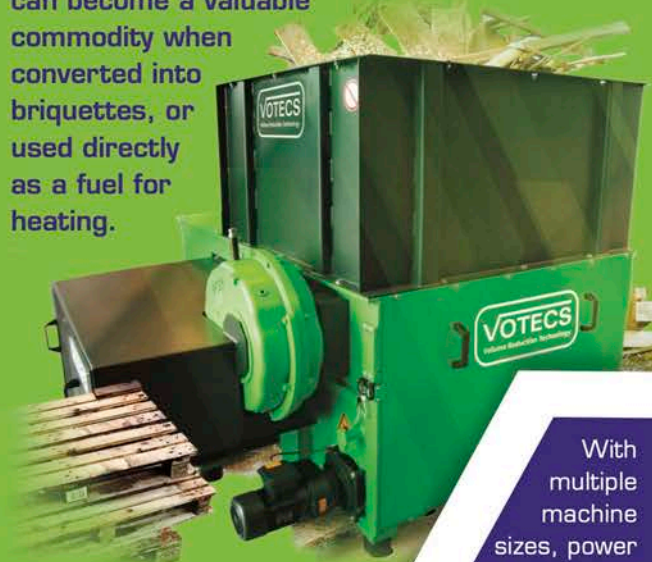
Andrew Legge, a construction tutor at Exeter College said: "The Selco partnership is proving a fantastic initiative and an absolutely invaluable experience for our learners. A builders merchant plays such a significant role in the life of a tradesperson so introducing our learners to them so early in their careers will stand them in really good stead. The materials and tools that Selco has kindly donated have also been an incredible help. We want our learners to carry out as much practical work as possible and the products and materials Selco has donated has enabled us to do that. We can't thank Selco enough for the work it is doing with our college and others around the UK and the significant difference it is making to the future of the industry."

Barry Price, branch manager of Selco Exeter, said: "We are committed to supporting tradespeople at every level so this is an extremely exciting project for us to be involved with. We are delighted to be playing a small part in the educational journey of the next generation of tradespeople, whether that be through the donation of materials and tools or the insight visiting one of our branches provides. It was great to see the students so receptive to learning about what the future might hold for them in their day-to-day working lives."

Selco ● [www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)

## WASTE WOOD IS WOOD WASTED

Disposal of timber offcuts, shavings, chips and sawdust can be costly, yet these inevitable by-products of the woodworking industry can become a valuable commodity when converted into briquettes, or used directly as a fuel for heating.



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# Stairways announces new training partnership with Walsall College

**STAIRWAYS Midlands, one of the UK's leading manufacturers of stairways and doors, has launched a new partnership with Walsall College.**

The company, which has three Midlands-based factory units, including one in Walsall, offering over 85,000 sq ft of bespoke and mass production capacity, has already welcomed two Walsall College students in their final year of their NVQ Level 2 Carpentry and Joinery course for work experience recently.

Anthony Walker, 24, and Kyle Chapman, 21, were working within the manufacturing environment, learning about modern woodworking and production methods, volume manufacturing and general workplace skills.

This was the first of many planned collaborations. From September Stairways plans to offer apprenticeships to college students. The partnership with Walsall College will see the company sharing its knowledge and resources in a host of other ways, to the benefit of the college and its students. The projects are being led by Andy Clarke, production manager, Walsall, and Stairways managing director Karen Wood.

Karen Wood said: "We are very excited about the new partnership — both Andy and I share a passion for supporting the next generation and passing on skills essential to the future of our sector. We have so much experience and expertise to offer, and a long track record of developing apprentices — including Andy Clarke himself, who joined us as an apprentice at 16.

"This is the start of what I am sure will be a long and successful partnership, not only bringing fantastic new talent into Stairways, but inspiring and supporting many more young people into a fulfilling career, as well as helping to safeguard the future of our sector."

Future planned projects in-



clude students collaborating with Stairways to make a new table for the Stairways Walsall factory boardroom, Stairways providing off-cuts and timber to college for students to use in the development of their woodworking skills, as well as Stairways providing the in-work training environment for students studying relevant apprenticeships and T-levels. Stairways is also set to design and manufacture a staircase for the College building.

The new partnership is also being supported by the Construction Industry Training Board, with skills grants and funding.

Paul Underwood, a Lecturer in Carpentry and Joinery at Walsall College, said: "Developing real-world skills and understanding is essential to our students' future success, so partnerships such as this one with Stairways are vital in providing that supportive in-work training environment where they can learn from experienced professionals."

Paul, who used to work at Stairways' Walsall factory under a previous owner, and still knows some of the longer-serving team members there, added: "I am delighted

to be working with their team, ensuring that together we pass on to the next generation the carpentry and joinery knowledge and skills

which are essential for the future of the construction industry."

**Stairways**  
<https://stairways.co.uk/>





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Powerful user-friendly CAM software  
for programming CNC routers

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# Mint Ltd's strategic implementation of AXYZ routers for enhanced retail display production

**MINT Ltd, established in 2010, has carved a niche and rapidly established itself as a pre-eminent provider of innovative retail displays, windows and pop-up spaces.**

Serving high-profile clients in the luxury retail, skincare, and beauty sectors, Mint focuses on creating impactful bespoke solutions and brand experiences while emphasising sustainability and local production by leveraging local supply chains.

With 12 years of dedicated service to the retail industry, Mint designs and manufactures up to 90% of its products in-house in the UK, adhering to eco-friendly practices. The company's dedication to quality and innovation has positioned them as a leader in creating impactful retail environments. "We are constantly evolving along with our clients' needs and striving to exceed expectations to ensure that we design, produce and deliver each project to the highest possible standard and quality. All designs are made with the planet in mind. We pride ourselves on offering a UK-based sustainable supply" said Stephen Hughes Managing Director.

As Mint Ltd expanded its client base and project scope, the need for increased production efficiency and quality became evident to meet the increasing demand for customised retail installations, the company faced significant challenges and Mint required technology that could overcome these:

- **Need for Precision:** high-end retail clients require precise and high-quality craftsmanship in their displays, necessitating exact cutting of materials like plastics and polystyrene.
- **Scalability Issues:** the growing number of projects and complexity of designs called for enhanced

production capabilities that could not be met with manual processes alone.

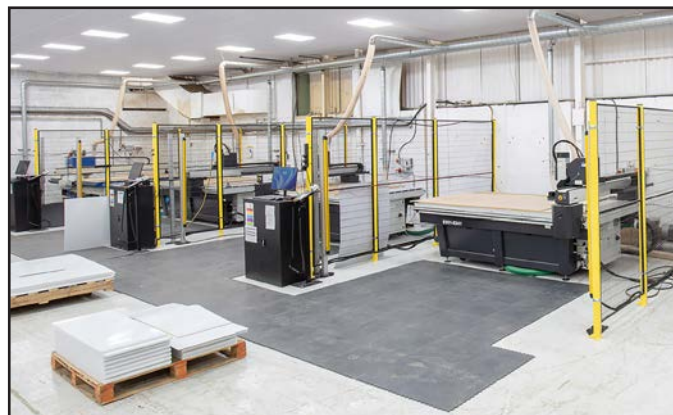
• **Sustainability Commitments:** Mint aimed to maintain its sustainability standards while scaling up production, which required advanced technology that could minimise waste and optimise material usage.

Mint Ltd chose to integrate AXYZ routers into its manufacturing process, having exclusively used AXYZ's technology from the outset with the Pacer series of machines. The decision was driven by the routers' reliability, the strong support from AXYZ and the advanced features such as camera registration that significantly enhance precision and efficiency. Mint Ltd's long-standing partnership with AXYZ provided a clear pathway to addressing these challenges through the adoption of advanced CNC routers. "We have only ever used AXYZ machines; we would not use another supplier. We are familiar with the technology and have a great relationship with AXYZ. Reliability is first class", said Stephen Hughes.

The decision to use AXYZ's technology was based on several factors.

The AXYZ routers have been instrumental in automating the cutting of plastic and polystyrene materials, a critical part of Mint's production. This automation has led to several key improvements:

- 1. Increased Productivity and Efficiency:** the camera registration technology has minimised errors and reduced setup times, streamlining the production process, allowing for quicker transitions between different production runs and allowing Mint to handle larger volumes and more complex projects with faster turnaround times.
- 2. Cost Savings and Increased**



**Profitability:** With shorter setup times and reduced material spoilage, Mint has observed significant cost savings. These efficiencies have translated into increased profitability, enabling them to invest in further growth and innovation, thereby lowering costs and supporting Mint's sustainability objectives.

**3. Enhanced Product Quality:** The precision of the AXYZ routers ensures that each piece is cut with exacting standards, leading to higher-quality final products that meet the demands of Mint's high-end clientele. The advanced routing capabilities enabled more intricate and personalised designs, providing Mint with a competitive edge in bespoke retail solutions.

**4. Positive Impact on Workforce:** The introduction of AXYZ routers has been well-received by Mint's employees. Automation has not only eased the physical demands of production but also allowed staff to focus on more skilled aspects of the manufacturing process. Employees were trained to operate the new technology, which not only increased job satisfaction through skill enhancement but also added value to Mint's workforce.

**5. Maintenance and Support:** Mint's proactive approach in setting up comprehensive service agreements with AXYZ ensured that the machines were regularly serviced and maintained, avoiding potential disruptions in their production cycle.

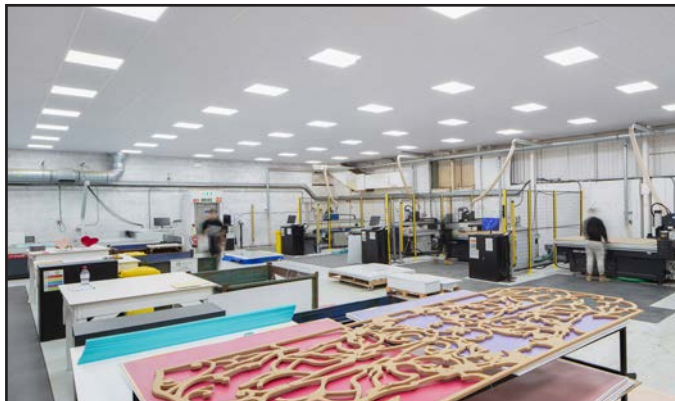
The most recent acquisition was the purchase of three INFINITE routers, two of them were the 4008 size Infinite with 7G Auto tool change and the other was slightly larger 4010 size. The INFINITE is a highly configurable CNC machine that is suitable for one-off, small batch production as well as high volume and high productivity applications, including woodworking, plastic fabrication, engineering plastic

machining and so much more. For a wide range of routing operations, one can choose from high-speed spindles ranging from 5 HP to 15 HP. For knife cutting, choose from a tangential knife, which can be used for creasing and folding applications or an oscillating knife which can be used to process soft goods material.

While the current focus remains on optimising the use of existing machinery, Mint faces challenges related to rapid expansion, such as space constraints and the need for more machines and staff. The future might include further integration of automation technologies as part of their scaling strategy, although specific plans are still under development. Strategic planning is ongoing, with a focus on maintaining agility in operations and excellence in production.

Mint Ltd's implementation of AXYZ routers demonstrates a successful alignment of technology with business objectives, leading to a transformation in its production capabilities with improved efficiency, cost savings and product quality. This has enabled the company to scale operations while adhering to its high standards of quality and sustainability. As Mint continues to grow and adapt to market demands, the strategic use of technology will undoubtedly play a crucial role in maintaining their market leadership and commitment to sustainability. This case study exemplifies how targeted technological integration can resolve specific business challenges, leading to improved efficiency, reduced costs, and enhanced product quality — all of which are critical for maintaining competitiveness in the dynamic retail display market.

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# GABBIANI GT2 WITH ROBOT

## FLEXIBLE & PRODUCTIVE MACHINING

In response to the ever-growing market need to produce both in batch 1 and in larger runs in a continuously flexible manner, SCM has developed this **new process solution** that involves the use of a **gabbiani gt2** single-blade panel saw with an **anthropomorphic robot** positioned on the floor at the front left of the machine. This is the only integrated solution currently on the market that allows switching between automatic and manual processing with an operator in a matter of seconds (patent pending).

The transition between **automatic mode with robot** and manual mode is in fact immediate and automatic: the robot places or removes the additional modules between the in-feeding tables, necessary for its correct operation.

In **automatic mode with robot**, the cell allows to operate without shift limits, relieving the operator from low-value-added activities, and to handle even small finished parts with the utmost ease, thus allowing to achieve a large increase in productivity and quality.

**Manual operation with an operator**, allows stack cutting, ensuring increased productivity.

The solution is also fully integrable with horizontal warehouses like scm FLEXSTORE.



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*is more*

# SCM signs an agreement with Springa for the global distribution of the Goliath CNC robot



SCM, A WORLD-leading group in secondary woodworking technologies and services and Springa, a startup that simplifies access to digital manufacturing tools for craftspeople and professionals, have signed

an agreement to distribute Goliath CNC, a portable and flexible numerically controlled milling machine for large-scale projects.

This innovative solution will be sold worldwide under the name

"scm maker", through the group's authorised distributor network and e-shop.

SCM is also supporting the equity crowdfunding campaign launched by Springa to finance its R&D activities and the industrial production of the CNC robot by signing a PFI worth €300,000 that lasts for two years. The crowdfunding campaign will remain active until 12th October 2024 on the CrowdFundMe portal with a maximum collection objective of €2.2 million.

"SCM firmly believes in innovation initiatives that bring value to the customer. It does this by investing 7% of its annual turnover in R&D and supporting young people and the future of the wood sector and its community," stated Pietro Gheller, Director of the SCM Group Wood Division.

"In the case of Springa, we admired the team's skills, passion and entrepreneurship, and we decided to get involved by joining them. Today, we are doing this by distributing the product and we will potentially continue doing this in the future through

a broader partnership. With this new 'maker', SCM strengthens its leadership position in CNC machining centres and continues to complete the range of solutions we offer customers in every market segment."

"Through this campaign we want to consolidate our market position, optimise production and develop new products. The involvement and support of a company like SCM is a great confirmation of the quality of the work and technology developed in recent years, as well as a growth opportunity for Springa's future," explains Lorenzo Frangi, Founder and CEO of Springa.

This operation will be guaranteed through the adoption of the technological infrastructure provided by Fleap S.p.A., Europe's leading platform for the management of digital financial assets and the native digitisation of corporate processes based on block-chain technology.

**SCM Group**

**Tel 0115 977 0044**

**scmuk@scmgroup.com**

**www.scmgroup.com/en\_GB/**





# Supporting charity farming project

**PREMIER Forest Products and Ian Williams Carpentry (IWC) have donated to a social enterprise flower farm at Hartcliffe City Farm, Bristol.**

The two businesses, based in South Wales, have stepped in to donate to the charity-funded project by donating three picnic benches for use in the flower farm, which is run by Heart of BS13.

Heart of BS13 is a local charity based in South Bristol that aims to support and foster a healthy community. They work to improve the environment, tackle food poverty and create vocational training and jobs across Hartcliffe and Withywood.

The flower farm on Hartcliffe City Farm produces sustainable local blooms, while also offering vocational training and volunteering opportunities to people who have an interest in horticulture and floristry.

IWC's client, ISG, asked the firm to donate to the cause as part of their ongoing partnership with the charity. Alongside the picnic bench donation, IWC also helped construct compost bays out of old wooden pallets.

Richard Wadely, hardwood & specialties manager at Premier Forest Products, said: "We're so pleased to have worked alongside IWC to donate to the Heart of BS13 flower farm at Hartcliffe City Farm. The picnic



benches, made from pressure-treated timber, are responsibly sourced and produced and align well with the charity's aims, as well as complementing the surrounding area."

Annemarie Jenkins, quality and environmental manager at Ian Williams Carpentry, said: "We're very happy to have partnered with Heart of BS13 to donate to their important cause. The picnic benches fit so well in the flower farm and will hopefully continue to encourage visitors to explore the blooms and learn about their sustainable background."

Sol Harmsworth, horticulture programme manager at Heart of BS13, said: "We're grateful for Premier Forest and IWC's generous donations and are so happy with how the area has improved. We're looking forward to welcoming more visitors and learners and further developing the community."

**Premier Forest Products** ● <https://premierforest.co.uk/>

**Ian Williams Carpentry** ● <https://iwc.uk.net>



# Selco helps Peterborough school reimagine playtime

**CHILDREN at a Peterborough school are exploring different ways to play — thanks to a leading builders merchant.**

Welland Academy, on Scalford Drive, has signed up to the OPAL Programme, which helps schools across the country redesign their playgrounds and provision to help encourage new ways of play.

Selco Builders Warehouse's Peterborough branch has thrown its support behind the project by donating a host of materials, including wood, pallets, plastic pipes, chains and buckets.

Tanya Peebles, of Welland Primary Academy, said: "We are so grateful to Selco for their support. They have absolutely embraced what we are trying to do at the school to make playtime more interesting and exciting for our pupils.

"The OPAL Primary Programme is all about giving children the type of experiences we enjoyed in our childhood, using basic materials to be creative.

"They can build things, climb ropes, or play in the sand. It's

about helping them to learn their limits in a safe environment.

"We already had some materials in place for the children to use and I'm sure they will be excited to receive these additional items from our friends at Selco."



*Selco Deputy manager Marta Ciz hands over the materials to teachers and pupils at Welland Primary Academy.*

Selco opened its Peterborough branch last year, on Padholme Road East, creating 30 new jobs and providing new convenience for tradespeople in the area.

Deputy manager Marta Ciz said the business was keen to play its

part to support the local community. "We have established ourselves in Peterborough over the last 16 months and have built a loyal customer base," she said.

"Getting involved with communities in which we are based is key part of the Selco ethos so we were delighted to be able to help Welland Primary Academy.

"Schoolchildren spend 20% of their day in play. Tanya and the team are working hard to improve the play facilities so the children can enjoy their time together and we're proud to be a part of that."

The OPAL Primary Programme offers schools a structured process, with mentored support provided for up to two years, to enable schools to permanently change both environment and culture.

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

**Selco**  
[www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)

# School spruced up thanks to Selco

**CHILDREN at a Solihull school will have an extra spring in their step after the outdoor learning and play area was spruced up with the help of one of the UK's leading builders merchants.**

Burman Infant School, on Velsheda Road in Shirley, has benefitted from the support of Selco Builders Warehouse to bring enhancements to its playground.

A team of seven members of the category management team from Selco's Support Centre in Wythall attended the school to carry out the work which included replacing and painting fencing, repairing the gate and refreshing the storage shed.

Selco, which has five stores in Birmingham — in Stirchley, Solihull, Perry Barr, Tyburn and Tyseley — also provided all the materials and paint used on the project.

Ella Saxty — Headteacher at Burman Infant School which has more than 200 pupils across nursery, reception, year one and year two — said: "I would like to send a huge and heartfelt thanks to Selco as a whole and the team that volunteered to carry out the work in particular. We were hopeful that they would paint one fence in the time they had but the team ended up doing so much more.

"We don't have any money to carry out anything but absolutely essential repair work so we would normally have to hold a fundraising event and then carry out a bit of work and repeat the process

many times to get things done. To have a company like Selco support us with not only materials but also a number of its team volunteering is incredible. It has made a huge difference to the outdoor area used by our nursery and reception children, not only visually but also in inspiring the children who are approaching their learning in a different way because of the more vibrant look we now have."

The attendance of the team came after Selco introduced a new scheme offering all of its near 3,000-strong workforce the chance to volunteer to support a local community project on a working day.

Gary Walker, a member of the category management team which attended, said: "It was a fantastic day and something we were very proud to be involved with. The outdoor area needed some repair work and we got stuck in as a team and made the repairs and carried out the painting. The school were thrilled to have our support and made us feel very welcome, providing us with regular refreshments on what was an extremely warm day. We hope they are happy with the final outcome and the children get many more years of benefit from their outdoor play and learning."

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

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# Building a brighter future for youngsters

**A JUNIOR football club which is linked to a Southwark charity designed to improve the lives of local youngsters has hit the back of the net.**

The Bosco FC under 12 team has received a £3,000 donation from leading builders merchant Selco Builders Warehouse towards running costs for the team, as well as a new strip.

Bosco is a small charity-based college which also has a nursery on-site and offers a youth club open for extra-curricular activities after school. In addition, it runs a football academy for children aged from two to 14 and has nine teams operating from under sevens through to an adult team.

Robert Rosier, club secretary for Bosco FC, said Selco's donation is making a huge difference to the club. He said: "What sets us apart from other football clubs in the area is our charitable aspect.

"We rely on support from the local community to create opportunities for young players who demonstrate commitment and talent to fulfil their potential. We understand that the rising costs of recent times is posing huge challenges for families so Selco's donation is having an incredibly positive impact on the local community.

"The donation is covering the cost of our under 12s for a whole season, ranging from training sessions, kit and the funding of league matches, so everyone involved with the club is hugely grateful for Selco's support."

Bosco's junior teams play in the South East London and Kent Youth Football League.

Alison Wong, head of communications and sustainability for Selco Builders Warehouse which has branches on Old Kent Road and in Canning Town and Charlton, said: "We are delighted to be supporting Bosco Football Club and the wider charitable aspects of the organisation. It's a unique offering which brings opportunities on and off the football field to hundreds of youngsters in the deprived area. We are following the progress of the club with great interest."

**Selco**  
[www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)



# West Fraser helps nurture allotment

**COWIE-BASED wood panel manufacturer, West Fraser, has donated £1,000 to a Tillicoultry allotment group, which serves as a nature haven for the local community.**

Founded in 1978, the Tillicoultry Allotment Association has grown into a large allotment offering social areas, a community greenhouse, and vegetable plots. It also hosts Alloa school pupils, providing them with dedicated raised beds to learn about growing plants and vegetables.

The donation from West Fraser will help the group repair its communal tool shed floor and install new guttering to prevent water damage during heavy rain.

Elke Mackenzie, Co-chair of the Tillicoultry Allotment Association, said: "We're hugely grateful for this kind donation from the team at West Fraser. The Tillicoultry Allotment Association benefits from grants and donations to keep our allotments open for all members of our local community who make use of it, so this support is massively appreciated.

"Thanks to generous donations, such as this one from the team at West Fraser, we can further develop our allotments to cater more for the community, as well as put in place our plans to make the allotments accessible for all with a new accessible gardening patch."

David Connacher, marketing manager at West Fraser, added: "As a major employer in the local area, West Fraser recognises the importance of supporting the local community and the businesses making a huge positive difference within

them in line with our own dedicated commitment to safety and staff wellbeing. We are happy to support the team at Tillicoultry Allotment Association, who provide a fantastic social and educational space for the local community to enjoy, with this donation and are excited to hear how these new updates progress."

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





# Housing charity celebrates sound investment

**A HOUSING ADVICE charity is ready to add soundproofed rooms to its facility in Loughborough after winning building materials in a national competition.**

The Bridge (East Midlands) is the latest winner in Selco Builders Warehouse's Community Heroes campaign, scooping £500 worth of building materials. The charity, which delivers specialist housing related advice, support and assistance services to vulnerable people across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, will spend the cash on soundproofing rooms to make private conversations easier.

Nash Chhatralia, CEO of The Bridge (pictured), said: "We are thrilled to receive this fantastic prize from Selco. We are a long-standing homeless prevention charity working alongside homeless and vulnerably housed people across the region. We plan to construct soundproof partitions within our office, facilitating private conversations for housing advice, mediation and other confidential matters. These booths will ensure individuals and families can discuss their housing situations without fear of being overheard, fostering trust and openness in our consultation."

Last year the charity supported more than 5,000 individuals, preventing 97% of those from becoming homeless. Nash and the team will visit Selco Leicester on Parker Drive to select their materials.

Over the course of six months, Selco is awarding 12 groups with a windfall worth £500 through its ever-popular Community Heroes scheme. At the end of the campaign, the dozen winners will go before a public vote, with the most supported bagging £5,000 in cash and the runner-up securing £1,000.

Simon Humpage, Head of MultiChannel Marketing at Selco, said: "Community Heroes helps to make a tangible difference to charities, community groups and good causes right across the country."

"It's a very tough job selecting two winners each month from the hundreds of amazing entries, but our judges were impressed by The Bridge (East Midlands) and its commitment to continued improvement for its clients. We look forward to receiving the next batch of entries at the end of the month."

**Selco**  
[www.selcobw.com](http://www.selcobw.com)



## PANELS & TIMBER

# BSW Group contributes to children's book

**BSW GROUP, believed to be the UK's largest integrated forestry and timber business, is proud to be part of the team behind a brand new children's book aimed at educating the next generation about sustainability and the role of British timber.**

'Sitka Spruce: The Amazing Timber Tree' is the latest book by 'Tales from Mother Earth', an organisation that aims to educate and empower children to connect with the natural world in a positive way. Available both as a physical picture book and a soundtracked audiobook, this new story is all about the fantastic benefits of timber, and in particular the Sitka Spruce which is the tree of choice across the UK timber industry. Aimed at children from 3 to 10 years old, the heart-warming story explains how Sitka Spruce is grown in managed forests, how it is harvested and turned into timber, and how this sustainable resource is used to construct the world around us.

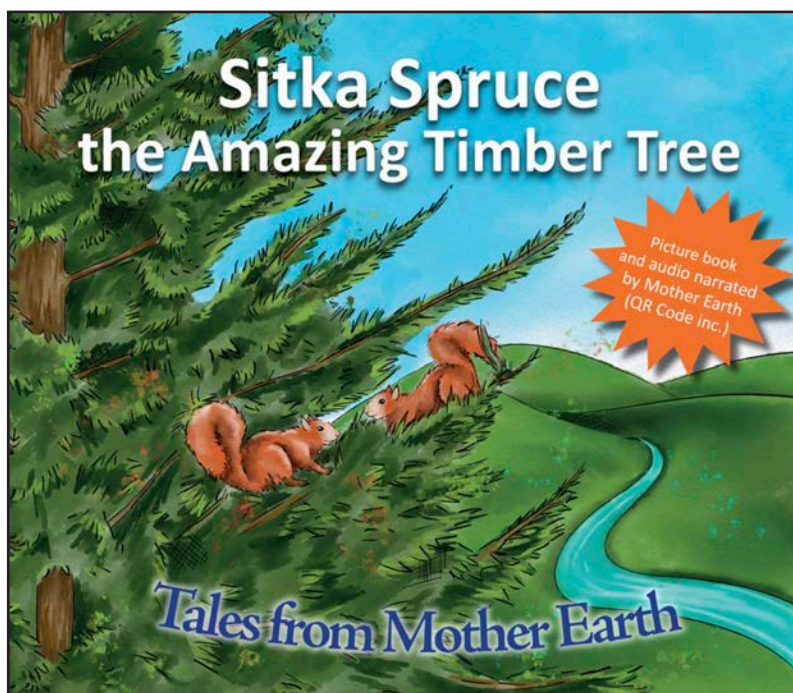
As the UK's largest integrated forestry and timber business, experts from BSW Group helped educate author Jenny Bailey on exactly how Sitka Spruce is cultivated and the process to turn it into timber. Morgan Sindall Construction also shared their experience on how timber is used in the construction industry.

Gavin McLaughlin, BSW Group's Head of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance), said: "Increasing people's understanding of the importance of British timber is, of course, something that is very important to us at BSW Group."

"We absolutely jumped at the chance to be part of this great book that teaches the next generation all about it. We're huge fans of Tales from Mother Earth and their fantastic work helping children understand the importance of

looking after the natural world. We hope that everyone who reads or listens to 'Sitka Spruce' will have as much fun as we did helping to create it!"

'Sitka Spruce: The Amazing Timber Tree' is now available for purchase at: <https://talesfrommotherearth.co.uk/product/sitka-the-amazing-timber-tree/>  
**BSW Group** ● [www.thebswgroup.co.uk](http://www.thebswgroup.co.uk)





# dp-crystal slim

**Timeless glass designs with the unrivalled strength of crystal**


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

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


Visit our website, [www.decorativepanels.co.uk](http://www.decorativepanels.co.uk) to explore the full **dp-crystal slim** range within our **dp-limitless** portfolio.




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50% lighter than real glass



10x less brittle than real glass



Easily processed



4mm acrylic surfaces

# International Timber provides Laminated Oak for long-standing clients Runciman & Redpath

**INTERNATIONAL Timber, a leading UK importer and distributor of bespoke, sustainable timber and panel products, has collaborated with specialist joinery manufacturers Runciman & Redpath on internal modifications to homes across Scotland, providing high-quality timber to be used for staircases and bespoke benches.**

Runciman & Redpath is a specialist joinery manufacturer who undertakes interior renovation projects across Scotland, creating bespoke features from timber. Having recently completed five stunning projects, the team have worked alongside International Timber to provide staircases, benches, shelving and panelling for large estates and new build properties.

Working together for over a decade, Runciman & Redpath utilised Laminated Oak supplied by International Timber for the construction of its joinery projects. The strong relationship between both companies has resulted in high-quality home interior improvements to be achieved as well as the mutual sharing of expert advice within the timber and joinery industry.

## Laminated Oak

Laminated Oak is a type of engineered timber that consists of layers of wood veneers glued together to create a strong and durable material. It provides huge benefits, such as strength, durability and design flexibility.

With the high traffic volume that stairs and benches experience, Laminated Oak's strong and flexible qualities make it the perfect material for any such projects. One of the key advantages of Laminated Oak is its flexibility; the layers of wood veneers can be bonded together in differ-



ent directions, making it the ideal material for use in curved structures or traditionally difficult, uneven surfaces.

This flexibility also means Laminated Oak can be cut and shaped to fit any design, giving architects, designers and joiners greater creative freedom to create innovative and bespoke designs.

## Colour consistency

Initially, one of the main challenges for Runciman & Redpath was choosing a timber product that would create a consistent colour to ensure its clients' desired aesthetic was achieved when manufactured into staircases, benches, shelves and panelling.

International Timber chose to supply American White Laminated Oak to create a consistent wood effect across the internal modifications of each home. Laminated timber is just as aesthetically pleasing as solid wood, and is a great alternative for exposed beams, shelving and panelling interiors compared to steel or concrete.

Kevin Anderton, senior external sales representative at International Timber, said: "It was great to work with our longstanding customer Runciman & Redpath on these projects, continuing our strong working partnership. The team continues to buy from International Timber based on the added value services that we offer."

Ewan Redpath, managing director at Runciman & Redpath, said: "International Timber provide an excellent and reliable service for each and every job. I have been working alongside Kevin for over 10 years and he always provides expert advice regarding the recommended timber solution for any joinery project."

International Timber is a leading specialist in laminated and modified timber products, including a variety of different options that are suitable for a whole host of projects.

**International Timber** ● [www.internationaltimber.com](http://www.internationaltimber.com).





# John Penny Joinery cuts costs on bedroom suite with MEDITE MR PLUS

**JOHN PENNY Joinery recently completed a bespoke bedroom suite in Edinburgh featuring a fitted wardrobe, set of drawers, table, and nightstand.**

They chose MEDITE MR PLUS, a premium white primed moisture-resistant MDF panel, to achieve a luxurious finish and long-lasting performance for the doors and drawers. MEDITE MR PLUS eliminates the need for primer, saving both time and money. The project took around two weeks — a reduction of 2.5 days from the typical span — and resulted in a 13% cost saving.

“Running a business means constantly looking for optimal solutions that provide superior end-product quality while ensuring cost-effective and efficient installation. With MEDITE MR PLUS, I managed to save 13% of the project costs. These savings came from reduced material and labour costs. It took us a few days less than usual to complete the entire suite, keeping the client happy. Fewer distractions, higher quality than with any other materials on the market, and faster installation — it is a win-win for all,” says John Penny, Director at John Penny Joinery.

MEDITE MR PLUS is a game-changer for joiners, according to the company. Its primed

surface saves time, cutting out the need for additional priming. An added benefit is the reduced need for sanding, allowing the end user to apply paint directly onto the panel. The matte low-gloss primer provides a perfect base for further paint application.

The increased opacity of the primer reduces the need for multiple finishing coats, maintaining quality while saving on paint costs.

For this project, 12 sheets of MEDITE MR PLUS (1220 mm x 2440 mm, 18 mm thick) were used for the doors and drawers. By selecting MEDITE MR PLUS, John ensured the furniture's longevity and durability. He also used Tikkurila Intact 8, a water-based, fast-drying, durable furniture paint for indoor use that leaves a smooth and hard surface. The combination of white, walnut, and blue is stunning.

John added: “I’ve been using MEDITE MR PLUS for the past nine months, and it has completely transformed my business. It’s my go-to material for all joinery projects because it’s easy to use, delivers stunning surface quality, and saves money. I highly recommend it to anyone looking for peace of mind and a flawless finish.”

**MEDITE MR PLUS**  
<https://mdfosb.com/en/>



# West Fraser and Falcon Timber — Working in complete harmony with mirrored brand values

Here, Stuart Sims, Falcon Timber's chief marketing officer, outlines the company's operations and how the team works with West Fraser.

**"It's not just a strict supplier/customer relationship. We believe that the company's values and operations position West Fraser at the forefront of high-end panel production."**

**Falcon Timber is a stalwart of the industry; how does the group look today?**

Falcon Timber is the overarching distribution brand for Consolidated Timber Holdings. In 2023, Falcon Panels Products and MBM Forest Products amalgamated to form a new company, Falcon Timber Ltd, resulting in a strong, well positioned timber distribution model that offers true nationwide delivery in the UK.

Falcon Timber, alongside the manufacturing division of Hoffman Thornwood and Triesse Ltd, positions CTH as one of the leading timber distributors and manufacturing solution specialists; with a strong product catalogue and impressive team of experts.

**What does Falcon Timber offer?**

Falcon Timber, as a leading UK wood-based panel products and timber importer, distributor and solutions specialist, supplies softwoods, plywoods, engineered panels, OSB and everything in between, with the vast product library, service levels, and expertise, setting the company apart from others.

Providing market-leading ranges of quality products, matched with unrivalled pricing and nationwide delivery services, affords Falcon Timber the opportunity to meet customer expectations with ease.

The on-site port facility at Tilbury, and additional depots in Nottingham, Birmingham, Haydock, Leeds, High Wycombe and Gateshead, are strategically located to offer a responsive, nationwide service and, at each location, we carry a full range of products including the STRE-branded ranges.

We also have an extensive collection of FSC® chain of custody-certified products. As the industry evolves, we continue to invest in the development of products.



**West Fraser manufactures Falcon Timber's exclusive STREbord® products. Tell us more about them.**

STREbord®, the number one choice in the vast majority of mezzanine floor installations in the UK and abroad, features a specially-engineered T&G 2LE profile designed for strength and ease of fit. STREbord®38mm Mezzanine Decking is available as a P6 Standard or P5 (MR) Moisture Resistant chipboard core with a choice of surface finishes to meet end-user requirements.

It is designed for strength and ease of fit while consistency of quality and specification from board to board ensures straightforward installation, a neat pro-



fessional finish and high user satisfaction. Protective foil, in silver or white, applied to the underside of the board, provides excellent fire performance characteristics. It's environmentally friendly, using wood from sustainable forests, and conforms with current formaldehyde emission classes to BS EN 120 — perforator test method.

Based on customer requirements and the installation environment, there could be all sorts of different treatments applied to the STREbord® product.

Is it going into a chilled environment, for example?

Does it need to be able to be moisture-resistant?

Will it need to withstand forklift trucks driving over it; or will it need to have wires placed in it to ensure that robots know where they're going!

### What are your key markets? Who buys STREbord® from Falcon Timber?

STREbord® is effectively a one-product market, which is mezzanine flooring and, as such, we don't have hundreds of customers when it comes to STREbord® — it's tens, not hundreds, and they tend to be very high volumes. It's the huge warehouses you see — think of a large omni channel retailer in the world and you are getting the idea!

### What happens at the depots as customers do not generally collect product?

We distribute and deliver from our depots; we have a sales office



and warehousing facilities at Tilbury where all our products are delivered to.

We then distribute to the eight Falcon Timber depots which, in turn, deliver to their customers.

At its simplest, Falcon's customer base comprises builders' merchants large and small, timber merchants, and buying groups.

In addition, we supply what we classify as end-users such as shop-fitters, kitchen manufacturers, and housebuilders.

### Why did you choose West Fraser to manufacture your exclusive STREbord®?

Falcon Timber has been working with West Fraser (Norbord and Nexfor beforehand) for over

thirty years and supplies us with other panel portfolios including SterlingOSB Zero, CaberMDF, CaberDek flooring, and Caber-Floor P5 particleboard.

It goes without saying that the products are of the highest quality in the market; that's why we have supplied them to our customers for decades.

The organisation, and people we work with, match our group values in terms of their environmental positioning; this is the thread that is so important to them and us.

Geographical proximity is also key. We are not transferring products too far — which is great for logistics and the environment!

It's a long-standing partnership built on mutual trust. Everyone we deal with at West Fraser is a willing participant in our business. It is not just a supplier/customer relationship; the West Fraser team is involved with all of our depots and our teams.

People such as Mark Lewis-Ranwell, our Account Manager, who is effectively embedded within our depots.

West Fraser supports the growth of our business by being actively involved in our depot network and looking for opportunities that may be more appropriate for Falcon Timber than West Fraser direct. We understand our lines of demarcation!

A recent anecdote which reinforces our joint brand values was when Falcon Timber's Operations Director, Aidan Hudson, visited the West Fraser sites in Scotland. He was really impressed as the discipline is front and centre of everything that they do, so there's some lessons that we're learning there!

Then there's their investment in the United Kingdom. I think they hide their light under a bushel somewhat! West Fraser should be justifiably proud of the investments they make in ensuring their equipment is state of the art.

Most people know that manufacturing has been on the decline in the UK for many decades, so to see a business like theirs, thriving, is fantastic.

**West Fraser**

**01786 812921**

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# Leeds based builder making the best of CaberMDF

A FORMER member of the Royal Corps of Signals, who switched to carpentry after leaving the Army, now runs his own building company covering the West Riding area of Yorkshire and is making a name for himself fitting out property renovations using CaberMDF, as well as other panel products from the West Fraser range.

North Build Leeds was set up by Van Midgley five years ago and now tackles a variety of conversions as well as general building repairs and improvements, purchasing the high performance MDF and CaberDek flooring from different builders' merchants in the city, depending on price and the locality his team are working in.

Van explained: "While I left the army with a qualification in telecommunications, I always had an interest in building and would count myself as an 'old school' joiner, who can pitch a roof if necessary - as well as carrying out kitchen fitting to a very high standard, which is one of the second-fix applications where I use a lot of the CaberMDF, sometimes ordering 20 sheets at a time. When I've got a job coming up, I will put out a cutting list to the merchants I use and see who comes back with the best price. At the moment, I am

employing four people full time as well as using a number of subbies, including an electrician and a plumber.

"And the jobs we've got on include a couple of loft conversions and an old, listed property which is going to be converted into an HMO with five flats in it; I rarely have to work more than 20 minutes from my house in Leeds. I started off using the Norbord brand quite a few years ago and have stuck with West Fraser because you can be sure of the quality, as well as the value. It's a reliable product. For the fitted cupboards I did on one job recently, that I put on Instagram, I used a combination of 18 mm MDF plus thinner material to clad 20 mm timbers, say if I want to create a void for wiring. Then I'll use 9 mm for shelves and the Shaker doors I produce. For floors, I prefer to use the 22 mm CaberDek, together with the D4 glue which gives you a really solid fix — and with the tongue and groove you don't need to land the joints on a joist. It all makes our job straightforward."

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

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



# Wilsonart UK national distribution network

**WILSONART UK, a world-leading engineered surfaces specialist, has confirmed full product availability across its Polyrey, Resopal and Bushboard brands, via the manufacturer's national distribution network.**

Following the recent appointment of Panelco as a nationwide distributor of the company's Polyrey brand, the major strategic partner has this week confirmed plans to extend its Wilsonart portfolio.

The tactical development will see Panelco introduce a number of additional collections from the company's Bushboard range of work-surfaces, upstands, splashbacks and waterproof wall panels; including Options, Omega, Zenith, Alloy and Nuance. Further news of this brand expansion will be released over the following month, as Panelco builds its Bushboard-focused stock inventory throughout September.

Wilsonart's extensive product portfolio also continues to be available from a network of key distribution partners including BGN Boards, Noyeks, Blackheath Products, Claygate Distribution, Ideal Bathrooms, Mitchells Worktops, and Barwick Bathrooms.

Thanks to the diversity of products across the Wilsonart brand portfolio and the company's commitment to speed of delivery and availability, customers from sectors such as residential, retail, hospitality, healthcare and education, can readily source a multitude of surface solutions to meet their specific needs.

Tim Emery, sales director at Wilsonart UK said: "At Wilsonart UK we are 100% focused on maintaining and developing a strong, reliable distribution network that ensures a seamless supply of our core brands and products into our varied customer-base."

With an underlying focus on growth and service, the company's core brand ethos remains a principal driving force; "We deliver customer visions with surfaces you love, service you can count on, and people who care."

Wilsonart UK ● [wilsonart.co.uk](http://wilsonart.co.uk)





# The ambassador for quiet acoustics at Embassy Gardens

**ARCHITECTS** Common Ground Workshop, recently named as one of the 16 emerging practices in Landsec's new retail framework, completed a new hospitality development at 6 Embassy Gardens in Nine Elms, London. The projects forms part of a wider urban realm masterplan comprising 5,000 square metres of commercial and retail spaces for client Ballymore.

Adjacent to the American Embassy, 6 Embassy Gardens includes a restaurant, bar and events space that blends hard and soft landscaping into a material palette filled with tactile and textured surfaces set against harder more industrial finishes and reminiscent of the burgeoning infrastructure landscape at Nine Elms.

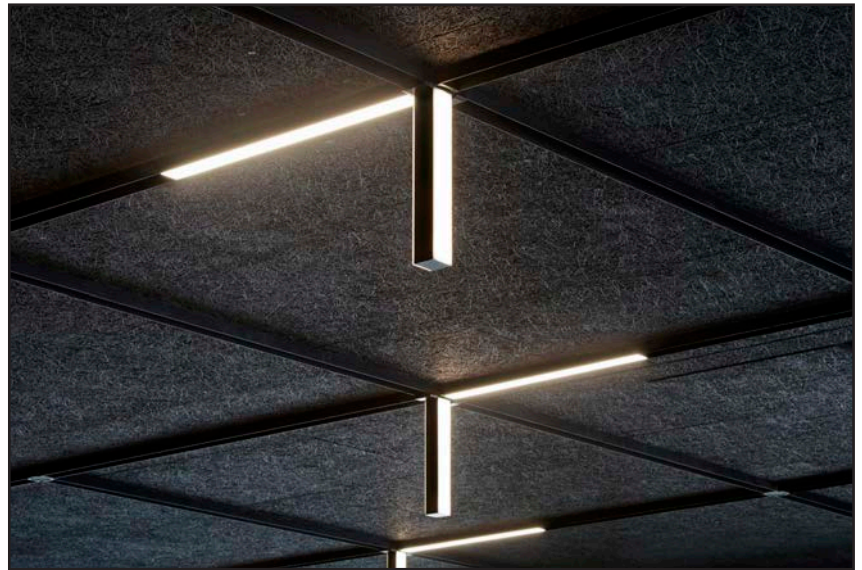
Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panelling with a black finish was specified throughout the space, punctuated by a bespoke lighting track with drop-down custom-made LED light battens further emphasising the urban and industrial aesthetic look. Troldtekt panels were specified for their excellent acoustic properties and ability to dramatically reduce sound reverberation as well as their superior environmental credentials.

Troldtekt acoustic panels are available in a variety of different structures and colours, combining superior sound absorption with an award-winning design. The Troldtekt range has a minimum expected life cycle of 50 years coupled with excellent resistance to humidity and tested to meet ball impact standards. The range is available in various sizes and structures, from extreme fine to fine. The panels can be supplied

as natural wood or finished in almost any RAL or NCS colour. Depending on the panel specified, reaction to fire is classed in accordance with EN 13501 as B-s1,d0 or A2-s1,d0 respectively. Cradle to Cradle Certified® at Gold level, Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panels are manufactured using wood from certified forests (PEFC™ and FSC®C115450) and can contribute positively to a building's BREEAM, WELL or LEED points.

*Photos: Jack Hobhouse*

**Troldtekt** ● [www.troldtekt.co.uk](http://www.troldtekt.co.uk)





# CaberDek weatherproof flooring with protective film

**CABERDEK, from West Fraser, is well-suited for the unpredictable climate in the UK. It combines the company's leading particleboard flooring with a durable, waterproof, and slip-resistant film.**

Meeting BS EN312: part 5 standards, CaberDek provides a secure working surface with its robust film that withstands impacts, punctures, and tears common on construction sites. For optimal bonding, CaberFix D4 adhesive is recommended for securing flooring to joists and within tongue and groove joints, as well as along exposed edges. CaberDek holds full BBA approval for up to 42 days of exposure when applied according to instructions.

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

Available in a convenient T&G format measuring 600 mm wide by 2400 mm long, CaberDek can be easily installed and is distributed through West Fraser suppliers. It's an ideal choice for housebuilders and subcontractors seeking swift installation and resilience in challenging on-site conditions.

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



## Engineered wood solutions from West Fraser



**NATURAL timber is gorgeous; and has been the building material for eons! It still has a huge place in our heart even amongst the multitude of new technological advances in the construction industry.**

Timber is a natural product and, like all products of nature including us, it is neither consistent nor guaranteed free of defects. Prone to warping, twisting and splitting, sawn timber is still widely used — understandably so, as it is relatively cheap, easy to work and both light and strong. Yet today's building industry expects high levels of precision and for structures to be right first time. Natural timber cannot deliver 100% reliably on this and so came the engineered wood products boom — materials which, instead of being hewn out of solid wood, are manufactured by bonding small pieces of wood fibre together to produce a homogenous product.

And West Fraser claims to lead the way in the manufacture of innovative timber panel products and claims to have done so for decades.

Today's wood panel products are among the best-known examples of engineered wood.

- Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF) is made by mixing sawdust with a strong resin and curing it under pressure to create a solid board with a smooth and consistent texture all the way through.
- Production of particleboard achieves a similar effect by using larger wood particles. Both these products are free of defects and are easy to work with.
- Oriented Strand Board (OSB), however, provides the best example of how timber's natural strength can be exploited and even enhanced through an engineered process. Thin flakes of softwood fibre, coated with a resin binder, are laid down in layers to create a deep bed of loose fibres.

The assembly process carefully orientates each layer so that the fibres overlap in different directions. The fibre mat is then compressed under great pressure and heat is applied to cure the resin.

The resulting board is stiff and strong, with the fibres oriented in such a way as to maximise bending resistance.

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



# Architects specifying warm SterlingOSB Zero for raw aesthetics

**FOR ARCHITECTS** looking to specify a versatile high performance engineered wood panel with exceptional sustainability credentials, SterlingOSB Zero offers a perfect solution. The product is the only UK-manufactured OSB with zero-added formaldehyde and is stronger than ply, with no knots, voids or risk of delamination. Visually, it has a raw appeal that provides a natural and contemporary look.

OSB (Oriented Strand Board) is formed of flakes or strands of timber bonded in cross-directional layers that are pressed together mechanically. The resulting structurally-engineered panels are available in a range that includes various profiles and finishes while meeting all building standards. Suited to a diversity of applications from roofing, flooring and hoarding to timber frame construction, the boards are also ideal for retail and other commercial projects such as building displays and partitions.

A clear rival to plywood, OSB has grown a reputation for being affordable, reliable and time saving. It has long been a hidden



*Architect Daniele Sini, of AU Studio, used OSB in his family home: "I liked the texture of SterlingOSB Zero and its warm colour variation; this is emphasised by the morning sun to give the space a warm glow".*

and important functional component of buildings and now archi-

tect also specify it to add style, warmth and character to spaces.

The SterlingOSB Zero range comprises three distinct options that provide architectural solutions right through the design, specification and construction processes. SterlingOSB Zero OSB 3 is a precision-engineered board for structural use in load bearing and challenging conditions. SterlingOSB Zero OSB Tongue & Groove is tailored to flat roof decking and flooring applications. SterlingOSB Zero PrimedPlus has all the benefits of SterlingOSB Zero but with the added advantage of being created to be the perfect solution for site boarding and displays. Pre-primed on one side in white or grey, it is a blank canvas for graphics and marketing messages.

With the pressure on architects to address the climate emergency and specify products with strong environmental credentials, SterlingOSB Zero not only has zero-added formaldehyde but is FSC® (C012533) certified and is manufactured in Scotland from sustainable locally grown timber, meaning fewer carbon miles are clocked up in transportation.

**West Fraser**

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*"The idea was to highlight the functionality and form of the materials used. By choosing an industrial wood - a raw material usually meant to be hidden - we were also seeking to express all of the small details we had created. Architecture makes sense when design explores the different scales, and, in a way, we are paying tribute to the manufacturer's creativity. Significantly, OSB is quite warm and it complements steel." — Florent Chagny Architecture on his use of SterlingOSB Zero in a compact Parisian apartment.*

# Choosing the Medium-Density Fibreboard: A Guide to Moisture-Resistant Options

By Becci Goldsmith, Product Manager, MEDITE SMARTPLY

**WHEN IT COMES** to selecting the right materials for construction projects, especially in areas with humidity or potential water exposure, moisture-resistant Medium-Density Fibreboard (MDF) panels should be considered. Despite misconceptions that MDF is not suitable for humid environments, the modern variations of these boards offer a range of benefits that enhance the durability, functionality, and aesthetic appeal of interior elements, making them ideal for kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms, exhibition stands, and shop fittings. This article explores the advantages of moisture-resistant MDF and highlights successful applications.

## Benefits of moisture-resistant MDF panels

- ◇ Improved durability: Compared to regular fibreboards, moisture-resistant MDF panels offer better durability in areas prone to moisture. This translates to a longer lifespan and reduced maintenance needs, providing a cost-effective solution for homeowners and builders alike.
- ◇ Enhanced machinability: Ensures smooth, precise cuts and ease of shaping, leading to high-quality finishes and satisfied clients.
- ◇ Ease of use: Depending on the selected option, MDF can eliminate sanding and priming or feature superior machinability, streamlining projects and saving time and costs.

## Option 1: Lightweight moisture-resistant MDF

For example, MEDITE MR LITE is a lightweight, moisture-resistant MDF panel designed for use in humid conditions in accordance with L-MDF.H (Option 1) as defined in EN 622-5.

It makes it ideal for kitchen and bathroom furniture, skirting boards, and general interior joinery. It serves as a substitute for softwood in non-stressed applications and can be used in applications where light routing is adequate.

For more demanding applications, the options below are recommended.

## Option 2: Primed moisture-resistant MDF

Innovations like MEDITE MR PLUS provide joiners and fitters with efficient, moisture-resistant, high-quality panels. Designed for humid conditions in accordance with MDF.H (Option 1) as defined in EN 622-5, it is ideal for exhibition stands, shop fittings, kitchen and bathroom furniture, general furniture, and general interior joinery.

Primed on both surfaces with an opaque UV-cured coating system, it provides a matt low gloss topcoat that is the perfect smooth base for further application of water or solvent-borne paint products by brush, roller or spraying equipment. This enables savings and reductions in the finished coating systems while maintaining superior end-product quality.



Credit: John Penny Joinery





Credit: John Penny Joinery

### Bespoke bedroom furniture built with MEDITE MR PLUS

John Penny Joinery recently completed a bespoke bedroom suite in Edinburgh featuring a fitted wardrobe, set of drawers, table, and nightstand. MEDITE MR PLUS was selected for its premium white primed moisture-resistant qualities, which helped achieve a luxurious finish and long-lasting performance for the doors and drawers. The reduced need for sanding allows the application of paint directly onto the panel. This decision resulted in a 13% cost saving (material and labour costs), as MEDITE MR PLUS eliminates the need for primer, saving both time and money.

"I've been using MEDITE MR PLUS for the past nine months, and it has completely transformed my business. It's my go-to material for all joinery projects because it's easy to use, delivers stunning surface quality, and saves money. I highly recommend it to anyone looking for peace of mind and a flawless finish," says John Penny, Director at John Penny Joinery.

### Option 3: Moisture-resistant MDF with an extra smooth surface

Another example of moisture-resistant MDF is MEDITE OPTIMA—a specially engineered moisture-resistant MDF panel with an extra smooth surface finish, ideal for applications requiring added density, enhanced machinability, and higher surface quality. Designed for humid conditions in accordance with MDF.H (Option 1) as defined in EN 622-5, it is used as a substitute for softwoods and hardwoods in non-stressed applications such as kitchen furniture, bathroom furniture, architectural mouldings, window boards, flooring, and general interior joinery. Its smoother surface requires less paint, leading to significant cost savings.

### Kitchen doors with the perfect finish

Switching to MEDITE OPTIMA was a success for John Penny Bespoke Joinery, who designed and created bespoke shaker kitchen doors for a private client in Scotland.

MEDITE OPTIMA was used to create durable, elegant shaker doors for a kitchen renovation in Edinburgh.

John Penny praised this moisture-resistant MDF for its stability and machinability, stating that the product ran smoothly through the machines and handled water-based paints well.

"The finish was absolutely perfect," commented John Penny, director at John Penny Joinery. "One of the main benefits of MEDITE OPTIMA was that it's easier to machine. The product I was using before was quite waxy, so it was getting stuck when I ran it through the machine. MEDITE OPTIMA runs very smoothly through the machines, and that made a huge difference."

### Sustainability

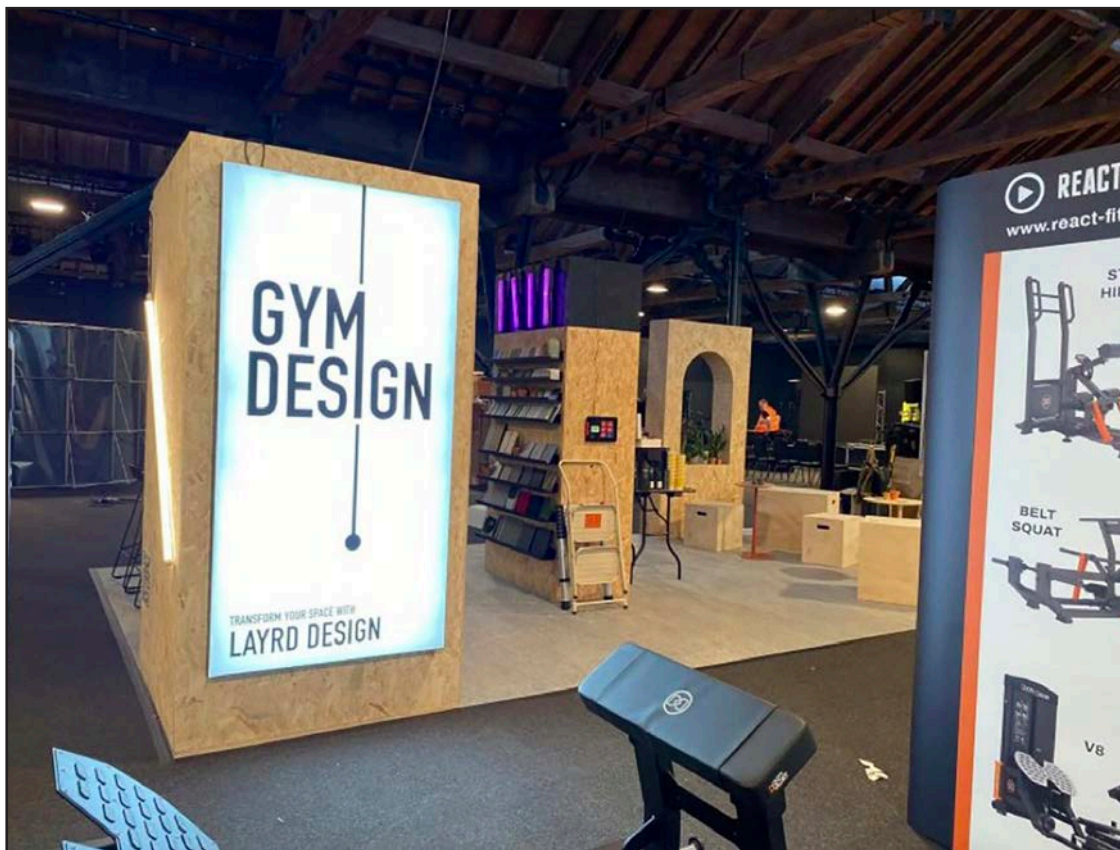
Check with your suppliers to ensure that timber is sourced from sustainably managed, FSC® and PEFC-certified forests. Using fast-growing trees that lock up carbon during their lifespan offers significant benefits as the construction industry strives to reduce its carbon footprint.

Choosing the right moisture-resistant MDF panel can significantly impact the quality of projects, especially in humid environments. Innovative solutions can provide easy-to-use options, meet regulations and ensure superior performance over the lifetime of the furniture and fit-outs.

These products not only enhance the durability and visual appeal of your projects but also offer cost savings and improved efficiency.

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

# West Fraser panel products are the natural choice for Cambridge workshop business



**A CAMBRIDGESHIRE based couple with a burgeoning wood-working business have established a reputation for precision made products, based on basic flair, topflight equipment and buying high quality performance board products from the West Fraser range.**

Natural Workshop began trading back in 2013, when Michelle Elener wanted to get back into the workplace after having the couple's third child and began producing table mats and art-work using a technique known as pyrography — burning images into wood with a soldering iron. And despite the cost of initially buying small blanks of birch plywood from high street art shops, increasing demand soon saw her partner Josh Anders getting involved. Since then, they have moved premises twice, with the current one in the town of March turning out everything from

chopping boards and pottery stands to bespoke speaker cabinets and kitchen units.

Josh Anders recounted: "Michelle was selling a lot of her pyrography on eBay but also began producing bespoke sections of ply for other businesses. When we got more space in 2019, we installed an 8 x 4 CNC router as well as a laser cutter and began diversifying further. Up until Covid hit, we were doing a lot of work for the hospitality industry — making coasters and menu boards etc — but when that industry was shuttered by the lockdowns, we began working with interior designers and specialist joinery companies. Most recently I have been building some exhibition stands for a new client, using the SterlingOSB Zero on a timber frame.

"Unfortunately, apart from the economic ups and downs of recent years, we have also had some bad experiences with very

poor quality boards so we started buying West Fraser's CaberMDF Pro some 18 months ago. This is a quality product which cuts and engraves really well, while we also use the MDF to make our router templates for shaping beech chopping boards. I now go out of my way to purchase West Fraser products, currently getting them from Travis Perkins — in a world where so much seems to be being dumbed down and inferior, it is great to know there is material you can buy which won't cause you stress."

The premium grade CaberMDF Pro is part of a range of high quality, medium density boards widely used in shop-fitting, furniture manufacturing and other applications where accuracy and sharpness of cut are crucial. The range also includes the CaberMDF Trade and CaberMDF Trade MR options, the latter being ideal for making kitchen and bathroom units

where the enhanced moisture resistance is required. Being precision-made in the UK means less waste onsite and the associated costs of disposal to landfill, plus lower transportation charges. As well as guaranteeing a more secure supply in a currently challenging global market, specialist manufacturers, fit-out contractors or other customers can specify West Fraser's well proven MDF options with total confidence.

Josh and Michelle are meanwhile in the process of designing a new range of precision made marking and measuring tools which will be sold in MDF presentation cases, and they are also planning to invest in a computer-controlled ACC machine which features an automatic tool-changer so they can produce more complex fabrications.

**West Fraser**

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# Introducing DP-Crystal Slim: A perfect blend of timeless glass design and of crystal strength

**DECORATIVE Panels Lamination has launched a new product, dp-Crystal Slim — a collection of over 16 REHAU designs from their Pure, Strong and Deep ranges, designed for vertical indoor use, perfect for splashbacks and wet wall applications. With an easy to clean, hygienic surface, dp-Crystal Slim is a suitable replacement for traditional bathroom and kitchen wall tiles. It is an ideal substitute for glass, tile or traditional stone and marble in all hospitality and retail environments, according to the company.**

dp-Crystal Slim boasts exceptional durability, resisting scratches, heat, and chemicals, making it an ideal choice for high-traffic areas. Its sleek and modern aesthetic will elevate any space, while its low maintenance requirements ensure a hassle-free experience. The crystal glass surface is non-porous, preventing the growth of bacteria and mould, making it a hygienic choice for kitchens, bathrooms, or even healthcare facilities.

The versatility of dp-Crystal Slim knows no bounds, according to the company. It is suitable for kitchen walls under cupboards, shower walls, basin splash backs, kitchen splashbacks. dp-Crystal Slim is considered perfect as a centre panel for furniture or media units. Its acrylic surface is only 4 mm thick, is 50% lighter than real glass and 10x less brittle. It is

the perfect surface finish for hospitality and retail interiors, according to the company. dp-Crystal Slim can be easily machined on site using conventional woodworking tools, no need for templating, off site working and revisiting to install at a later date. It is also considered a suitable replacement for traditional bathroom or kitchen wall tiles.

It can be used to create stunning feature walls or elegant back-splashes. Its slim profile and lightweight design make it easy to handle and install, reducing labour costs and minimizing environmental impact.

dp-Crystal Slim is not just an ordinary surface finish. It is a masterpiece

crafted with precision and care to deliver a product that is both visually stunning and incredibly durable. The slim design adds a touch of sophistication to any setting, making it the perfect choice for those who appreciate the finer things in life. But what truly sets dp-Crystal Slim apart is its strength. Made with the highest quality materials, this product is built to last.

Whether you're working on a large-scale commercial project or a bespoke residential design, Decorative Panels are here to help you achieve your creative vision. dp-Crystal Slim is available in high-gloss and matt versions in quantities from as little as just one laminated, acrylic sheet.

**Decorative Panels**  
**Tel 01484 658341**

**[www.decorativepanels.co.uk](http://www.decorativepanels.co.uk)**

