

# PANEL, WOOD & *Solid Surface*

*Issue No. 185/186*

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## Combilift celebrates its 25th anniversary

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# THE PERFORMANCE YOU WERE WAITING FOR

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# Mindful Living announced as theme for Surface Design Show 2024

**SURFACE Design Show announces the theme of its 2024 edition: 'Mindful Living'; which will explore the balance between design intuition and analytical thinking to achieve meaningful experiences.**

Surface Design Show returns to London's Business Design Centre from 6-8 February 2024 allowing architects, designers and specifiers to discover the best innovative materials for the built environment whilst also enjoying a stellar line up of guest speakers and thought-provoking installations.



**Sally Angharad**

From physical to digital, materials and their properties play a central role in the multi-sensory space. As we embrace technological advancements and invest in new design approaches, the boundaries between virtual and reality continue to blur; Mindful Living explores what this means for the built environment.

Mindful Living celebrates progress and innovation in design for interiors and architecture, as we adapt to our ever-changing world. Conversations around man versus machine continue as we search for new ideas. Digital and human intelligence are key, exploring the benefits of each to provide progressive solutions. Whether the focus is on machine learning for industry research, digital platforms becoming independent designers, or simply the virtual world driving new aesthetics, one thing is clear: our material world is evolving.

Surface Design Show director Nickie West says: "The theme for 2024 focuses on the ambition to design well while doing good - with a conscious effort to protect our planet by aiming for zero waste manufacturing and sustainable alternatives. The natural world remains a key influence on the design industry, inspiring new techniques and processes, as well as offering a wealth of material substitutes".

Curated by material, design & trend expert Sally Angharad and located at the heart of the show is Surface Spotlight Live, a recurring highlight of the show. The 2024 edition will shine a light on cutting-edge surfaces, finishes and processes that embrace the future and harness the vital role materials play in design across all dimensions.

Sally explains 'We are at such a turning point with technological advancements where we are trying to gain a deeper understanding of how these innovations can benefit us today as well as in the future. Since the pandemic we have become more in tune with our innate need for emotional connections. This means we seek to embrace new ideas but at the same time appreciate the value of human interactions. The effect of this on our aesthetic world is also significant, and the way we experience physical and digital spaces is a key research topic for the design industry'.

The main stage will play host to over 40 speakers during the 2½ days of the show. Several sessions including Tuesday's Opening Night Debate will focus on the topic of Mindful Living. The full programme of events will be announced in November.

Aiming to live harmoniously, the 2024 Surface Design Show shines a light on cutting edge surfaces, finishes and processes that embrace the future and harness the vital role materials play on design across all dimensions.

**Surface Design Show** ● [www surfacedesignshow.com](http://www surfacedesignshow.com)

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## GERRY LYNCH WOODWORKING MACHINERY



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# SCM presents the latest innovations and the new Digital Control Room at its headquarters in Rimini

**MORE THAN 2,500 visitors from all over Europe, Asia, and North and South America, crowded the SCM Group headquarters in Rimini from 28 to 30 September to open the new Technology Centre dedicated to the entire woodworking industry.**

This new space has been enlarged to 4,000 square metres and presents technological and digital innovations for every machining requirement in the furniture industry, windows and doors production, timber construction and bespoke joinery.

The Technology Centre was created as part of a redevelopment plan involving an additional 11,000 square metres of the entire Rimini industrial site.

Other investments, totalling an increase of 20,000 square metres, were made to increase production efficiency at the SCM sites in Monza, Piacenza and Siena, as well as at the Villa Verucchio site of the controlled company Hiteco, which specialises in electro-mechanical components.

The new Technology Centre presents itself as the new digital home of woodworking innova-



tion: every detail has been designed to offer the widest range of technologies and services and provide integrated, connected, flexible, more sustainable and optimised processes at each stage of secondary wood processing.

The event was an opportunity

to discover the latest solutions developed by the Group which combine the strong technological skill for the production of solutions for furniture, doors and windows, timber construction and artisan joinery with the development of software and services,

to accompany the client at each stage of their production process.

Among the new entries there were some applied to the CNC machining centres: Cargo, an innovative automatic system for loading and unloading doors and panels, and the new CAD-CAM programming software, Maestro lab.

Cargo was presented integrated with the Morbidelli m200 pods&rails machining centre: it is a fully automated cell that requires no operator supervision, and it is believed to be unique in the market for its ability to continuously load and unload pieces in masked time while the machine performs drilling and routing operations. This exclusive solution allows for maximum efficiency by avoiding manual work phases and their associated costs and unproductive time, in addition to an unprecedented ease of use: both the machining centre and Cargo are directly managed with Maestro active HMI interface.

However, if it is true that the technology remains the heart of SCM's experience, the software and services are increasingly the





guarantor element of a continuous and shared relationship with the client. Maestro lab is the new cutting-edge CAD/CAM programming software for both the office and machine use. Intuitive and dynamic, it allows you to easily transform an idea into a finished product, thanks to intelligent and technologically advanced programming functions and more than 150 already integrated apps. So, from the office to the factory in a flash via an enjoyable and fast user experience.

The contextualised and continuous exchange of information from the machine to the cloud thanks to the IoT Maestro Connect platform means SCM can provide clients with rapid access to answers and specific advice which will support the operators and maintenance workers with their challenges and needs for autonomy when using, carrying out maintenance and programming the machine and software. A specific area created inside the Technology Centre demonstrates how data are transformed into bespoke assistance and advisory services of a proactive and predictive nature with a view to guaranteeing the client operational continuity thanks to what are claimed to be the most evolved digital technologies and constant attention by the SCM Service team.

SCM continues to invest in the excellence of its customer service and, for the event, opened the doors to Autostore, its new automated spare parts warehouse. This innovation has allowed SCM to increase fivefold the pick-up speed of the codes and increase the number of orders handled within 24 hr by 26%. All this with an energy consumption of less than 0.1 kWh per robot, confirming the Group's focus on sustainability.

Sustainability which also means ergonomics and ease of use, made available to the operators of all the SCM machines by the renewed eye-M control panel, which makes the operator's work easier and offers a modular programming and a higher calculation power.

## Other Technological Innovations

### Automated systems for the furniture industry

SCM's new Technology Centre displayed automated and connected solutions, as well as interaction systems between humans, machines, articulated robots and AMR shuttles, software and digital services.

Gabbiani gt2 beam saw with articulated robot for automatic loading and unloading: a flexible cell that optimises shifts and promotes the needs of machining that is both "batch 1" and based on large volumes. It

can be used with or without the articulated robot, with automatic switch from one modality to another. All this enhanced by the new Maestro optiwise optimiser.

Sizing and nesting cell ideal for batch 1 with Flexstore hp automatic storage and an articulated robot for unloading finished, small and discarded pieces. Gabbiani p80 beam saw and Morbidelli x200 nesting machining centre are both integrated into the automatic warehouse that ensures storage, labelling of the panels and direct loading onto the worktable of both machines, to protect the more delicate surfaces. Simultaneously, the Gabbiani p80 beam saw can also perform pack cutting with exceptional production levels.

Stefani cell E edge banding cell: it combines the many advantages of Stefani x industrial edge bander in terms of productivity and quality with those of an automated and flexible interaction. This happens thanks to the pickback gantry panel return system. The electronic touch operating units guarantee top finishing quality even on the most delicate materials, while the new hi-drive kit increases the positioning speed of the units for high productivity even in batch 1 production. All this with a simple and intuitive control thanks to HMI Maestro active edge software.

The Morbidelli cx220 drilling and dowelling flexible cell with robot to produce all furniture elements more efficiently, even with workpieces that differ considerably from one another. The cell produces one panel per minute and over 400 panels per shift, with one operator, in 50 m<sup>2</sup>. It can be used exclusively with the robot for a continuous cycle production, or with partial operator supervision.

### Beam saw

On display is the Gabbiani vsi, vertical panel saw with independent motors for main blade and scorer with mechanical plunging designed to make horizontal and vertical cuts on different types of wood materials.

### Edge banding

Making its debut is the new Maestro edgestore manager software for centralised control of the customer's edges: it ensures their use and position in the warehouse are always under control, as well as sharing information with software and company management systems.

A completely new entry is the Olympic 500plus edge bander for even



higher productivity, processing solid wood lippings up to 12 mm and gluing plastic edges by using hot air technology for an invisible glue line.

Also on display is the Olympic 500: automatic compact edge bander. Versatile use of different kinds of glue, EVA and PUR and the machining of 2 real radii thanks to the Multiedge devices available on all the operating units including the rounding unit.

Also making its début is the Olympic 300: a new edge bander for small artisan businesses. It allows the performing of a wide variety of processes like the 2 real radii machining with simple automatic settings, 45° chamfering and the upper and lower edge finish of the panel in differentiated mode.

### Assembly

For assembly, the featured Action e is now available with the new unloading loading system: a valuable aid for mounting the cabinet at the working height of the clamp and pushing it into the pressing area as well as vertically positioning mounted cabinets and transporting them to the next work area.

The Action p manual loading and unloading electromechanical clamp machine is also revamped: the new operator interface (HMI) allows for even simpler and more intuitive operation and enables import and export of work programs, production data and general database.

### Surface treatment

SCM presented the latest entries of DMC eurosystem and DMC sd 90 for sanding and calibrating.

The main advantage of DMC eurosystem, highly modular automatic sanding-calibrating machine, is its capability to perform a variety of machining work on both raw and painted panels. At the Grand Opening the new 15" "eye-S" control panel was also on display, that allows the management of all the sanding functions directly from the touchscreen, as well as and the brand new Maestro active sand HMI which among its new functionalities is able to manage the tool storage, indicating the quantity per type of belts available in stock and giving an automatic warning when they are about to finish. The machine is equipped with the new planetary unit, ideal for achieving a precise finish on any surface, while the GSI-200 interchangeable brushing unit has been designed for companies looking for maximum production flexibility.

Making its début for DMC sd 90 is the exclusive roller unit with interchangeable rubber sleeves of different hardness. With this new configuration, the machine becomes more flexible compared to the classic two or three-unit versions, adapting to the production needs of small-medium businesses.

The new unit allows the operator to switch from calibrating operations to sanding operations of veneered and painted panels, in a matter of minutes, by simply replacing the roller's rubber sleeve with another one of a different hardness level. This leads to a considerable reduction in machine stops for classic maintenance operations. Its compact size means this sander is ideal for being positioned even in very narrow spaces, optimising production spaces.

Also on show at the Surface Lab in Villa Verucchio (Rn) was the new DMC system with laser unit. This innovative unit can create three-dimensional marking on parquet, wooden elements, MDF panels to be veneered, fibre cement panels and solid surfaces of any length. Some of the most innovative technologies to treat and finish the panel surface, include the Sergiani 3d form press for state-of-the-art veneering of 3D panels.

Superfici specialists presented the latest trends for finishing. Standing out among the new solutions digitally illustrated were the spraying robotic solutions.

Robot Maestro for painting windows and doors. Designed from the arm movements of an artisan worker transformed into a robot, now with 8 axes for machining even larger windows and doors. The management and control systems are highly efficient, both in organization and work operations. This guarantees the best quality standards at each individual spray and on every single window and door.

Valtorta bravo2, cartesian robot for painting panels. Two 5-axis heads, precision, reliability, and delicacy combined with speed and production continuity of an automatic spraying system for what is claimed to be unparalleled quality. Its application versatility shines thanks to the possibility of inclining and positioning the spraying guns, so as to adapt the machine to the piece's edges and structures that are not flat. After taking an automatic reading of the load, it will be possible to calculate the best spray trajectories using simple, intuitive software. No space, not even the most intricate, will be missed.



### Windows and doors and solid wood

The Grand Opening was also the opportunity to discover a world preview inside the expanded factory in Rimini, the new System 9 integrated line for windows and doors manufacturing, which includes another absolute novelty: the Celaschi action double-sided tenoning machine.

The SCM line stands out for the rapidity in its setup change and the extreme flexibility in the management of work-pieces with different dimensions, allowing the production of up to 200 complete windows per working shift, even with medium-small batches. The new Celaschi action, in particular, allows the processing of two elements of different lengths simultaneously, exploiting the principle of machining with moving motors and stationary work-pieces. Among the pluses, the presence of four electrospindles each one served by a six-position tool changer.

In the Rimini factory Windorflex, was also on show. This is a new automatic machining cell for producing complete windows, designed to optimise production rhythms by maintaining high flexibility and excellent finishing. News also for the Superset nt automatic throughfeed moulder, now equipped with SCM's IoT platform Maestro connect, for an intelligent and connected production of profiles for windows, doors, stairs, beads, frames and furnishings..

### Timber construction

Plenty of space was also dedicated to the latest in timber construction, presented in digital mode. These include Oikos xl+, a new CNC machining centre for structural columns with a maximum cross-section of 1.250 x 610 mm, used in multi-storey buildings. The presence of an independent sawblade unit as well as the six-axis operating unit, means that cuts can be performed even on the maximum thickness.

Also on show: the Oikos xs, cnc machining centre that guarantees maximum speed of execution, precision and reduced footprint when processing glulam or solid wood beams with a maximum cross-section of 450 x 240 mm; DMC system xl, highly modular automatic sanding-calibrating machine, capable of machining CLT panels up to 3700 mm in width and 500 mm thick.

### Joinery machines

The most representative SCM joinery machines were also on show, claimed to be world leading for top of the range performance and continuous innovation. Stand-alone as well as integrated solutions like those for beam saw, edgebanding and drilling of the Smart&Human Factory integrated cell dedicated to flexible and bespoke production from raw materials to finished furniture and enhanced by the integration with MES software.



The new entries include "blade off", the innovative SCM's safety system applied to circular saws. Thanks to the smart sensors it prevents accidental contact between the human body and the blade. Also in evidence: the new on/off system and the automatic setup with multi-radius tools on the trimming and edge scraping units on me 40 and/or me 35 edge banders controlled by the eye-S compact control system with Maestro active edge interface which guarantees high performance according to the program; startech cn k, compact 3-axis NC machining centre able to carry out all types of milling, decorations, engraving, signboard creation and 3D model prototyping.

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# Combilift celebrates its 25th anniversary

**MATERIALS** handling experts, recently celebrated 25 years in business. On 25 September, members of the trade press joined dealers and customers from a wide range of countries at Combilift's global headquarters in Monaghan to celebrate, just the first day in a week of celebrations at the company.

The Combilift team was joined on the first day by Heather Humphreys TD, Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands, who said: "Over the past 25 years, Combilift has made a very important impact to the Irish economy. Combilift is a visionary company in every sense and I'm delighted that the Irish government, through Enterprise Ireland, has supported Combilift through its incredible 25-year journey.

Combilift has also marked its anniversary with five new product launches. Two of these have already been reported in this journal: the Combi-CB70E, launched at Ligna 2023, was covered on pages 14 & 15 of our June/July issue, while the Combi-Cube featured on page 25 of that same issue. The three other products are Combi-Connect, Combi-LC and Combi-AGT (Autonomous Guided Forklift Truck).



*Pictured with the newly-launched Combilift-CB70E was (left to right) Conor McKenna, Seamus McMeel, Heather Humphreys, TD — Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands, Martin McVicar and Mark Whyte, Combilift. Photo: Rory Geary.*



The Combi-LC was seen as particularly significant by Mr McVicar as it enables Combilift to enter the rapidly growing offshore wind sector.

Designed in collaboration with Siemens Gamesa, it allows for the movement of wind turbine blades and towers — some as long as 115 m



*Above: the newly-launched Combi-LC from CombiLift at Siemens Gamesa. The Combi-LC is designed to meet the load handling demands of largescale offshore wind manufacturers.*

and weighing in at around 70 tonnes, through production stages and on to storage locations — which can sometimes be as far as 5 km apart.

The concept of bespoke Load Carriers [patent pending design] is based on two fully customisable remote-control units with low-level chassis beds that can work in tandem master and slave operation, with dimensions and wheel configurations that vary according to load type and weight.

Siemens Gamesa, one of the world's largest offshore wind suppliers, has become the first company to leverage the new technology by signing a multi-million order for a number of the bespoke Load Carriers, and Combilift is in active discussions with other offshore wind companies with similar demands. Combilift expects to generate over €50m in revenue per year in this market segment by 2026.

Josh Moffett, Heavy Equipment Manager at Combilift, commented on the company's move into the offshore wind sector: "We are thrilled to have launched this new product — the Combi-LC, and we hope it will act as a gateway for us to further progress within our venture into the wind energy sector. The scale of offshore wind projects around the world leads to a very unique set of challenges, one of which being the ability to transport the very large components that make up a wind turbine. We recognised this and used our expertise in load handling to develop a solution to support those in the industry. The product is specifically made to order and therefore can be uniquely customised to fit specific applications."

Another of the new products, the Combi-AGT, was demonstrated to visitors during their guided tours of the factory. We saw how Combilift stores the steel and other components used in the manufacture of its vehicles, and uses those same vehicles to select components as they are required for use. It had been first announced at the Fabtech trade show earlier in September, and is covered separately on page 19 of this issue.



*Heather Humphreys, TD — Minister of Social Protection, Community and Rural Development and the Islands addresses staff and visitors at Combilift's 25th anniversary celebrations.*

# COMBILIFT 25 Years

## LIFTING INNOVATION

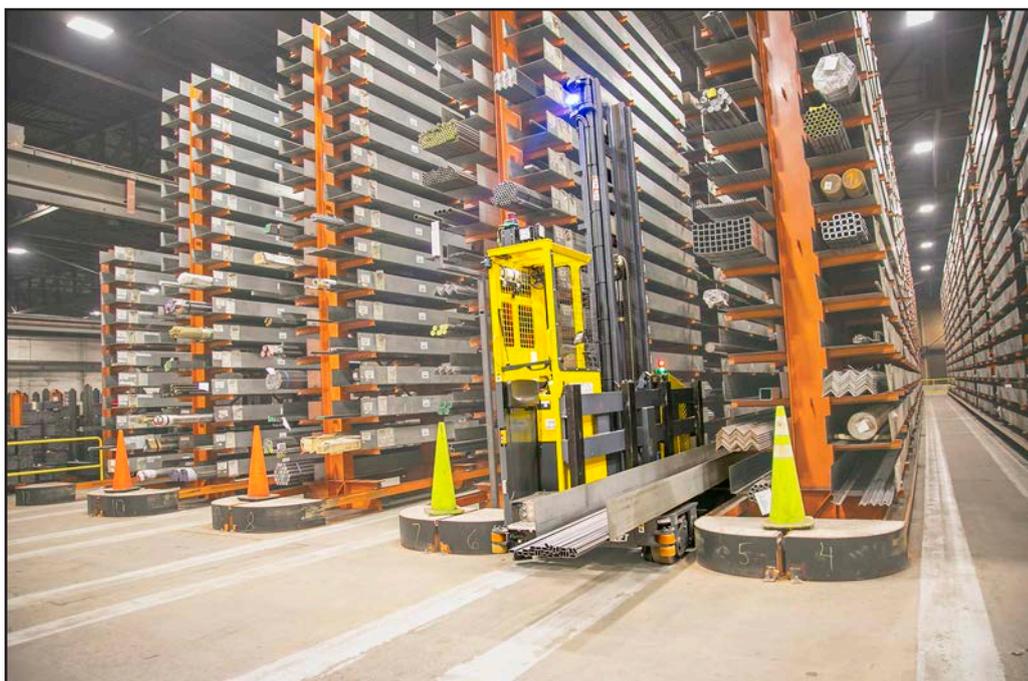
It was an interesting tour, which included meeting the teams who customise individual vehicles to meet customers' specific requirements, and those who handle the delivery of spare parts to customers, as well as those who weld and spray the individual components, then assemble the individual trucks: and, at all stages of the production process, ensure that the vehicles meet the highest possible quality standards.

The final new product, Combi-Connect is a telematic software product that provides its customers with greater levels of insight into fleet management and utilisation, providing real time data on fleet performance, including location tracking, usage analytics, and maintenance alerts. With

this invaluable information at their fingertips, businesses can optimise operations. Based on a subscription model, Combi-Connect offers fully transparent data analytics enabling users to make informed decisions, for example on scheduled maintenance.

To quote Martin McVicar: "We have a track record of innovation at Combilift. We invest 7% of our revenue annually in R&D and today is the culmination of many years' hard work. We are delighted to be continuing this tradition of innovation 25 years on. Now employing over 800 people in Monaghan and 200 people in other locations across the world, the success of Combilift is testament to our people, our customers and our supporting dealers around the world. We are looking forward to the next 25 years at Combilift."

**Combilift**  
www.combilift.com



*The recently launched Combi-AGT (Autonomous Guided Forklift Truck).*

# HOLZ-HANDWERK is on the home stretch!



**STAND confirmations have been sent out, and HOLZ-HANDWERK is on the home stretch. That means the planning is complete, and just a few spaces are still available. Despite the tough economic conditions in the building industry, organizers VDMA and Nürnberg-Messe remain confident. HOLZ-HANDWERK will face the professional community in 2024 with an improved hall arrangement and a clear focus on the trades and the relevant themes for the future. The successful pairing of HOLZ-HANDWERK and FENSTERBAU FRONTALE will take place in Nuremberg from 19 to 22 March 2024.**

From the outset, the special thing about HOLZ-HANDWERK has been its combination of a family atmosphere, time for in-person discussions with customers, and presentation of the latest machines and tools, which can be individually explained and tested first-hand. "The final sprint has begun," say organisers Stefan Dittrich, director HOLZ-HANDWERK, and Dr Bernhard Dirr, managing director of VDMA's Woodworking Machinery Association. "Now we're making the final dash toward HOLZ-HANDWERK 2024."

## Place to be: VDMA and exhibitors stress the importance of HOLZ-HANDWERK

Gregor Baumbusch, CEO of Weinig, explains the importance of HOLZ-HANDWERK to his business: "We are there for our customers, even when times are hard. What LIGNA is for industrial customers, HOLZ-HANDWERK is for our skilled tradespeople. With our brands Weinig and Holz-Her, we are the partners to the skilled trades. The trade fair in Nuremberg is therefore an important platform, and we're looking forward to the interaction there."

Dr Dirr sums it up: "Many exhibitors already perceive themselves as partners to the trades, and in Nuremberg they exhibit the solutions that a modern operation needs. Automation and flexible, digitalised production technologies are at the top of the list, and are there to be seen and experienced at the trade fair. Unfortunately, however, the economic situation facing the building industry is heading for a crisis worldwide, and that impacts on us as manufacturers of woodworking machinery."

Mr Dittrich adds: "In this situation, we can be pleased with the current level of registrations for HOLZ-HANDWERK 2024, even if a number of machine builders have decided not to participate. Although we are really sorry to learn of these individual decisions, many ongoing discussions with our customers are giving us the reassurance that we can expect HOLZ-HANDWERK 2024 to be a success. In addition, bookings for FENSTERBAU FRONTALE are very strong. We are looking forward to the combined trade fair event here at the Nuremberg exhibition venue in March 2024."

Jürgen Köppel, management spokesperson and CEO of Leitz, rated HOLZ-HANDWERK as the "place to be": "For us at Leitz, HOLZ-HANDWERK is a trusted partner to the skilled trades and the wider industry, making it one of the most important events on our trade fair calendar. Trade fairs are all the more important in our digitalized world, since they form a neutral, tangible marketplace. HOLZ-HANDWERK is the "place to be" for us in March every other year, since this is where we can experience an in-person, down-to-earth approach in a professional trade fair setting. That is what HOLZ-HANDWERK is all about, and I am confident that this successful design will work again for the visitors and exhibitors in 2024, especially considering the difficult economic circumstances."

## New hall structure and exciting supporting programme

For 2024 the organizers, VDMA and NürnbergMesse, have further refined the profile of the event to align more clearly with what customers in the skilled trades want, based on their practical experience. By adding Hall 8 as a new and attractive machine hall for the forthcoming event, the organizers were also able to accommodate a number of structural changes and wishes. The Supplies area (hardware, materials) will thus be located in the western part of Hall 12.0, directly by the north-west entrance. Software and the HOLZ-HANDWERK Campus will welcome their customers in Hall 11.0. An attractive supporting programme, organized by the Bavarian Carpentry Association (FSH Bayern), and an exciting area devoted to "A practical guide to digitization" are in preparation.

## About HOLZ-HANDWERK

As the leading European trade fair for machine technology, equipment and supplies for the woodworking trade, HOLZ-HANDWERK is the must-do event for joiners, carpenters, specialist retailers and experts in furniture-making and interior fittings. The on-site display showcases products and technologies for secondary woodworking and wood processing — including woodworking machines, electrical and pneumatic tools, software, fixing technology and hardware, construction elements, fitted systems, and timber and engineered wood. The hands-on atmosphere is what sets HOLZ-HANDWERK apart.

As in previous years, the co-located FENSTERBAU FRONTALE exhibition can be visited using the same ticket.

HOLZ-HANDWERK will take place for the 21st time in 2024 and will be jointly organized by VDMA's Woodworking Machinery Association and NürnbergMesse GmbH. The co-sponsor of the event is the Bavarian Carpentry Association (FSH Bayern).

**Holz-Handwerk** ● [www.holz-handwerk.de/en](http://www.holz-handwerk.de/en)

# Wood Awards 2023 shortlist announced

**TWENTY buildings and fourteen furniture projects have been shortlisted for this year's Wood Awards – which celebrate excellence and innovation in timber architecture and design.**

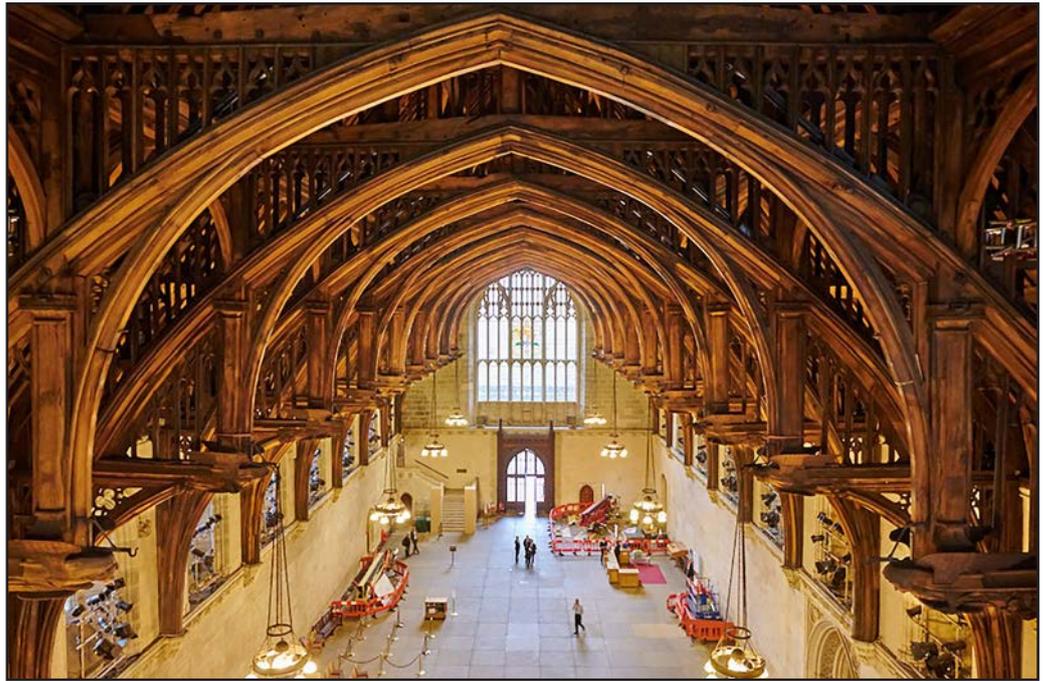
From over 200 projects entered, this shortlist of 34 entries celebrates the diversity and creativity of buildings and furniture made using the world's foremost sustainable and renewable material — wood.

A seafront visitor centre, a concert hall, and an office complex are among the shortlisted buildings for the 2023 Wood Awards, while lathe-turned lamps, a table-cum-musical instrument and a community-built table set are among the furniture and product projects.

The Awards are split into two main categories, Furniture & Product and Buildings. Buildings are split into: Commercial & Leisure, Education & Public Sector, Interior, Private Sector, Small Project, and Restoration & Reuse. Within Furniture & Product, there are three subcategories: Bespoke, Production Made and Student Designer.

Spanning significant public spaces, forward-thinking offices, and unique private homes, the twenty shortlisted structures in the Buildings category provide a snapshot of exemplary and progressive timber architecture.

Shortlisted projects for the Building Categories of the Wood



*Westminster Hall Roof and Lantern, one of the shortlisted projects in the Building category (Donald Insall Associates). © Thomas Erskine & Donald Insall Associates.*

Awards 2023 include Westminster Hall Roof and Lantern, London (Donald Insall Associates), pictured here. This heritage conservation project has expertly repaired and rebuilt Westminster Hall's exquisite medieval hammer beam roof and lantern.

Jim Greaves, Head of the Building Judges says: "Selected from over ninety entries, this impressive shortlist reveals the best use of timber in construction today

and demonstrates that wood truly is a material of continuous change and innovation. Our panel of judges will now visit each shortlisted building to determine this year's winners — and select a stand-out project to receive the prestigious Gold Award. This rigorous process is one of the things that makes the Wood Awards the highest accolade in the UK timber industry."

The fourteen shortlisted Furniture & Product items include The

Sound of Wood, London (George Richarson), pictured here. Using a colourful array of seventeen native and UK-grown woods, this engaging and playful project combines two passions: furniture and music.

Corinne Julius, Head of the Furniture & Product Judges says: "Wood is a wonderful and often underrated, sustainable material. It's a taken-for-granted material that deserves more respect. The Wood Awards are intended to showcase to the public the beauty and versatility of wood and highlight its ability to connect us to the natural world. They also aim to inspire the industry, designers, makers, and students to gain a better understanding of wood in its myriad forms in order to create beautiful, intelligent products for an increasingly discriminating public."

The winners of the Wood Awards will be announced on 22 November during an Evening Ceremony at Carpenter's Hall.

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

**Wood Awards**  
[www.woodawards.com](http://www.woodawards.com)



*The Sound of Wood (George Richarson). © Carmel King.*

# Althia Colours by Abode shortlisted at Designerati Awards

**ABODE**, award-winning designer and distributor of market leading kitchen taps & sinks, Pronteau hot water taps, bathroom taps & showering solutions is proud to announce its latest range of single lever mixer taps Althia Colours, is a finalist on the Innovation LONGLIST at this year's Designerati Awards, 'Kitchen Product of the Year' category.

Taking place on 22 November 2023, the ceremony for the Designerati Awards 2023 will be held on board Ocean Diva, the UK's debut carbon neutral vessel which is currently moored at Butler's Wharf in London. The perfect location to help celebrate the pinnacles of design, the 'Kitchen Product of the Year' category showcases the very best in new product design across the kitchen interiors sector and is open to both manufacturers and suppliers.

Designed to elevate the everyday, Althia Colours by Abode presents across a contemporary range of single lever mixer taps, which are designed to capture the latest interior trends in the UK home and kitchen. The collection offers four modern paint colours



and includes a Mediterranean-style Terracotta, neutral Nude, Nordic-style Scandi Grey (pictured below) and Matt White (pictured above), which has been dubbed the fastest emerging tap colour inspired by the much-loved Scandinavian design trend.

Althia Colours extend the Althia Finish Library from six to 10 options, meaning you can now

choose between a range of painted colours and metallic finishes across the versatile and popular Althia Tap Family by Abode. The new Althia Colours help to highlight the beautifully contoured spout and slim lever handle of the Althia, which offers a subtle blend of square and round forms in one design.

With multiple finish options, Althia becomes an ideal choice for

an array of kitchen styles and utility rooms. The new Althia Colours are expertly handcrafted from quality raw materials and feature an innovative control valve and anti-splash spout to ensure stylish durability and allow for optimum usage with minimal water waste!

Leanne Stansfield, Marketing Manager at Abode says "Everyone in the Abode family is delighted by the news that Althia Colours has been shortlisted as a finalist at this year's Designerati Awards. As the contemporary kitchen continues to be founded on top-tier originality, we are finding this year's hero products are welcoming taps with real wood handles and designs in a new palette of painted finishes. Being able to beautifully coordinate the hardware with the furniture, materials and other finishing touches is a huge asset when innovating with colour, so we are pleased that we can offer something new to the design community; and have it recognised on a global stage!"

**Abode**

Tel 01226 283 434

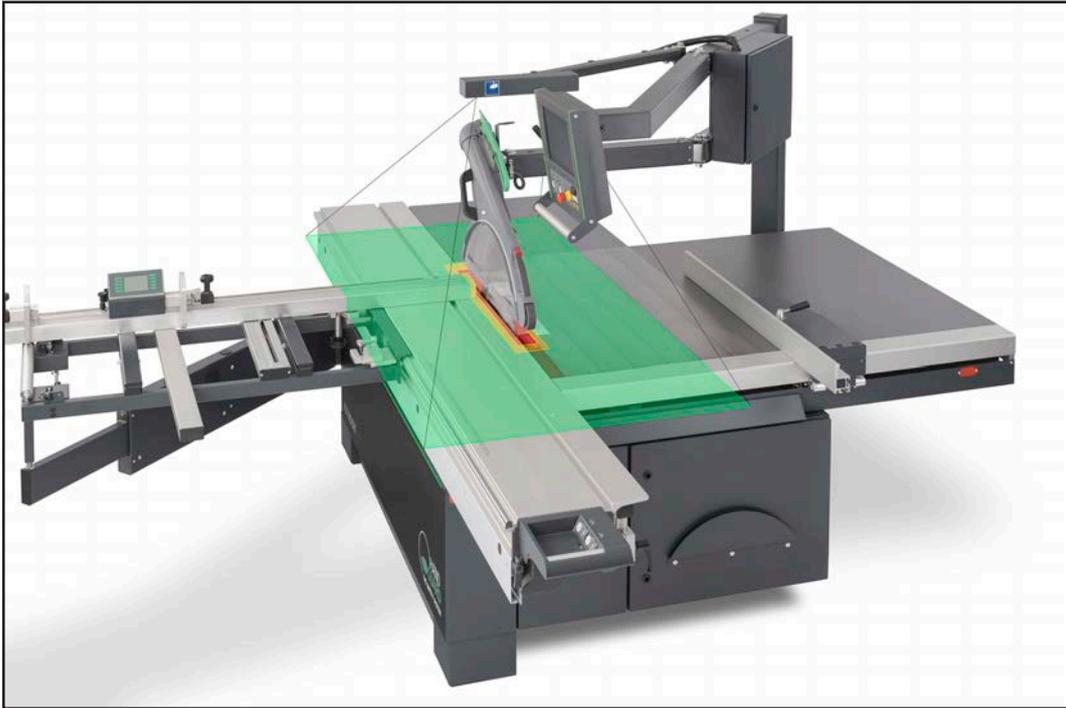
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# Altendorf Group honoured with prestigious International ISSA Section Machine and System Safety Award for HAND GUARD Safety Assistance System



**THE Altendorf Group, a globally acclaimed pioneer in woodworking machinery and technology, is delighted to announce its triumphant recognition as one of the esteemed winners of the ISSA Section Machine and System Safety Award. This accolade celebrates the Altendorf Group's revolutionary HAND GUARD Safety Assistance System, a groundbreaking technology that redefines workplace safety and aligns perfectly with the international Vision Zero strategy of globally reducing work place accidents to zero.**

## Pushing the boundaries of safety in the woodworking industry

The ISSA Section Machine and System Safety Award stands as a testament to the Group's unwavering dedication to pushing the boundaries of safety innovation within the woodworking industry. The award, relaunched every three years, motivates machine manufacturers to pursue excellence in machine safety and ergonomics, striving to mitigate accidents and reduce human suffering and financial burdens on social insurance systems.

## New standards for machine safety across industries

The HAND GUARD safety assistance system, a hallmark of Altendorf's commitment to safety, is an embodiment of cutting-edge technology and human-centric design. Integrated into sliding table saws, this system utilizes advanced cameras and artificial intelligence to achieve an immediate disappearance of the saw blade when there is any dangerous approach, thanks to the recognition of specific hand characteristics. This remarkable breakthrough not only prevents severe hand injuries but also sets new standards for machine safety across industries.

"We are honoured and elated to be recognized by the ISSA Section Machine and System Safety for our HAND GUARD safety assistance system," said Peter Schwenk, CEO of the Altendorf Group. "This achievement underscores our unwavering dedication to creating innovative solutions that prioritize the safety and well-being of workers globally. The HAND GUARD system represents a leap forward in machine safety, and we are proud to contribute to the Vision Zero strategy."

## Commitment to Vision Zero

The ISSA Section Machine and System Safety Award winners share a common commitment to technical safety approaches that align seamlessly with the international Vision Zero strategy, which envisions a world with zero accidents and injuries at the workplace. Altendorf Group's HAND GUARD system has not only gained international acclaim for its integration of artificial intelligence and hand recognition technology but has also garnered widespread adoption across different regions and sectors.

The award ceremony is scheduled to take place at the prestigious 23rd World Congress of Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia from 27 to 30 November 2023. This event will provide a platform for industry leaders and innovators to celebrate safety advancements and exchange insights on enhancing workplace well-being.

Altendorf Group expresses its gratitude to the ISSA Section Machine and System Safety for this remarkable honor and looks forward to continuing its mission of reshaping safety standards and contributing to a safer, more productive future for workers worldwide.

**Altendorf Group**  
<https://www.altendorfgroup.com/machines/formatkreissaege-altendorf-hand-guard/>

# Onfigr by Pikcells named finalist at Designerati Awards



**AWARD-winning CGI and Software Development Company Pikcells, is delighted to announce it has made the Innovation LONGLIST at this year's Designerati Awards, as its groundbreaking photorealistic 360° visualiser Onfigr is named one of eight finalists up for 'Design Technology Product of the Year'.**

Marking its 21st year, the Designerati Awards will take place on 22 November 2023, on board the UK's first ever carbon neutral vessel, Ocean Diva in London, where the industry will come together to celebrate and crown the winners!

Entries for 'Product of the Year' span kitchens, bathrooms, materials, and the newly introduced design technology category where Onfigr is shortlisted. Open to tech-based products of all kinds, this category is looking for brands and businesses, which are making a difference to innovative kitchen and bathroom design while enhancing the creative and/or customer service experience.

Reflecting the rise of e-commerce and a new generation of digital natives looking to furnish their homes, Onfigr is developed and managed by the leading experts at Pikcells, and offers what is claimed to be the ultimate in photorealistic design to help bricks and mortar retailers in the KBB, construction and interior design sectors gain more traction among their target audience and deliver an elevated customer journey.

Suitable for anyone looking to style an interior space, Onfigr room categories include Kitchens, Bedrooms, Bathrooms, Living Room Furniture, Fixtures & Fittings, Tiling, Flooring, Paint & Wallpaper, and Hard Landscaping.

Providing a new standard of photorealistic 360° and 3D visualisers, Onfigr, is designed to help bring products and spaces to life and core features include lightning fast 360° configuration, custom UI design and branding, photorealistic visuals, trend presets, a call to action where you can save designs, fully responsive and compatibility on all devices and browsers, analytics & more!

Making it faster and easier to quote for new projects, Onfigr was developed to bridge the gap in the marketplace for photorealistic visualisers that truly reflect the original concepts of the interior design community and premium products specified. High function features also include the specially designed pano-visualiser, which offers 85% more screen space when compared to the market average of just 15% display.

With more than 600,000 interior design customers using its range of groundbreaking products annually, Pikcells is clear the growing appetite from consumers to produce photorealistic visuals is strengthening the need for creative design tools, which are innovative and technologically advanced.

Stephen Mooney, Sales Director at Pikcells says, "We live in an increasingly visual age and so it has become a huge challenge for the interior design industry to sell a 'lifestyle' complete with high-quality products using low-quality visuals. By having the support of a 3D design space that resides online, means you're in a much better position to serve each customer before they even step into your showroom.

"For instance, if you have a visualiser on the landing page of your website then customers will be able to start trying out ideas immediately in the comfort of their own home and personally pre-qualify themselves as warm leads by already starting the design process with you virtually."

Richard Benson, Co-Founder of Onfigr adds "Visualisers make it incredibly easy for a customer to get a truly visual idea of how you can introduce a signature style to enhance their space and uplevel their lifestyle, rather than relying on flat 2D graphics.

"On behalf of the entire Pikcells team, we are thrilled Onfigr has been recognised by the Designerati Awards, and we want to take this opportunity to wish all the nominees the very best of luck — fingers crossed for winning results in November."

**Pikcells ● 0333 050 3335**

**stephen@pikcells.com ● www.pikcells.com**

# Combilift's CB70E wins Italian award

**COMBILIFT, believed to be the largest global manufacturer of multidirectional trucks, articulated forklifts and straddle carriers is thrilled to announce that the Combi-CB70E has been honoured with the coveted Italian Terminal and Logistics Award. This prestigious accolade recognises the company's innovation in the operational field and its commitment to operator training and safety.**

The Italian Terminal and Logistics Award is a significant industry recognition, presented annually to highlight the skills of operators in port, intermodal and logistics terminals both in Italy and abroad.

The new Combi-CB70E is a further addition to Combilift's ever growing range of electric models which offers powerful performance, extensive battery life and unrivalled ergonomics. This model, in the vibrant Combi-green livery, boasts the distinction of being what is believed to be the shortest 7 tonne capacity counterbalance truck on the market whilst also benefitting from multidirectional ability, enabling the versatile space saving handling of both long and bulky loads.

Martin McVicar — CEO and co-founder of Combilift accepted the award alongside their EA

Group partners and said: "We are honoured to receive the Italian Terminal and Logistics Award for the CB70E. This recognition validates our unwavering commitment to innovation, safety, and training in the material handling industry. The CB70E is a perfect example of our dedication to providing our customers with efficient, eco-friendly, and safe solutions." **Combilift** ● <https://combilift.com/combi-cb70e/>



# IBMG scoops two prestigious national awards

**THE Independent Builders Merchants Group (IBMG) was victorious at the Builders Merchant Federation (BMF) Awards, taking home the award for Training Company of the Year and runner-up award for Young Merchant Achiever.**

IBMG's HR director, Sarah Campbell was presented with the award for Training Company of the Year while IBMG's Nathan Arthur, 28, head of mergers and acquisitions at IBMG scooped the runner-up award in the Young Merchant of Year category.

IBMG was lauded for its ongoing commitment to supporting career

progression at every level and its learning and development opportunities throughout its 183 branches including three timber merchant branches — extending from Penzance to Margate, East Anglia and north to the Midlands.

Sarah Campbell, HR director, IBMG, said: "Being recognised as Training Company of the Year underlines our commitment to supporting and developing teams across our entire business, from apprentices to directors, providing bespoke pathways for development, as well as giving our people the skills required in their day-to-day roles."

Nathan Arthur, head of mergers and acquisitions at IBMG, said: "I'm very proud to accept this award and be recognised on behalf of IBMG. I hope to continue to fulfil the legacy of IBMG as 'the acquirer of choice' for independent merchants in the industry."

Richard Robinson, IBMG CFO said: "From spearheading successful acquisitions to implementing a robust branch strategy, Nathan has demonstrated a level of expertise and leadership that surpasses his years. His ability to collaborate seamlessly with colleagues of all ages and backgrounds is a testament to his interpersonal skills and adaptability. Nathan's value to our team is immeasurable, and I have no doubt that his future endeavours will continue to help shape IBMG."

Independent Builders Merchants Group (IBMG) is believed to be the largest group of independent builders merchants in the South of England owning more than 20 leading builder merchants across 182 branches, that include: Kent Blaxill, Grant & Stone, MS Roofing Supplies, Total Plumbing Supplies, RGB, Stamco Hoppings and Chandlers Roofing Supplies among others.

**Independent Builders Merchants Group (IBMG)**  
[www.independentbm.com](http://www.independentbm.com)



# Selco Wolverhampton ready to go crazy



From left, Craig Dickinson, Clare Clifford, Selco Soapbox driver Joe Tucker, Laura Smith and Sunny Lal.

**A WOLVERHAMPTON builders merchant combined a trade theme with a nod to the famous Jamaican bobsleigh team when it lined up for the annual soapbox racing event in the city centre on August Bank Holiday Monday.**

Selco Builders Warehouse Wolverhampton, based on Stafford Road, took part in the Crazy Races event in Queen's Square from 11am on the Monday.

The soapbox design is based around a Selco vehicle, complete with crane, while the team were racing under the banner of 'Tool Runnings', taking inspiration from the Cool Runnings bobsleigh film.

The team was hoping to raise £2,500 which will be split three ways between Selco's nominated charity Cancer Research UK and two local good causes — Wings and Paws Animal Rescue and Every Family Counts.

Craig Dickinson, branch manager of Selco Wolverhampton, said the build-up to the event had captured the imagination of colleagues, customers and suppliers alike.

Speaking before the event, he said: "It's been brilliant getting everyone involved in preparing the vehicle. Given we are a builders merchant, we wanted a trade theme to be at the heart of our design and we are confident we have achieved that and produced something which will grab atten-

tion on the day. We've taken the vehicle out for a few test runs on skate ramps at local parks and we are confident it will go fine.

"We are delighted to be raising a significant amount of money for three charities close to all our hearts. Cancer Research UK is the organisation we raise money for at Selco all year and Wings and Paws Rescue and Every Family Counts were selected by our branch team.

"It would be great to win one of the prizes at the event but the three things we set out to do at the start were to raise money, bring the team together on a project and to have fun and we have achieved all of those."

Joseph Trucker, a van driver at Selco Wolverhampton, drove the soapbox and was supported by four of his colleagues in the pit team — Laura Smith, David Beck, John Campbell and Sunny Lal.

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)



Selco Soapbox driver Joe Tucker is cheered on by colleagues (left to right) Clare Clifford, Laura Smith, Marvin Butta, Craig Dickinson and Sunny Lal.

# STABILA launches next generation of electronic spirit level — robust, precise and no calibration required



**STABILA, a leading designer and manufacturer of exceptionally high-quality precision measuring equipment, has launched two new electronic spirit levels — the TECH 196 DL and the TECH 196M DL.**

Highly efficient, extremely precise, easy to handle and robust, the new generation of electronic spirit levels from STABILA is fit for all challenges faced every day on building sites and in assembly practices and can easily withstand contact with water, dirt and vibrations. Both models have two digital displays that can be read off perfectly in any situation, promptly showing the measurements of inclinations, slopes and angles. Numerous improvements on the previous generation mean that it can complete common measurements particularly quickly and efficiently.

- Ideal for measurements for inclinations, slopes and angles
- A model with a rare-earth magnet system
- High measurement accuracy, many functions
- Extra-compact design for short building components

## Broad range of applications

The new electronic spirit levels from STABILA are designed for a wide range of measurement tasks. The TECH 196 DL model is particularly suitable for taking exact measurements in carpentry, joinery, kitchen installation, stair installation and civil engineering. It is also ideal for architects to check completed work, for example when reviewing the slope of a balcony. In gardening and landscaping, it is considered the perfect aid when laying a garden path with slopes. The TECH 196M DL model has an extra strong rare-earth magnet, making it especially suitable for metal construction, metalwork and concrete formwork. The user thus always has free hands to align and adjust the relevant parts, pillars and supports.

## Optimal protection and no calibration required

The new electronic spirit levels are protected to IP 67 against dust and water — so well that they can even be temporarily submerged — for up to 30 minutes at a depth of one metre (ULTRA-PROTECT). Another plus point is that dirty buttons can be easily cleaned after work is complete, thanks to the robust membrane keyboard.

They are CAL-FREE to make it as easy as possible for the professional to use the electronic measuring tools. This means that it is not necessary to calibrate the electronics during everyday use thanks to the high-quality sensors and advanced production process, even if the product is dropped or subjected to temperature fluctuations.

## Higher measurement accuracy, many electronics functions

Whilst the previous generation of electronic spirit levels stood out for its

high measurement accuracy, this has been improved even further with the new generation with values: 0° and 90°: ± 0.05°, 1° to 89°: ± 0.1°.

The electronics module is equipped with a wide range of functions and is perfectly tailored to the challenging requirements. This means that acoustic guidance with two different audible signals enables components to be aligned more quickly, without having to look at the spirit level.

For work in poor light conditions, both displays are illuminated to two levels, at the push of a button. The light settings remain even when it is switched off and on again. Another helpful feature is that the digital display automatically turns to the reverse position, enabling it to be read off easily at all times.

Thanks to reference angle mode, an angle measurement can also be accepted, saved and transferred to other components. The HOLD function saves a measured value so that it can be transferred quickly, even to areas with poor accessibility, whilst the KEY-LOCK function also prevents accidental entries.

## Proven spirit level technology

Both new models contain proven spirit level technology from STABILA. The most important factor for long-term precision is quality vials, which are connected to and cannot be removed from the aluminium rectangular profile, as part of a special installation process (LOCKED VIALS). This also prevents the vials from detaching if the spirit level is dropped. The shock-absorbing end caps absorb energy effectively upon impact, protecting the profile. At the same time, the slip stoppers on the end caps guarantee a firm seat when marking, without allowing the spirit level to slip. The caps can be removed so that exact positioning and marking is possible right into the corners. The large finger-grip opening also ensures ease of use and a secure hold during all work.

## Different lengths and designs

The new TECH 196 DL and TECH 196M DL electronic spirit levels from STABILA are available in different lengths. The TECH 196 DL is also available in a new short version of just 23 cm, without vials, in a completely digital design, which is particularly suited to aligning short building elements or for tight spaces. The scope of delivery of all models/designs includes a practical spirit level case for transporting it. All lengths, except the 23 cm and 40 cm variants, come with a shoulder bag.

**STABILA** ● [www.stabila.com](http://www.stabila.com)

## Selco York helps to freshen up charity's city offices

**ONE OF the UK's leading builders merchants has delivered hundreds of pounds worth of paint to a York charity that supports individuals affected by domestic abuse so it can brighten up its city centre offices.**

Selco Builders Warehouse's York branch, based on Osbaldwick Link Road, made the donation to IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service) as part of its commitment to supporting their local communities. IDAS, a trailblazing and award-winning charity that supports thousands of adults and hundreds of children and young people in South and North Yorkshire every year, urgently needed to refresh its York offices, from where staff support individuals in need.

When the team contacted Selco for help, there was no hesitation in making the donation. Vicky Anderson, York and Selby local area manager at IDAS, said: "Our York offices are looking a little run down so we really want to brighten it up to make it look more inviting for those individuals who come to our offices when they need our support. As a local charity that uses its funds to help vulnerable people wanting to escape domestic or sexual abuse, we have no budget for decorating and are so grateful for Selco for its generous donation. A new lick of paint will make all the difference to how the office looks and feels."

Selco York branch manager Aaron Matthews said: "It's important for us to work closely with the communities we are based in and we know what brilliant work IDAS does across North and South Yorkshire. We are more than happy to support the charity as it looks to brighten up its York offices."

IDAS, which recently won a new contract to provide emergency accommodation for people escaping abuse in Sheffield, provides advice and support to thousands of victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence every year. Last year, it provided intensive support and accommodation to more than 250 families and individuals and it also developed training courses for professionals, including domestic abuse and rape awareness training courses, which were completed by more than 5,000 people in the last 12 months.

More than 2,000 professionals, students and volunteers also completed its more advanced accredited training sessions.

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



*Richard Thorpe, shopfloor manager at Selco York with Kerri Rose of IDAS.*

## Lightweight cordless air compressor from Makita

**MAKITA has launched its first cordless air compressor, offering a powerful, portable solution for interior nailing applications.**

Operating at only 68 decibels, this lightweight and compact machine can drive up to 700 finish nails using a fully charged 4.0Ah 40VMax XGT battery, and up to 1,400 finish nails using a fully charged 8.0Ah 40VMax XGT battery.

With a tank capacity of up to 7.6 litres and a maximum tank pressure of 9.3 bar, the new AC001G 40VMax XGT Brushless Air Compressor reaches full pressure within just two minutes and is capable of moving 34 litres of air per minute at a pressure of up to 134 PSI, and the pressure can be adjusted to suit various pneumatic fixing machines. Ideal for interior timber fixing applications, such as panelling or wood trimming with 16Ga, 18Ga or 23Ga nailers or pneumatic staplers, this versatile machine can also be used for light garage tasks, inflating, blowing and pressure testing.

The rigid roll cage frame construction offers superior protection, ensuring durability even in demanding work conditions, yet this product is impressively lightweight. In fact, it's believed to be up to 10 lb lighter than competitor models, making it perfect for jobs where performance, mobility and flexibility are key.

In addition, the AC001G has been designed with low noise emissions,



even at high pressure. Operating at only 68dB (quieter than an alarm clock), the product ensures a quiet working environment without compromising on power, making it ideal for indoor use.

To conserve power and offer additional safety, Makita has also equipped this new product with automatic cut-in and cut-out pressure features to optimise operating efficiency. While the motor is off, pressure in the air tank drops with continued use. When the pressure drops to 0.72 MPa, the motor will restart automatically (cut-in). When the air compressor is turned on and it starts running, air pressure begins to build inside the air tank. When it reaches a pressure of 0.93 MPa, the motor automatically shuts off, protecting the air tank from pressure higher than its design rating (cut-out).

Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita, said: "We are excited to launch the AC001G, our first cordless, 40VMax air compressor, which offers market leading design and performance. This workhorse is part of our expanding XGT platform, so the battery can be used with over 100 products in the range, making it easy to switch between tasks quickly and easily."

**Makita**

[www.makita.com/products/cordless-tools-xgt-40v-40vx2](http://www.makita.com/products/cordless-tools-xgt-40v-40vx2)

# Combilift launches an autonomous sideloader with the option to operate manually

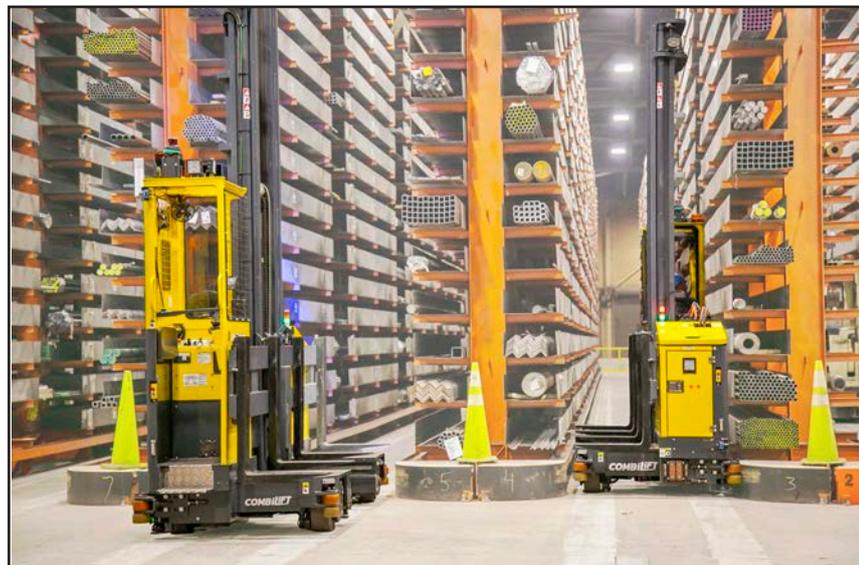
**IRISH materials handling manufacturer Combilift has launched its first autonomous vehicle at the annual Fabtech trade show, held in Chicago, USA, 11-14 September 2023. Developed by Combilift's dedicated automation team, the Combi-AGT is a 4-wheel electric stand-on model, which is the world's first autonomous dual operational sideloader for long loads.**

Celebrating 25 years in business, Combilift is acknowledged as being at the forefront of innovation in the global material handling sector with its wide range of customised products, and the Combi-AGT harnesses the very latest smart technology to meet customer demands for driverless sideloader capability. These were driven in part by safety to eliminate the presence of personnel in aisles, consistency in handling procedures and to maximise order fulfilment, while also having a backup manual mode in case of power outages or internet disruptions.

Combilift's automation team has spent three years liaising with specialist steel suppliers to identify the best specifications for the Combi-AGT. The new model, with a lift capacity of 5,000 kg/11,000 lbs and various lift heights, addresses the requirements of steel service centres and the metal industries, which typically handle long loads. Combilift worked in tandem with IMR (Irish Manufacturing Research) during the development process to enable seamless integration with multiple client warehouse management systems.

Its design is based on the electric manually operated Combi-GTE model which has long been a very popular choice for service centres due to its ability to work efficiently in rail guided narrow aisles. The first Combi-AGT unit was supplied to Kansas based Steel and Pipe Supply 18 months ago, and since then Combilift have collaborated with a number of leading metal service centres across North America during the development process.

The laser-based sensors, fitted at various positions on the chassis, constitute an anti-collision safety system, as required by the American National Standards Institute. If the machine senses an obstacle or pedestrian that has entered its path, it automatically slows down and will, if necessary, stop in cases of emergency, it will then continue to drive automatically when the obstacle has cleared its safety sensor area. The enhanced adaptive safety system enables the size of the obstacle detection fields to increase or decrease as per the steer angle and speed of the truck. The natural feature navigation system is considered superior to traditional methods of truck navigation based on wire guidance or artificial landmarks such as reflectors. Instead, it uses the naturally occurring features in a warehouse — walls, racking and columns for example, avoiding the need to add to or change the warehouse infrastructure. Its newly developed load dimension detection system (patent pending) operates by performing a laser scan of the load to check that its length matches the task sent to the machine. Similarly, when unloading, it checks that the rack in front has sufficient free space to accept the load.



Combilift CEO and Co-founder Martin McVicar said: "We have deliberately not rushed into incorporating autonomous products into our portfolio. As with any new launch we have carried out extensive field tests to make sure it is fit for purpose by liaising with a number of leading customers in the metal service industry during the product development stage.

"We are fortunate to have a very motivated group within our autonomous team of software and mechatronics engineers who are committed to scaling this business unit. The Combi-AGT signals a new milestone in product development with further expansion of our autonomous range in the pipeline."

In 1998 Combilift originally made history with its world-first multidirectional C4000 3-wheel, all-wheel drive forklift. 25 years on the company is still challenging the market and the Combi-AGT is no exception.

**Combilift**

<https://combilift.com/combi-agt>

# Certified fire retardant treated wood

**WITH this year's Fire Door Safety Week campaign running 25-29 September, International Timber stressed the importance of correctly specifying fire retardant wood and panel products, backed by independent certification.**

Specification errors, installation issues and poor maintenance of fire safety products can have devastating consequences. To facilitate change within the building industry and to help meet building codes, fire safety awareness initiatives like Fire Door Safety Week from the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) are vitally important.

With awareness comes education when it comes to specifying the correct products to help reduce insurance costs and save lives in case of a fire. This is why we are seeing more and more contractors are increasing their use of fire retardant wood for projects.

Timber treated with flame retardant chemical treatments work by reducing its ignitability, slowing down the surface spread of flame and reducing the heat released, which allows more time for escape. Many fire retardant wood products are also tested for durability in high moisture and heat, as well as corrosivity and toxicity. A great source of information and advice is 'Flame Retardant Treatments for Timber — An Overview', issued by the Wood Protection Association (WPA) earlier this year. This document explains how wood products have a 'reaction to fire' classification, with an associated Euroclass performance rating.

Untreated wood-based materials typically have Euroclass ratings of D or E, where flame retardant treatment can improve that to Euroclass B or C as required by the

particular specification and end use. International Timber's MDF and plywood fire rated products are all rated Class B and have been treated by flame retardant chemicals that have been fully incorporated into the wood using a pressure system rather than a surface coating.

Where fire retardant wood-based panel products are used in a building, it is vital that they provide long-term, predictable fire protection backed by independent certification. A checklist summarising all the essential factors of an effective and accurate specification is available from the WPA.

International Timber's award-winning cradle-to-cradle fire retardant wood and panel products are 100% biodegradable, non-toxic, pH neutral and come with full fire rated documentation from an independent third-party.

**International Timber**

**info@internationaltimber.com ● www.internationaltimber.com**



# Golfers tee up to raise £11,000

**CUSTOMERS, suppliers and colleagues at a Swansea builders merchant took to the fairways to raise more than £11,000 in a charity golf day.**

Selco Builders Warehouse's Swansea branch organised the successful event at the picturesque Gower Golf Club.

A total of £11,009 was raised for Selco's nominated charity of the year, Cancer Research UK, with 80 players in attendance.

Jason Delaney, deputy branch manager at Selco Swansea on Upper Forest Way, organised the event.

He said: "I'd like to give a huge thank you to everyone who attended our golf day, as well as those who supported in other ways such as sponsoring holes and donating prizes.

"It was a brilliant, sunny day with some top golf on show — as well as one or two wayward shots! To raise such a huge amount of money for a great cause is really pleasing. The tireless work of Cancer Research UK makes a tremendous difference to people with cancer and their families so to play a part in supporting their efforts is a real honour."

The golfers battled for a host of honours, including a team award, nearest the pin and longest drive. Team Dawes scooped the first prize in the Texas Scramble team competition.

The money raised means Selco has contributed almost £100,000 to Cancer Research UK in 2023 alone, on top of the £200,000 donated to the charity last year. All money raised will help Cancer Research UK's studies into the prevention and treatment of cancer through the work of over 4,000 doctors, nurses and scientists.

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 to make life as convenient as possible for tradespeople.

**Selco ● www.selcobw.com**



# UniFace to Uni Floor: ACO's access covers make the cut at University of Nottingham renovation



**THE University of Nottingham's Florence Boot Hall is a student accommodation property that can house 200 students per year. The building is currently undergoing major improvement works to refresh its look and upgrade the building services. As part of the renovation project, access covers were needed at various points along the ground floor of the building, allowing easy access to plumbing and electrics.**

The ground floor of Florence Boot Hall was positioned on a latticework of timber joists. Due to this, specialist contractor Spiral Joinery took the lead in the access covers' installation. A key challenge arose when it was discovered that the access covers originally specified had been temporarily discontinued and therefore a new solution was needed. This presented two problems: firstly, Spiral Joinery needed to source new products fast to keep the project moving and prevent delays. Along with this, openings of 600 mm had been factored into the plans and were already part of the timber joists, so the new covers needed to be an exact match.

## Selecting a suitable solution

Intended for communal spaces such as common rooms and dining areas, the access covers needed to be able to sit flush with the finished floor and not interrupt the building's aesthetic once the renovation was complete. They would be used to perform necessary routine plumbing maintenance beneath the floor. After searching several suppliers, Chris Leggett of Spiral Joinery found that ACO offered cost-effective access covers that were ideal for the project.

Soon after Chris contacted ACO, Liam Watkins, Technical Sales Coordinator at ACO Access called to talk through the parameters of the project, ensuring that the right product would be recommended. Following a consultation, Liam recommended UniFace AL SHALLOW Recessed Access Covers, which were quickly approved by the project manager and deemed safe by a structural engineer.

The UniFace AL SHALLOW Access Covers come with liquid and odour-

tight seals and offer optimum cover security, meaning that, even in well-trafficked parts of Florence Boot Hall, there is little risk of unwanted ingress of any kind. Their versatile design means that they can be made to blend in with almost any design aesthetic without compromising on usability or safety.

One of the key challenges was to ensure the solution fit into the existing plans, particularly because ACO's UniFace AL SHALLOW Recessed Access Covers are aluminium-based. Despite the product being slightly bigger than those originally specified, ACO's technical team worked with Spiral Joinery to suggest an approach that would allow the installation. To ensure the product could be installed securely, an extra 10 mm rebate was formed into the timber joists, meaning the access covers to fit perfectly.

## Assistance key to success

Chris Leggett of Spiral Joinery said: "Working with ACO was great. We were able to talk through exactly what we needed and they made sure they really understood the job before making the recommendation to use the UniFace Access Covers and were available to offer technical support at every stage of the process. Ultimately, we went with ACO because they made the whole process easy, and supply was quick."

Liam Watkins said: "The Florence Boot Hall access covers project has been challenging yet highly rewarding to be involved in. The hurdle of rapidly sourcing a suitable product is always a challenge, so it was pleasing that we were able to partner with Spiral Joinery to find a creative and practical solution that met the project requirements. We were very happy to make this part of Florence Boot Hall's renovation go as smoothly as possible."

Spiral Joinery ordered 12 access covers and, once seeing the quality of the product and ease of installation, ordered 15 more to complete the job.

ACO ● [www.aco.co.uk/accesscovers](http://www.aco.co.uk/accesscovers)

# Expanding timber merchant group

**AFTER more than 70 years of trading, Savoy Timber Ltd, a Lancashire-headquartered family business, has been acquired by Savoy Timber Holdings Ltd, a new company set up by Chris Powell of Estate Sawmills Ltd, a fast-growing Bradford-based timber merchant.**

Established in 1952, Savoy Holdings, which trades as Savoy Timber, has grown into a £15 m turnover timber merchant group with superstores in Preston, Blackpool and Wigan as well as an online store. With customers across the UK, the business supplies a wide range of timber products including doors, decking and worktops. It employs 82 people.

The acquisition complements the operations of Estate Sawmills, another family-run business based in Heaton, Bradford. Headed up by Chris Powell, it supplies timber, fencing, decking, agricultural products and gates to trade and DIY customers nationwide.

The deal follows the retirement of George Cornwell, managing director of Savoy Holdings. The business will continue to trade as Savoy Timber.

Completing on 8 September, the transaction was in the region of £10 m and was supported by a team of Yorkshire-based advisers. Hitesh Tailor, Nicola Cooper and Jonathan Simms of Clarion provided legal advice to the buyer, supported by colleague Julie Evans who provided property advice; and Gavin Lamb of

Azets provided financial advice. The vendor was advised by Ormrods Solicitors. Banking was provided by NatWest with legal advice from Schofield Sweeney.

Chris Powell said: "After acquiring Estate Sawmills in 2020, we have seen rapid expansion and the acquisition of Savoy will enable us to continue our growth journey in this dynamic sector.

"Savoy is a long-established and well-known business that not only broadens our presence across the North, but its strong e-commerce platform also increases our market share throughout the UK as well as expanding our product offering. While Estate Sawmills has focused on

external timber products, Savoy offers an extensive range covering all timber products, both inside and outside the house.

"This expanded product line will now also be available via Estate Sawmills.

"We have an ambitious vision and this latest acquisition marks another important milestone as we seek to press on with our expansion, having capitalised on the garden improvement boom post-Covid.

"We are now actively looking for a complementary timber business in the South to strengthen our national coverage."

**Estate Sawmills Ltd**

**Tel 01274 487882**

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



*Left to right: Chris Powell of Savoy Timber Holdings, (back) Gavin Lamb of Azets, and (front) Hitesh Tailor and Luke Mansfield of Clarion.*

# West Fraser encourages future carpenters

**WEST Fraser is sponsoring the carpentry department at PETROC college in North Devon.**

The department, which provides courses for those aged 16 right up to mature students, will be supported with donations of SterlingOSB Zero and CaberMDF.

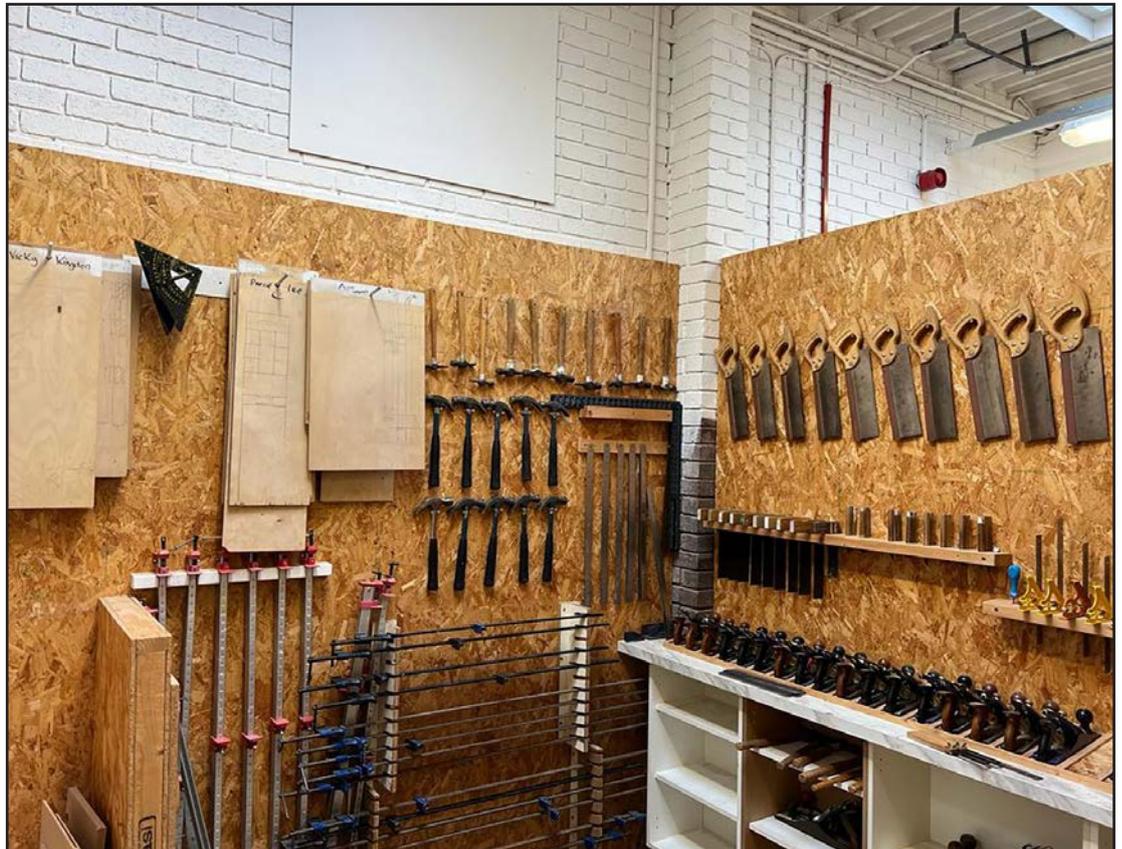
The panels will be used by students studying for T-level qualifications and carpentry apprenticeships to create staircases and treads, small wooden tool storage boxes and to re-surface the workstations which need to be done annually.

The faculty staff will also receive West Fraser polo shirts!

**West Fraser**

**01786 812921**

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



# International Timber provides sustainable Accoya® cladding for contemporary farmhouse

**SUSTAINABLE Accoya cladding from International Timber has been used for the construction of a self-build farmhouse in Salisbury, designed by award-winning architect practice Adam Knibb Architects.**

Waldens Farm is a striking four-bed property located in beautiful West Grimstead with views of the surrounding picturesque landscape. Accoya timber cladding from International Timber features on the exterior of the house alongside traditional stone and contemporary glass, resulting in a truly stunning build.

With a strong farming past to the area, the site's rural context was a key factor in material selection. The cladding supplied by International Timber ties the new house into its agricultural setting and the existing barns and outbuildings on site.

The local Jewson branch worked in close collaboration with Adam Knibb Architects and the builder to design and specify 125 mm and 150 mm of Accoya, cutting it into three different widths. This was then used for the external cladding of the building to create the biophilic aesthetic and continuous inside-outside connection that the architect wanted to achieve.

A counter batten was placed behind the Accoya cladding to maintain ventilation and drainage of any water and condensation. Insect mesh was also fitted to prevent insects and other pests entering into the cavity or gaps around the cladding or ventilation gaps. In addition, International Timber supplied Accoya for use on the ceiling inside the property as well as to create two doors and door frames.

Jon East, Timber Development Manager at the Jewson White-parish branch, said: "Jewson was successful in securing the contract to supply the Accoya cladding for Waldens Farm due to our close working relationship with both the client/builder and the team at International Timber Parkend. The team there were, as always, really helpful and easy to work with."

Bernie Roberts, National Product Manager for Cladding Solutions at International Timber, added: "We are thrilled to be chosen as a



supplier for this incredible build. Timber cladding is often specified for self-build projects due to its aesthetic qualities, biophilic design, natural durability and ease of working, and this project was no different.

"Accoya is a great sustainable wood, which is a huge factor as to why it was chosen here. It also has many other great benefits, including the fact it is incredibly durable, has a 50-year above-ground warranty, and is trusted not to visibly swell, shrink or distort, with minimal movement. The fact it also provides a fantastic finish is another great reason to always opt for Accoya in projects such as these."

**Adam Knibb Architects**  
[www.adamknibbarchitects.com](http://www.adamknibbarchitects.com)

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

# MKM opens two new branches

MKM Building Supplies, a leading UK independent builders' merchant, opened its 122nd branch in London Colney on 2nd October 2023 and its 123rd branch in Thame on the same day. Situated at Unit 3, Riverside Industrial Estate, London Colney Bypass, the branch has created 20 new jobs. The Thame branch is located at Lupton Road, OX9 3SE and has created 18 new jobs.

The London Colney branch will be headed up by branch directors Kelly Collins and Laurence King who are local to the area with a deep understanding of the local community and extensive experience in the merchandising industry.

Sitting on a 1.3-acre plot, with a 30,000 sq ft warehouse allowing timber to be dry stored — MKM London Colney will offer specialisms across a range of products and services, including plumbing and heating, tool hire and kitchen and bathrooms design.

The branch will have a state-of-the-art kitchen & bathroom showroom showcasing products from market leading suppliers and a large variety of popular and well-known brands including Symphony Kitchen and Velux windows.

A strong range of plasterboards and insulation including trade favourites Rockwool, Kingspan and Kronospan will all be available.

Speaking on the opening,



Branch Director Kelly Collins, who has over 30+ years' experience in the industry, said: "It's a privilege to lead MKM London Colney. We're intent on building a local merchant for local people, something the area has needed for years. Beyond business, the branch aims to weave itself into the fabric of London Colney's community, we've recently sponsored the women's team Colney Health FC and we're supporting the London Colney Parish Council community group. We're in talks with local charities we also hope to assist."

MKM Thame branch directors Aaron Campbell and Jake Sherwin have extensive ties to the Thame community, bringing expertise in the merchandising industry and a deep understanding of local needs to the new branch.

From a career that began as a yard assistant at the age of 20, Aaron Campbell evolved into roles of increasing responsibility, most notably at John Nicholls and Grant & Stone.

Aaron said: "I've seen first-hand MKM's commitment to creating exceptional workplaces that support the local community, and

we're determined to bring the same blueprint to our Thame branch.

"We're looking forward to supporting local businesses, community projects & providing local sponsorship support.

"Tradespeople want fair consistent pricing, knowledgeable staff, and the best service, oh, and free coffee.

"We're going to give them that and more. I'm proud that Thame will now have a local merchant for local people, something it has needed for years."

Branch director Jake Sherwin's started out in the industry at 18, working in a yard before moving to sales positions and eventually running his own branch.

He said "Heading up MKM Thame is an opportunity to make a tangible difference for local tradespeople, particularly in terms of product variety, expertise, and prompt quote generation.

"We'll stock top brands including Symphony Kitchens and Velux Windows, as well as specialisations in plumbing & heating.

"The branch offers a drive-through for dry quick products, and delivery options including free and same-day delivery services — available all year round.

"Add to that that we're a five-minute drive away from the legendary Thame Kebab van and I think we've got it all covered."

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



# Hebridean housebuilder specifying SterlingOSB Zero on sustainability grounds

**SITUATED** seven degrees west of the Greenwich Meridian, and exposed to some of the harshest weather conditions anywhere in the British Isles, the Hebrides present a challenging location for building projects, prompting a recently established building company to adopt offsite construction technologies which make full use of the technical and environmental benefits of West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero.

70-22' Systems was established in 2022 by three business partners whose experience encapsulates architecture, education and manufacturing amongst other skills, and who decided to develop their own highly-insulated, modular timber building system.

Growing organically by providing bespoke packages to clients of parent business, Fraser Architecture, 70-22' has already delivered properties on the Outer Hebrides; and has more than half a dozen schemes of different sizes in the pipeline for the coming year.

The trademarked system has been designed specifically to avoid the need for craneage, due to the inaccessibility of many sites, while the cellular component modules take the form of wall blocks, lintels and beams to span larger openings. The SterlingOSB Zero is CNC machined and assembled in the workshop before being filled with Warmcel recycled paper insulation.

Significantly, the 70-22' Systems design personnel were determined from the outset to utilise the West Fraser board because of its formaldehyde free formulation and the fact the material is manufactured in the North of Scotland, using mainly locally sourced softwood from well managed forests.

70-22' Systems' co-founder and commercial director, Alex Durie, commented: "We use West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero to construct our ecological building components, that are prefabricated in our workshop utilising CNC technology to achieve 0.1 mm tolerances for each beam and block. It is the ideal material to use as the shell for our components, which are then filled with recycled insulation to achieve a building system that can achieve market leading thermal performance, with a U-value of 0.1 W/m<sup>2</sup>K, and excellent air-tightness, while maintaining a breathable floor, wall and roof construction. The added bonus of being formaldehyde-free OSB enables us to build ecologically, utilising timber grown and processed in Scotland as we aim to limit the travel miles in each of our builds. The OSB produced by West Fraser has performed very well in our structural testing, with our system proving to be 1.6 times stronger than a traditional timber frame — and as our system arrives on site as a component that is pre-fabricated, pre-insulated and designed for manual handling, it is much quicker to assemble."

Not only do all of the 70-22' Systems structures exceed the thermal requirements of Section 6 to the Building Standards, Scotland, but can also be delivered as a Passivhaus compliant solution where the client or planning consent demand it. In the medium to long term, the business is building a pattern book of standard house types and has plans to establish a pilot plant on the mainland. The company will also be showcasing its system at the Self-Build and Renovation exhibition in Aviemore this autumn.

SterlingOSB Zero is available in a range of sizes and thicknesses up to 22 mm as well as a T&G version ideal for flooring and decking applications. The high performance panel product, free of added formaldehyde, has also earned BBA approval and meets the requirements of NHBC Technical.

As is always the case, West Fraser's experienced technical team is available to aid with product specification, while downloadable data sheets are available at the website below.

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



# Opportunities for Northern Ireland

**FIRMS in Great Britain who want to access the EU market will increasingly do so through offices based in Northern Ireland, after new rules governing the movement of goods between the two regions were introduced on September 30.**

Speaking at the AGM of the Timber Packaging & Pallet Confederation (TIMCON), held in Belfast in September, Stuart Anderson, Head of Public Affairs, Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the country was making preparations to become a “gateway to Europe” as regulations arising from the Windsor Framework come into force.

“Northern Ireland is the only region of the UK that will have barrier-free access to the EU26,” said Mr Anderson. “We can provide that gateway to both the EU and UK markets, and we are working closely with the UK government on the ways and means to do best this.”

Initiatives underway to stimulate investment in the country include addressing a skills gap, corporation tax incentives and promoting NI as a hub for sustainability and technology-focused businesses. With 68 per cent of firms in Northern Ireland only trading within the country itself, and trade with the Republic of Ireland — at £5.2 billion — currently twice that of trade with the rest of the EU, there is huge potential for growth, he said.

TIMCON’s meeting also heard an update on post-Brexit plant health requirements affecting the pallet and packaging industry by Aoife Smith from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). As facilitators of the movement of most manufactured goods, the timber packaging and pallet industry will benefit from any boost in trade between the two regions. However, the Windsor Framework in its current form does not give wooden pallets and packaging exemption from the requirement to be heat treated for moving products between the

UK and EU, which was introduced as the result of Brexit. TIMCON is continuing dialogue with the UK and Northern Ireland governments on the issue.

In a virtual address to the meeting, TIMCON President John Dye gave an update on a “challenging 12 months”, and the organisation’s work in areas including meetings of the Advisory Committee on Packaging on the introduction of UK’s EPR regulations — which he said has been delayed by at least 12 months. David Daw of environmental compliance consultant Valpak gave the meeting insight into latest developments on EPR as well as the EU packaging waste regulations.

Mr Dye said because of the unique sustainability status of wood, TIMCON would continue to lobby for recycling targets to remain low until a reuse scheme proposed by the government is finalised.

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



## Celebrating newly GAI qualified staff

**SIX employees from Ironmongery-Direct have successfully gained qualifications in architectural hardware from the Guild of Architectural Ironmongers (GAI).**

The specialist retailer is committed to providing a comprehensive learning and development programme for all employees, with its category and customer service teams encouraged to pursue further study to ensure they can answer technical queries with confidence and give customers knowledgeable advice. The GAI education programme, which has been developed over the course of 50 years, is globally recognised for being the only one of its kind to offer qualifications in architectural ironmongery to British and European standards.

IronmongeryDirect congratulates Phoebe Judd, Roland Etheridge, Leia Syme-Chapman, Ella Duggin, Maison Riggs and Iain Campbell on the successful completion of their Stage 1 Certificate in Architectural Hardware (CiAH). The year-long course is designed to give students the confidence to make informed decisions when working with a range of products from hinges to seals to door closing devices — all of which are sold by IronmongeryDirect as part of their 18,000-strong product range. Additionally, it covers topics such as specification best practices and industry standards.

Roland Etheridge, category manager at IronmongeryDirect, said:



“Gaining my certificate in architectural hardware from the GAI has aided my understanding of how the products we stock are used by our customers as well as the different requirements for various projects. I now have a greater understanding of the many standards governing product specification, which enables me to help fulfil our trusted to deliver promise to customers by ensuring we have a broad range of quality products to meet their needs.”

“We are so pleased for Phoebe, Roland, Leia, Ella, Maison and Iain on the successful completion of their qualification,” said Kelsey West, HR manager at IronmongeryDirect. “The CiAH requires a lot of hard work and independent study, so they should be very proud of themselves and their achievement. At IronmongeryDirect, we are dedicated to the professional

development of our staff, creating new career opportunities and delivering the best service and advice to our customers.”

IronmongeryDirect is believed to be the UK’s largest online supplier of ironmongery to the trade. With over 18,000 products in stock, including everything from hinges, locks and security devices to specialist fire door hardware, customers can choose from a range of flexible delivery options to meet the needs of their busy schedules, including next day delivery and click and collect from 6,500 pick up points across the UK.

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

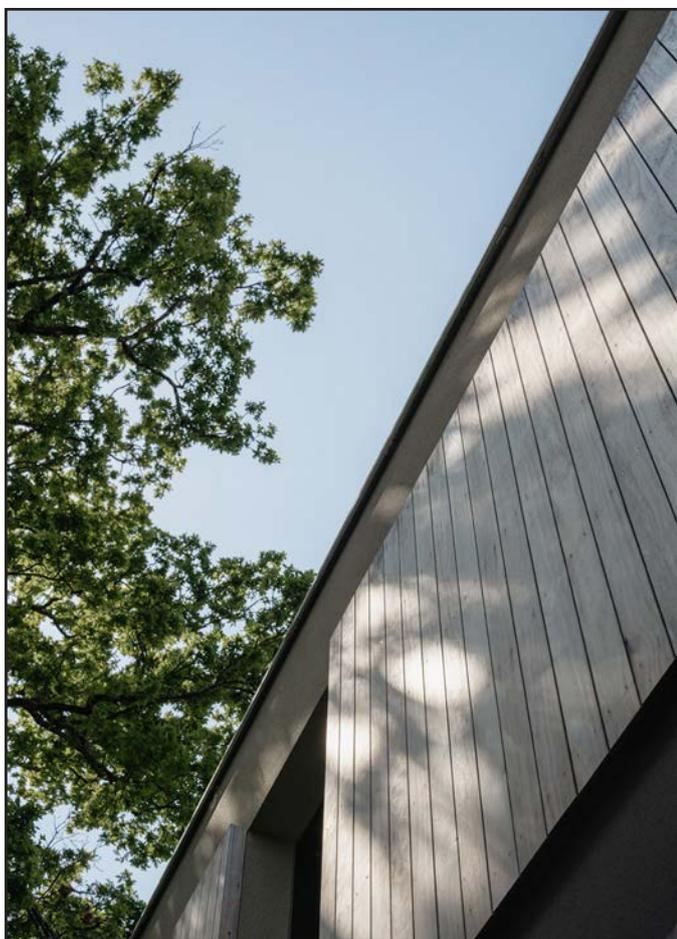
# Private forested home in Bois-le-Roi, France, harmonises residential life with sustainable architecture

**FOR THE past two years, the home of two architects in Bois-le-Roi, in the heart of the Fontainebleau Forest near Paris, has been clad entirely in sustainably sourced Kebony wood. The previous all stucco property has completed redevelopment with the use of knot-free Kebony Clear wood, simultaneously delivering a striking contemporary style, and complementing the predominantly stone architecture of the local area.**

The wood has also been chosen for the exterior decking of the home, as well as for extensive use throughout the interior, including lining the stairs and kitchen. This continuity of material used across different spaces in the property reflects the aesthetic sensibility of the homeowners and the landscaped, tree lined garden that the property sits in, giving an overall sense of harmony to the design, and delivering an understated yet intimate abode.

The couple chose Kebony Clear wood to clad their own home due to its superior sustainable credentials, durability, and aesthetic characteristics. The owners wanted their house to be fitted in vertical siding, with no ribs or veins, ensuring a sleek and uninterrupted facade. Above all, they wanted to avoid using endangered tropical hardwoods, such as Ipe or Cumaru, without having to make sacrifices on either build or visual quality.

"After carrying out a great deal of research, we realized that it was the best solution for achieving the result we wanted in technical, aesthetic, and environmental terms. Above all, Kebony wood is a viable alternative to other woods such as tropical hardwoods, which are less in tune with our vision of healthy architecture," explains the couple.



Developed in Norway, Kebony provides a sustainable alternative to tropical hardwoods, helping to ease the global dependence on traditional construction materials, thereby reducing the continued environmental damage caused by deforestation.

Through the production of enhanced dually modified™ timber, sourced from fast growing FSC-certified sustainable softwoods such as pine, Kebony offers architects a wood product with the same characteristics of protected wood species such as Ipe and Cumaru, without the same cost to the carbon footprint.

Increasing the dimensional stability and hardness of the wood by forming locked in furan polymers in the wood cell walls, this dual modification™ ensures resistance to all weather conditions and guarantees a long design life with minimal maintenance requirements. The Kebony Clear cladding will also gradually acquire a characteristic silver-gray patina, weathering alongside the building and allowing the house to blend harmoniously into its woodland surroundings over time.

Nina Landbø, International Sales Manager for Kebony, comments: "We are delighted to see Kebony proving to be a popular choice of cladding material for architects worldwide, and to see these eco-conscious inspirations brought to life through beautiful new private home projects. We hope the homeowners at Bois-le-Roi have many years of enjoyment in their stunning residential property, and the calming natural harmony afforded by the use of sustainably-sourced Kebony wood."

*Photographs: Kristian Alveo*

**Kebony ● [www.kebony.com](http://www.kebony.com)**

# Hollaway Studio transforms restaurant

**HOLLAWAY Studio, the award-winning London and Kent-based practice, has used sympathetic and considered design to transform the restaurant of the newly opened Grade II listed Boys Hall in Ashford, Kent.**

The 17th-century Jacobean Manor building, which was previously a dated wedding venue and then shared accommodation, has been remodelled as a designed hotel steeped in history and nestled in the countryside just minutes from Ashford International Station, itself only 35 minutes from London. Hollaway Studio's designs for the new 70-seat restaurant adopt many of the traditional methods that would have been used when Boys Hall was originally built in 1616 while achieving a contemporary outcome that suits the needs of its guests.

Bought just before the Covid-19 pandemic by husband and wife team, Bradley and Kristie Lomas, Boys Hall has undergone months of painstaking restoration to transform into a beautiful restaurant with rooms set within three acres of grounds located on the southern edge of the North Downs in Kent — 'the garden of England'. In creating the 'getaway destination of their dreams', the duo have painstakingly returned the 400-year-old house to its former glory with the help of family, friends and a variety of local specialists. Bradley was the



former operations director of East London Pub Co, and Kristie is the founder of Drink, Shop & Do as well as Keystone Crescent members club in London's King's Cross.

Listed due to its historic significance, Boys Hall had previously had an unsightly plastic conservatory with a swimming pool to the rear of the building that was completely out of character. The owners were granted permission to knock it down and build the new restaurant in its place. Working closely with them, Hollaway Studio was inspired by heritage in construction — incorporating

the skills and methodology of 17th-century building with modern materials and technologies. Subtle references to the existing architecture and more consistency in form have helped to bring back and amplify some of the character that had been previously obscured by the earlier extension. The new restaurant was built in the same pegged framed way, without the use of screws or other modern fasteners, and in red brick to ensure that it was sympathetic to the rich detail and complex design of the main historic aesthetic building.

Housed in a substantial new exposed beamed dining room, constructed with local oak cut and shaped to size onsite by a local carpenter, the restaurant is filled with light thanks to glass walls on both sides, allowing guests to enjoy the views over the stunning landscaped gardens and terraces as well as reducing the visual mass of the building. Above a large double rooflight allows natural light onto the large oak trusses while also breaking down the roof mass and granting views out from the courtyard garden to the walled garden behind. Inside, an impressive open fireplace, built by master craftsman Richard Bishop, echoes the traditional features and rich internal atmospheres consistent with the spaces in the existing listed building.

Alex Richards, partner at Hollaway Studio says of this approach in their design, "The restaurant at Boys Hall is a great example of how architecture can act as a positive intervention in transforming a building. In using traditional methods alongside modern technology we have been able to create a totally new addition to a 400-year-old building that in no way detracts from its history and listed status. Boys Hall deserves celebrating and it is wonderful to know that it has been revitalised for the future."

**Hollaway Studio**  
[www.hollawaystudio.co.uk](http://www.hollawaystudio.co.uk)



# West Fraser supports community Men's Shed

**LEADING panel manufacturer, West Fraser, has been providing donations of SterlingOSB Zero to a Men's Shed which is a fabulous initiative allowing members to meet and create!**

The Inverness plant has provided the product to Nairn Men's Shed members allowing them to create furniture items, signs, and crafts us-

ing the wood for other charities and local groups in the community; of course, the work helps to combat loneliness and isolation. One project includes creating a number of wooden workbenches which are being used as part of the renovated waiting room at the local train station in Nairn.

The Nairn Men's Shed, which has been running for seven years, recently hosted a supporters' event to welcome the West Fraser team to meet the 70 inspiring members to find out more about the work they've been enjoying.

Claire Ironside, marketing executive at West Fraser, said: "Our relationship with the team at Nairn Men's Shed is beneficial for everyone as the projects that the shed's members create from our donated OSB boards can benefit more than just the one group. From memorials and signs to gardens for local schools, it was fantastic to see what an amazing difference the members have made to the wider community using our products."

Ian Marshall, director of the Nairn Men's Shed, said: "Our group relies heavily on the generosity of local businesses and other charities. We simply couldn't function without the generosity of West Fraser and we hope to continue working with them to help others."

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



## DESIGN & INNOVATION

# AkzoNobel's Colour of the Year 2024

**AKZONOBEL'S Colour of the Year 2024 is Sweet Embrace™ — an opportunity for designers and woodworkers in furniture, flooring, cabinets & building products to provide a warm, calm and liberating environment for customers amid changing times.**

Sweet Embrace is a welcoming pastel pink inspired by soft feathers and evening clouds. It reflects the findings of global trends — that in an uncertain world, people are looking for belonging and reassurance. They are also in need of more peaceful environments and looking for joy in their everyday experiences.

"Choosing Sweet Embrace as our Colour of the Year 2024 reflects our extensive research into global social, design and consumer trends for 2024. This research found that, in a changing environment, we're on a quest to belong. We need places that make us feel calm, but which also provide moments of joy. Identified by our in-house paints and coatings colour experts and international design professionals, these trends will influence how we choose our colours," explains Henri Bijsterbosch, colour marketing manager for AkzoNobel's Industrial Coatings business.

AkzoNobel's Global Wood Design Studio in High Point, North Carolina, has created three unique palettes, or 'colour stories', around the Colour of the Year that are all driven by the themes of belonging, calm and joy encapsulated by Sweet Embrace. These colour stories provide an essential toolbox for furniture designers and joinery manufacturers looking for on-trend wood coatings to differentiate their projects. While for consumers, they make it easy to choose colours and combinations for a trendy look.

Specially crafted finishes are required for different products, as wood coatings are often applied

to highlight and play with the natural beauty of the wooden substrate. AkzoNobel's highly trained technical service team works closely with the Wood Design team to ensure finishes are robust and can be industrialized for customers around the world.

"Our Colour of the Year, Sweet Embrace, and its three complementary colour stories, are an inspiration for great combinations of colours to create a variety of different moods. They enable us to personalise our environments to fit the times we live in, as well as bringing a sense of stability and moments of joy to our spaces," says Mr Bijsterbosch. "We translate these trending colours to create robust finishes for our customers globally."

**AkzoNobel Wood Coatings**  
[www.akzonobel.com/en/about-us/initiatives/colourfutures](http://www.akzonobel.com/en/about-us/initiatives/colourfutures)  
<https://akzonobel-industrial-woodcoatings.com>



# Bespoke Scandi-style kitchen by Brandt Design

**BRANDT Design, luxury home interiors specialists, design and install a contemporary Scandi-inspired kitchen with utilitarian style for a professional couple in the highly desirable town of Bushey in Hertfordshire.**

From initial concept through to final install, Brandt Design was commissioned to create a fully bespoke kitchen that remains open to the main dining and living area. The homeowners knew they needed a generous amount of storage without it being on display, along with a well-lit ground floor space with a considerable degree of natural light. This contemporary barn conversion is also home to a lively cockpoo and so pet-friendly design features like easy clean materials, which are in keeping with the rest of the home, were also part of the design conversation.

Julia Steadman, commercial director at Brandt Design says, "The enduring popularity of the white kitchen is enhanced with the latest wood-effect finishes and intuitive appliances for a calm and practical Scandi vibe, which helps to support our clients' busy lifestyle.

"We're therefore delighted to bring our expertise in renovating older buildings to this project by creating a custom Scandinavian-style kitchen, which perfectly reflects the contemporary architecture and prominent vaulted ceiling with character beams."

Featuring handleless matt



white and light oak furniture from the Urban Collection by Brandt Design, this open-plan kitchen is centred around a feature island, which welcomes guests on arrival and delivers on the homeowners' love of good food and home entertaining. Creating a split-level island unit that seats up to four, this island chef's station offers an l-shaped breakfast bar in natural wood with ice white quartz worktops, also by Brandt Design.

Providing ample space to prep and cook food, the island worktop is also home to a flush integrated Bora X Pure cooktop with surface

induction and extraction in one: perfect in an open-plan kitchen environment as cooking aromas are quickly and silently removed at the source. There's also a hidden S-Box pop up 3-gang power solution to provide extra sockets for small appliances and two USB ports for charging up smart devices as needed. With deep base drawers creating extra storage for pans and cooking utensils, this island unit provides a low maintenance, modern cooking area which is sensitive to this contemporary barn conversion.

Julia adds, "Helping to unify

the overall kitchen-living space, the choice of modern furniture in a neutral colour palette all helps to create a natural flow from the kitchen right through to the dining space and living room. In fact, due to the open plan nature of the ground floor and importance to introduce high levels of natural light with beautiful views of the garden, a custom furniture arrangement was essential for clear sightlines and optimum utility."

A dedicated run of matt white tall cabinets, which are designed to fit exactly under the gable roof help to optimise the available storage. Finishing this run of cabinetry is an extra prep area, which houses the homeowner's smaller appliances like the toaster and coffee machine and above, a built-in microwave also by Neff is built-in to the light oak top units.

The generous wash zone is well-placed to take maximum advantage of the natural daylight.

The ice white quartz worktops wrap the perimeter of the kitchen, offering a huge capacity for extra worktops, base units and top units as storage is critical in a busy open-plan environment. By including a range of interior solutions such as pull-out and corner storage, and internal drawer organisers for pots and pans, Brandt Design has made sure that every inch of this u-shaped kitchen is designed with purpose.

**Brandt Design**  
[info@brandtkitchens.co.uk](mailto:info@brandtkitchens.co.uk)  
[www.brandtdesign.co.uk](http://www.brandtdesign.co.uk)



# Origin upgrades internal door range



**A LEADING UK manufacturer of premium doors and windows, Origin, unveils a new upgrade to its latest product launch — the OI-30 (Internal Door).**

The internal glazed door is now available as a door only without a frame, allowing it to be installed onto an existing frame, making retrofits more straightforward

and widening its availability to include carpenters and joiners.

The OI-30 is designed to separate home and office footprints into practical spaces. It revolutionises interior design by allowing light to travel unhindered through the building, creating the sense of space and airiness that homeowners want while pro-

viding the protection from noise and distraction that they value. It is also a great option for commercial spaces to section out individual offices.

With ultra-slim sightlines, the internal door can accommodate 4 mm, 6 mm or 6.8 mm glazing, and can also accommodate frosted or reeded glass, allowing home-

owners the benefits of privacy where required while still maximising light.

Minimum widths for a single door begin at 300 mm and extend to a maximum size of 1,000 mm. Height dimensions start at 1,500 mm and extend to 2,500 mm, offering flexibility. Additionally, fixed frames can be added to the top or side to fill larger apertures.

The OI-30 is available in a multitude of configurations, including fixed, single, French, and corner styles. Kickplates and solid panels can also be added which minimise fingerprints and scratches.

Like all Origin products, it is manufactured in the UK and offers an industry-leading guarantee of up to 20-years.

Daniel Baker, managing director at Origin, comments: "At Origin, we are always striving to challenge industry norms to offer the best products on the market. The OI-30 shifts steel-look doors from a pipe dream to a reality for homeowners. Now, we are excited to extend the availability of the OI-30 to include carpenters and joiners by allowing it to be installed to existing door frames."

**Origin**

<https://origin-global.com/>



# Multiple applications for SterlingOSB Zero

**ONE OF the UK's biggest manufacturers of timber frame homes, with factories in England and Wales, is making full use of the performance and economic benefits to West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero boards, in different thicknesses for a range of applications.**

Taylor Lane Timber Frame was established in 1982 and has four factories across three locations in Hereford and in Nantyglo, near Brynmawr in Gwent, producing in excess of 1,000 dwellings a year for housebuilders, developers and social housing providers. The company has established a strong reputation for quality and reliability over the past 40 years and with fresh investment from new owner, the Cala Group, is anticipating further growth as it addresses such challenges as affordability and the environmental agenda. In fact, West Fraser values its long-standing partnership with the Cala Group, as Daniel Clarke, senior key account manager at West Fraser explained, "As well as SterlingOSB Zero we also supply the Cala Group with CaberDek throughout their builds in England and Scotland. The specification of West Fraser products throughout the divisions of the Cala Group demonstrates the importance of the partnership to both organisations".

In addition to wall panels, Taylor Lane also produces its own roof trusses and floor cassettes, the latter featuring metal web Posi-Joists fabricated at its Gatehouse Factory in Hereford. The SterlingOSB Zero is primarily used to take the racking loads sustained by both internal and external walls, while the material is also used for roof sarking and as the sub-deck to floor joists within multiple dwelling types.

Taylor Lane's Construction Director, Liam Hale, commented: "Timber is the only truly sustainable material to build with, while timber frame is highly engineered and can offer extensive design flexibility it lends itself to an abundance of tastes and property styles, enabling you to meet the most structural and visual requirements, while adhering to the appropriate standards and regulations. The main reasons we choose to use SterlingOSB Zero is the dimensional accuracy and quality of the supplied product, making the cutting process for timber frame manufacture seamless. With optimised cutting technology timber frame doesn't just save you time and labour on site: it also reduces skip waste".

SterlingOSB Zero is available in a range of sizes and thicknesses up to 22 mm as well as a T&G version ideal for flooring and decking applications. The high performance, formaldehyde free panel product has also earned BBA approval and meets the requirements of NHBC Technical. Furthermore, being manufactured from UK grown timber using certified renewable energy supplies, and with zero added formaldehyde, SterlingOSB Zero has outstanding environmental credentials. As is always the case, West Fraser's experienced technical team is available to aid with product specification, while downloadable data sheets are available.

**West Fraser** ● 01786 812 921 ● <https://uk.westfraser.com/>  
**Taylor Lane Timber Frame** ● <https://www.taylor-lane.co.uk/>



# New Troldekt panels with reduced carbon footprint

**SINCE 2012, Danish acoustic panel manufacturer Troldekt has led the way with its sustainable practices and leadership. An early adopter of the Cradle-to-Cradle design concept, the company has focused on its material health, reutilisation, energy, water and social responsibility, winning recognition and numerous green awards over the years.**

The inclusion of FUTURECEM™ within its wood wool panels has further enhanced the manufacturing process, helping Troldekt further

solidify their Cradle-to-Cradle Gold Certification. FUTURECEM sourced from Aalborg Portland exploits the synergies between calcined clay and limestone filler. With this process, much of the burnt clinker in the cement can be replaced resulting in a bonding agent with a much lower carbon footprint. The result means that now, over their product life cycle, the carbon footprint of Troldekt acoustic panels based on FUTURECEM are 26% lower than that of Troldekt based on grey cement and 38% lower than that of Troldekt based on white cement.



This innovation, coupled with the company's sole use of wood from FSC® and PEFC™ managed forests has helped Troldekt get one step closer to its strict environmental targets. It also further enhances a building's contributions towards BREEAM, WELL, LEED and DGNB-Certifications.

Troldekt acoustic panels are available in a variety of different structures and colours combining superior sound absorption with award-winning design. The Troldekt 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 coarse. They 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.

**Troldekt**  
[www.troldekt.com](http://www.troldekt.com)



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YOUR PERFECT PARTNER



Finish shown: Serica Coffee Brown

# SERICA.

Create a sense of refined luxury.

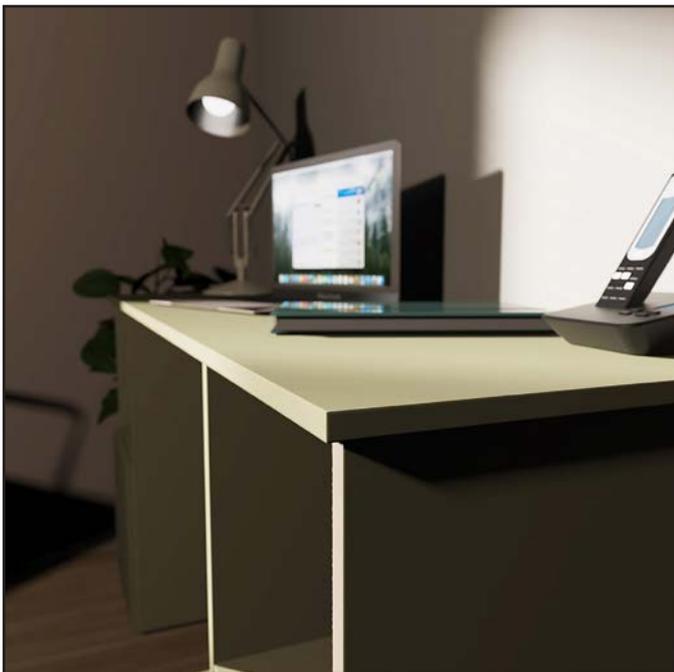
**dp-lamination**

dp-lamination is leading the way in the production of laminated products. The largest and most diverse portfolio of decorative surfaces available in UK.



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

# Decorative Panels presents: the SERICA Collection — a revolution in interior design



**DECORATIVE Panels' SERICA Collection is a breath of fresh air. Intricately crafted to cater to an extensive array of applications, spanning from kitchens and bathrooms to various other settings such as homes, offices, and retail spaces, the SERICA Collection serves as a reminder that interior design transcends aesthetics. It is about creating spaces that elevate the human experience.**

Named after the Latin word for "silky," the SERICA Collection encapsulates the essence of opulence and sophistication. It is a collection that exudes timeless elegance while offering unparalleled comfort — a fusion of aesthetics and functionality that is perfect for the modern home.

Incredibly durable, featuring innovative anti-scratch and anti-fingerprint technology, SERICA is meticulously crafted to envelop a wide spectrum of furnishings, catering to homes, offices, retail spaces, and proving invaluable for exhibition contractors and specialised projects alike. In comparison to its counterparts, SERICA raises the bar within its industry, notably in its ground-breaking utilisation of super matt technology. A decorative surface collection of super-matt, silky smooth finishes, SERICA is designed to cover all types of furnishings. The SERICA Collection offers a surface that is not only visually stunning but also incredibly tactile, inviting you to touch and feel its luxurious texture.

The palette of solid colours within the SERICA collection knows no bounds, allowing for limitless creative combinations. SERICA offers an unprecedented level of design freedom, empowering creators to explore surfaces and three-dimensional concepts to their fullest potential.

To meet the driving demand for matt unicolours, Decorative Panels'



SERICA Collection is constantly evolving with new colours being introduced on a frequent basis. These new additions are following the trend of warmer shades, bringing a new energy to the Collection.

As such, as part of Decorative Panels' Specialist range, Decorative Panels are thrilled to introduce three new colours to our SERICA Collection: Caramel, Sage Green, Rusty Red. These mesmerising hues will help and infuse surroundings with warmth, tranquillity, and a touch of rustic charm. A decorative surface collection of super-matt, silky smooth finishes, SERICA is designed to cover all types of furnishings in homes, offices, and retail environments. The introduction of Caramel, Sage Green, and Rusty Red to the SERICA Collection offers homeowners an opportunity to elevate their living spaces to new heights of style and comfort.

Exude timeless elegance with a touch of Caramel. Caramel, the embodiment of understated elegance, brings a sense of cosiness and luxury to any room. Its rich, inviting tones effortlessly complement a wide range of interior styles, making it a top choice for those seeking a timeless and refined ambiance.

Embrace the soothing essence of nature with SERICA's serene Sage Green. For those looking to infuse their homes with a sense of calm and serenity. This refreshing shade invites the outdoors in, creating an oasis of peace within a living space — perfect for crafting a tranquil retreat where you can unwind and rejuvenate.

Or ignite your passion for autumn with Rusty Red. Infused with warmth and a dash of vintage charm, Rusty Red gives your interiors a welcoming ambiance.

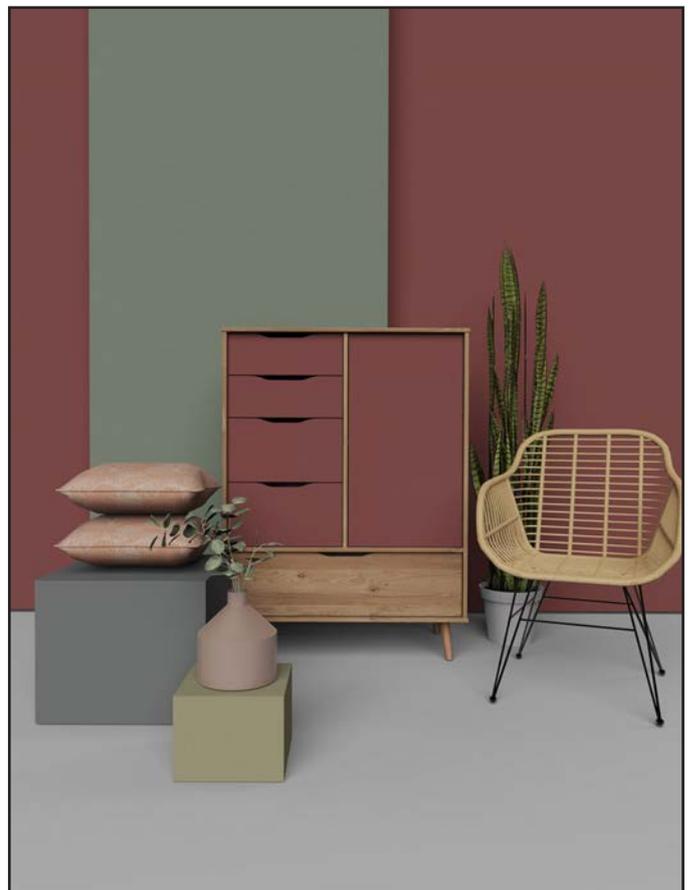
Experience a refreshing departure from the greys and beiges that once dominated living spaces. These vibrant hues offer the ideal backdrop for cultivating an ambiance that promotes both relaxation and productivity, capable of either igniting action or instilling tranquillity. The introduction of the new SERICA colour palette will undoubtedly define the essence of an interior.

Decorative Panels always prioritises innovation in design, consistently pushing the boundaries with ongoing advancements in innovative surface textures and finishes. The most recent additions to the Serica Collection, featured in the dp-specialist range, mirror the latest trends in contemporary design.

Book a visit to the dp-group Marketing Suite where the SERICA Collection is on display and keep looking out for more new release from Decorative Panels; innovative designs are coming out all the time.

**Decorative Panels Lamination**

Tel 01484 658341 ● [www.decorativepanels.co.uk](http://www.decorativepanels.co.uk)



# An affordable office

**IN NEED of a bigger space to work from, TMV architects harnessed its own team's design and build skills to create an office using a combination of West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero and corrugated metal.**

Six years ago, the fledgling practice had outgrown its annex accommodation above a garage in the home of one of its directors and "we wanted our own building; something to give us an identity and space to accommodate clients," explains Thomas Mann, a director. The practice bought a plot of land which was occupied by a disused BT repeater station building in Cambridgeshire. Today, the brick repeater station building has been replaced with TMV's new office, a simple black, single-storey metal-clad contemporary building, complete with a pitched roof to accommodate a mezzanine floor. With the exception of two car parking spaces at the front, the new office almost fills the plot.

Budget was a major constraint when it came to the new building so TMV's design is based on a superstructure of locally-manufactured structurally insulated panels (SIPs). The panels consist of a 140 mm insulating foam core sandwiched between two SterlingOSB Zero sheathing boards. The result is a building system that is extremely strong and energy efficient. "We designed the office with a large, vaulted roof which, if built traditionally, would have required a lot of expensive steelwork. However, because vaulted roofs are relatively easy to construct using SIPs, all we needed was a couple of timber posts," explains Mr Mann.

The simple SIPs walls rise from an insulated concrete raft foundation. The uncomplicated design meant very few contractors were needed; this allowed the practice to project manage construction. With the foundation slab cast, a single contractor assembled the SIP-walls and pitched roof. Within a week, the shell was up and wrapped in a membrane so that the building was effectively watertight. Externally, the SIPs are clad in block corrugated metal sheets that lend the building a modern industrial aesthetic. That aesthetic is continued internally with a full-height gable wall featuring exposed SterlingOSB Zero.

The SterlingOSB Zero feature wall's textured, organic finish is given additional emphasis by the crisp white plaster used to finish the adjoining walls. Mr Mann says visitors often walk into the office and say 'wow,' simply because OSB is a material they are not used to seeing in this context. The SterlingOSB Zero feature wall has also been given illuminated TMV branding. Eleanor Stamp, senior architectural designer at the practice says that, although the office had to be a cost-effective build, its open-plan design and the natural feel that the SterlingOSB Zero brings to the space makes it a great place to work: "Everyone loves working here; we've gone from two to eight staff in five years and no one has left," she says.

As is always the case, West Fraser's experienced technical team is available to aid with product specification, while downloadable data sheets are available at from the West Fraser website.

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



## SOFTWARE & WEBSITES

# BSW Group launches four new websites

**BELIEVED to be the UK's largest integrated timber and forestry business, BSW Group, has launched four new websites as it aims to drive further innovation within the timber sector.**

With forestry and timber businesses increasingly reliant on digital assets, and making services accessible to a wider audience, BSW has backed a number of its businesses, with BSW Timber, Bayram Timber, IRO Timber and Wood Fuel Direct all benefitting from revamped digital spaces.

James Brennan, Group Marketing Manager at BSW Group, said: "We've only just introduced the BSW Group brand, but the next step was to re-brand and reinvigorate each of the subsidiaries too.

"Although each subsidiary has a distinct product and service offering, and different audiences, we wanted to ensure that they are all seen in the best light, and as members of a wider forestry group. These new websites nod to the fact the businesses are connected, but without taking away any of their identities individually, which is important. We want the consistency but with some character."

Digital technology is helping to innovate many traditional processes in the timber supply chain, whether it be genetic research at tree nurseries, planting and harvesting woodlands, or in the sawmill itself, with new platforms en-

abling bigger data analysis. But it is vital that this innovation is also seen outside of those internal environments.

The new BSW Timber and Bayram Timber websites place more emphasis on the market-leading manufacturing capabilities of each business, as well as breadth of products they supply.

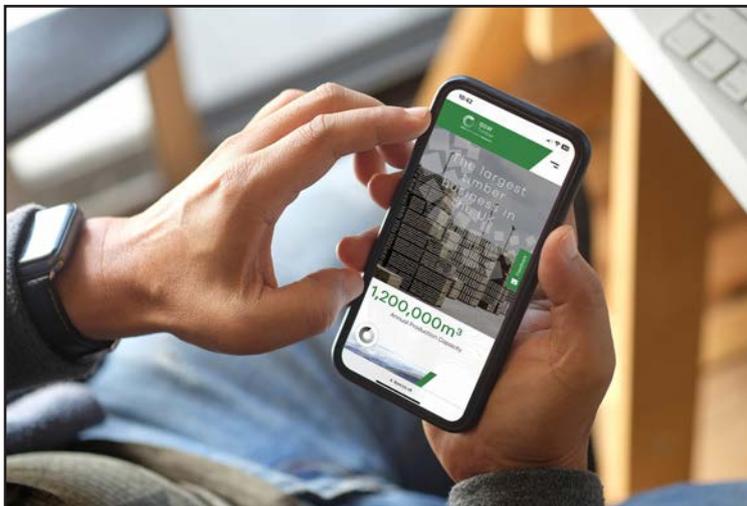
The IRO Timber website now more closely aligns with the product range itself, using imagery and case studies to promote the creative use of timber and its long-lasting benefits to the environment.

Wood Fuel Direct, which sells industry-leading heat logs that are manufactured from co-products, has also been completely redesigned with usability in mind, offering the user a much smoother, more modern experience.

Terry Allen, General Manager at Bayram Timber, said: "Being part of BSW gives us the knowledge and resource to increase our already-high standards, helping to drive positive change across the Group.

"I'm proud of the team at Bayram, the work we're doing on the shop floor and across supporting functions, so it can only be a good thing if we're able to let people see some of that through our new website."

**BSW Group**  
[www.thebswgroup.co.uk](http://www.thebswgroup.co.uk)



# Onfigr, award-winning 360° visualiser developed by Pikcells

**AWARD-winning CGI and Software Development Company Pikcells.com, continue to bring the industry's best products and spaces to life with Onfigr, a new standard of photorealistic 360° and 3D visualisers for customers within the KBB, home interiors and property development sector.**

Making it faster and easier to quote for new projects, Onfigr was developed to bridge the gap in the marketplace for photorealistic visualisers that truly reflect the original concepts of the interior design community. Offering a comprehensive range of core features, Onfigr is designed to assist with sales performance, analytics, and content management so you can deliver the concept phase with even more accuracy.

Craig Rothwell, Business Development Director at Onfigr says, "We live in an increasingly visual age and so it has become a huge challenge for the interior design industry to sell a 'lifestyle' complete with high-quality products using low-quality visuals. If we consider the retail space, then huge importance is placed on the staging and styling of product displays in order to create an elevated user experience. By having the support of a 3D design space

that resides online, means you're in a much better position to serve each customer before they even step into your showroom.

"As personalisation remains the backbone of the KBB industry and wider middle market, we are finding that more consumers are demanding a higher degree of visual product presentation. In fact, our research states that people are 10 times more likely to use a visualiser over a complicated planning tool and this is echoed in the latest survey from McKinsey, which reports that 71% expect companies to deliver personalised interactions and those that don't, frustrate up to 76% of new customers."

Promising to inspire clients, drive sales, and monitor performance, Onfigr will help you to convert customer design enquiries into bankable sales orders. Suitable for anyone looking to style an interior space, Onfigr room categories include Kitchens, Bedrooms, Bathrooms, Living Room Furniture, Fixtures & Fittings, Tiling, Flooring, Paint & Wallpaper, and Hard Landscaping.

Onfigr doesn't limit your ability to consider every aspect of a customer's project brief either, as the specially designed pano-visualiser offers 85% more screen



space when compared to market competitors, which typically offer just 15% display.

Delivering an affordable range of 3D visual design tools, Onfigr has two custom packages to engage and attract new customers (1) Onfigr Standard, which offers up to one million visuals per month and (2) Onfigr Enterprise, offering one million plus visuals per month. All users need to do is follow the simple screen prompts to create and save a concept design which you can then modify, refer to and ultimately approve with your client as needed.

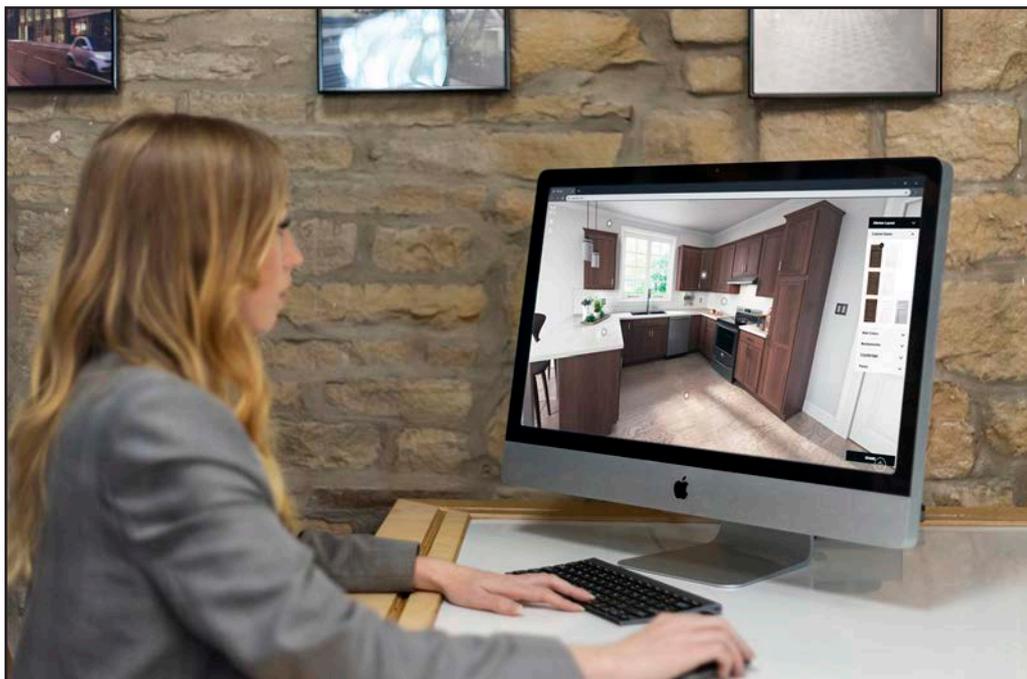
Core features include lightning fast 360° configuration, custom UI design and branding, photo-

realistic visuals, trend presets, a call to action where you can save designs, fully responsive and compatibility on all devices and browsers, analytics & more!

In fact, Onfigr has fast become the system of choice for anyone wanting a photorealistic visualiser that provides comprehensive content management features and 100% uptime. With offices based in the UK & USA, Onfigr is trusted around the world and has become integral to many leading brands like Wren Kitchens, BA Components, Omega, Crystal Doors, Toll Brothers and Masterbrand Cabinets.

Richard Benson, Co-Founder of Onfigr adds "We believe that sustainable product delivery is essential and if we can accelerate the design process from initial enquiry right through to concept and completion, you will be able to streamline your customers journey at every stage. By pre-selecting options and creating an interactive and collaborative design process, you'll also be appealing to next gen consumers who are known to enjoy a more gamified buying experience. Given the latest reports say that the UK construction and design software market is projected to grow by 3.90% in 2023-2028, we want to make sure we're offering the best and most complete set of visual design tools available on the market."

**Onfigr**  
Tel 0333 050 3335  
hello@onfigr.com  
www.onfigr.com



# Heaven Dowsett & Co. Ltd's integration of XYZ Tailored Router Solutions

**ESTABLISHED** in Birmingham in 1908, Heaven Dowsett & Co. Ltd has proudly upheld its position as the foremost supplier of plastics and electrical insulations to various industries from rail to construction. This enduring prominence has been maintained through their unwavering commitment to providing efficient and tailored services that cater to the unique needs of their valued customers.

Over more than a century of operation, they have witnessed numerous advancements in materials and manufacturing technologies. To remain at the forefront of their field, Heaven Dowsett has consistently invested in training and the latest CNC equipment, allowing them to adapt seamlessly to industry changes. In doing so the company successfully integrated XYZ Tailored Router Solutions routers into its operations. This case study explores the journey of

Heaven Dowsett, detailing their adoption of XYZ machines, the impact on their productivity, efficiency, cost savings, quality improvements, employee perceptions and future plans for automation.

## Adoption of XYZ Tailored Router Solutions

Heaven Dowsett & Co. Ltd has been utilising XYZ machines for over 10 years, they currently have two machines in their arsenal, including the XYZ 6010 7G ATC and the XYZ INFINITE 4008 7G ATC. The INFINITE router is the newer model, a highly configurable CNC machine that is suitable for one-off, small batch production as well as high volume and high productivity applications, including point of purchase, sign making, woodworking, plastic fabrication, engineering plastic machining and so much more.

The decision to adopt this technology was prompted by their desire to enhance production capabilities and expand their range of machinable designs and recognise the need for advanced routing technology to meet the evolving demands of their clients. "These routers have become an integral part of Heaven Dowsett's advancement in CNC machining and of our production capabilities and offer many advantages," said managing director, Mark Hamilton.

Heaven Dowsett operates across various core markets, including rail, automotive, electrical and construction. Their product range is diverse, spanning a wide spectrum of components and parts demanded by these industries. The XYZ machines at Heaven Dowsett handle a multitude of tasks and processes. They utilise the machines for cutting, shaping and machining various materials including laminated materials, acrylic, polyethylene and polycarbonate for the electrical insulation industry with precision, often achieving tolerances as tight as  $\pm 0.15/0.2\text{mm}$ .

## Impact on Productivity and Efficiency

"The integration of XYZ machines has significantly improved Heaven Dowsett's productivity and efficiency," said Mark Hamilton.

These machines allow them to produce goods ranging in size from small components to large pieces such as their range of screening meas-



uring up to two meters by three meters. Automation features, such as tool changers and material handling systems, have significantly reduced setup times increased overall production efficiency and have led to cost savings and faster project turnaround times.

This increased production capacity has streamlined workflow and optimised their production output, reducing lead times and enhancing overall efficiency, versatility and design capabilities making them capable of processing a wide range of materials, including wood, plastics, metals and composites thereby adding to Heaven Dowsett ability to increase their industry portfolio.

XYZ routers provide unmatched precision and accuracy, ensuring that Heaven Dowsett consistently delivers components with tight tolerances, meeting the most stringent industry specifications.



### Initial Challenges and Overcoming Them

One of the initial challenges faced during the integration of XYZ machines was the company's lack of prior experience with CNC routers. Employees needed to learn how to operate the machines and understand their capabilities effectively. Additionally, cutting a diverse range of materials required learning optimal settings and techniques for each material. However, with the invaluable support and advice from XYZ, they overcame these challenges and fine-tuned their processes for improved productivity and efficiency, quickly becoming proficient in the use of the machines.

### Enhanced Cost Savings and Increased Profitability

The use of XYZ machines has resulted in cost savings for Heaven Dowsett. These machines have expanded the range of machinable designs the company can produce and have increased the production rate of some of the regular parts. These cost savings have contributed to improved profitability. The ability to produce high-quality products with precision, consistency and speed using XYZ machines has raised production standards, resulting in superior products.

### Improved Employee Perceptions and Job Satisfaction

The introduction of automation in the workflow at Heaven Dowsett has been well-received by employees. The machines have not only improved their job satisfaction by providing opportunities to work on innovative projects but have also enhanced their skill sets and expanded their roles, rather than leading to a reduction in the workforce.

### Precision Cutting Services Increased

"The XYZ routers allow us to offer our extensive range of stock products to be delivered in precise cut-to-size panels or billets, eliminating the need to invest in entire material units. This service is especially valuable for machinists and small-scale users, offering a strategic pricing edge over competitors. With our efficient processes, you can typically access materials on the next business day and in some cases, even on the same day. This ensures that you're well-prepared for those occasional urgent situations that inevitably arise," said Mark Hamilton.

### Dependable Maintenance and Support

To ensure the smooth operation of XYZ machines, Heaven Dowsett benefits from the reliable support structure provided by XYZ and invests in annual service plans offered by XYZ, with in-house engineers handling minor issues. Regular maintenance and support from the manufacturer keep the machines running efficiently minimising downtime.

### Future Plans for Automation with XYZ

Heaven Dowsett has recently purchased a new XYZ machine, "which indicates our commitment to further integrating automation into our processes and reflects our determination to stay at the forefront of manufacturing innovation," said Mark Hamilton. The company plans to continue leveraging this technology to enhance its capabilities and expand its market reach.

In conclusion, Heaven Dowsett's journey with XYZ routers exemplifies how a forward-thinking company can successfully adopt automation technology to improve productivity, product quality and employee satisfaction. With a strong focus on continuous improvement and expanding their automation capabilities, Heaven Dowsett is well-positioned for future growth in their diverse markets.

#### Heaven Dowsett & Co. Ltd

Tel: 0121 360 0345

<http://www.heavendowsett.com>

#### XYZ Tailored Router Solutions

Tel: 01952 291600

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

<https://www.xyz.com>

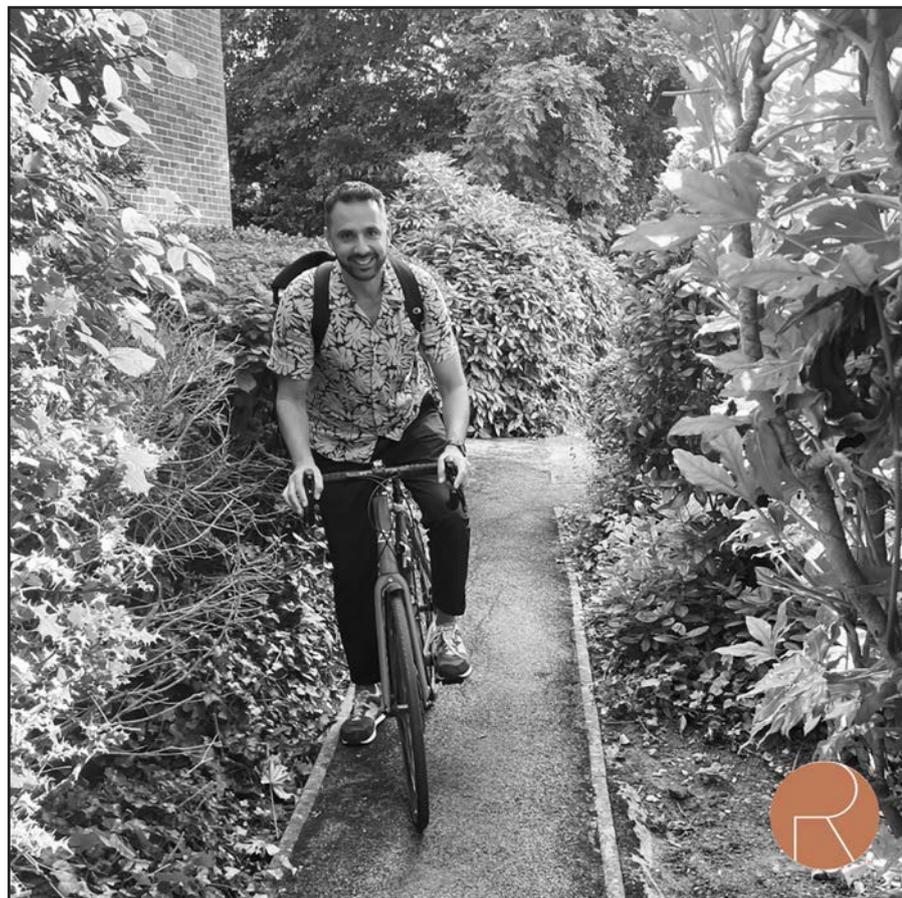
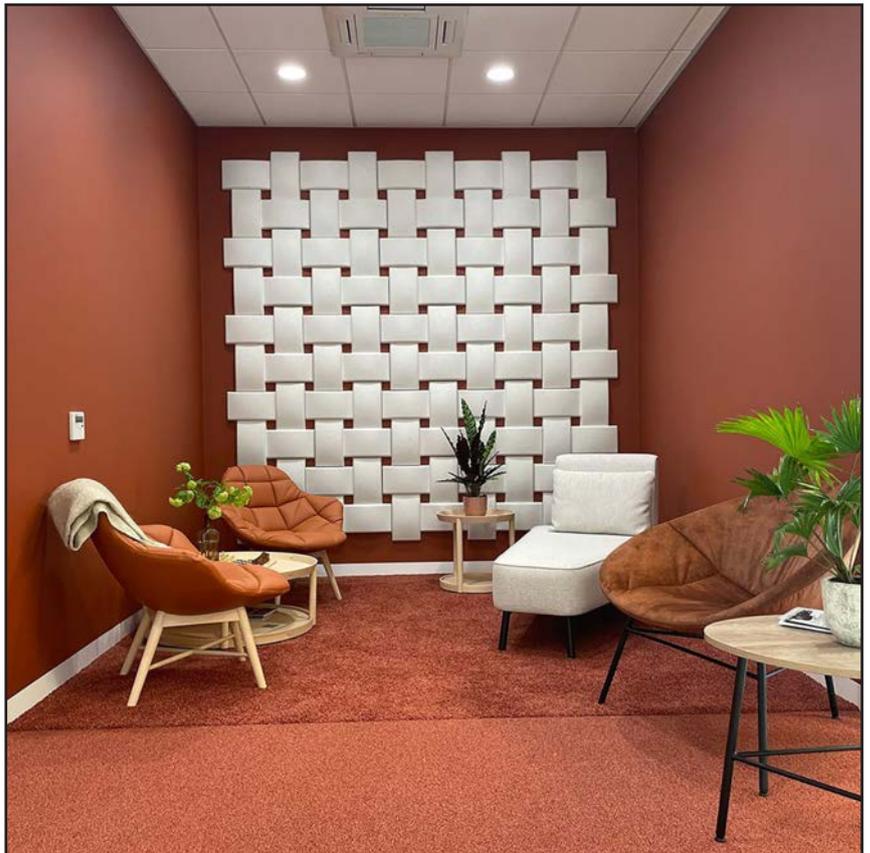
# Resonate Interiors officially becomes a carbon neutral organisation

**RESONATE Interiors is pleased to announce it has become a Carbon Neutral organisation with official validation from leading sustainability organisation Carbon Footprint.**

To do this, Resonate went through a rigorous process of tracking and reducing its carbon emissions. It completed a Carbon Calculator for twelve months from May 2022, which included emissions from its HQ in Surbiton in South-West London, flights taken by its employees, both for business and leisure travel, as well as getting to and from work, whether via public transport or using private vehicles.

The calculations were then independently verified by Carbon Footprint with supporting documentation such as energy readings, flight confirmation and commuter journeys supplied where necessary to support the figures. In total, Resonate had a carbon footprint of 27 tonnes.

Once verified, Resonate chose to offset its carbon emissions by UK tree planting as Venetia Flint, Resonate Sustainability Coordinator & Fitwel Ambassador explains, "We wanted to keep the tree planting local to us, so chose a specific location in the



South West London."

For every tree planted in the UK there is an additional tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent offset) through a Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) project to guarantee the emission reductions through approved carbon credits. The tree saplings will be planted in January 2024.

Treading lightly had always been a key value and focus for Resonate, therefore alongside offsetting the emissions, targets to reduce energy and carbon use have been set in place, aspiring for the amount used to only continue decreasing.

Commenting on the company's new Carbon Neutral status, Pernille Bonser, Resonate Founder says, "Treading lightly is a way of life for all of us at Resonate.

"We try to make as much of a positive impact on our overall carbon footprint as possible. To gain this external validation of our efforts is extremely good news.

"We love challenging convention and pushing the boundaries of what is possible, whether that's through reuse of materials, sourcing locally or incorporating biophilic design principles.

"We aim to positively impact human behaviour and our responses to our planet in how we act and in every project we work on, using as little of the Earth's footprint as possible on the way."

**Resonate Interiors**  
[www.resonateinteriors.com](http://www.resonateinteriors.com)

# Engineered in the UK to shape a sustainable tomorrow

With the market being flooded with cheap imports, an increasing number of architects are opting to bolster the UK economy by specifying domestically-produced products and brands. West Fraser has been a respected and trusted provider of OSB, particleboard, and MDF to the UK architecture and construction markets for several decades. Every engineered wood panel, produced in Scotland, is net carbon negative and meets rigorous standards, ensuring quality and compliance.

The product range includes: SterlingOSB Zero, believed to be the first and only UK-made OSB with zero-added formaldehyde which has been trusted by the trade for over 30 years for its structural capability and aesthetic prowess; CaberFloor, believed to be the most popular P5 flooring range in the UK, and CaberMDF, the original MDF brand in the UK.

The panels are net carbon negative, meaning they lock up more carbon than is released during manufacture. In addition, West Fraser is committed to responsible supply chains specifically to ensure the legality, traceability and prohibiting products associated with deforestation & forest degradation. All UK-manufactured products are FSC® certified (FSC® C012533).

- Efficient streamlined logistics
- Sustainable and responsible supply chain
- Enhanced product availability
- Eco-friendly packaging
- Exceptional technical and customer support

**West Fraser**

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



**CS 860 & CSF 860.**

**SIMPLE, FLEXIBLE, ABSOLUTE.**

Simple, Flexible and Absolute are three words that describe the CS 860 & CSF 860 from VOLLMER. Perfect for machining the sharpest clearance angles and sides, the new arrivals are easy to use and incredibly flexible. This gives you outstanding grinding results with optimal processes for all your circular saw blade requirements. The CS 860 & CSF 860 deliver the highest level of quality, productivity and user-friendliness with maximum flexibility.

[www.vollmer-group.com](http://www.vollmer-group.com)

# Carbon Efficiency Estimator for furniture launches

**A CARBON Efficiency Estimator which measures the total amount of carbon a furniture piece uses in its lifecycle has launched to market.**

Set to accelerate sustainability in the furniture and fixtures industry, the tool is believed to be a global first and has been created by Design Conformity, a certification company setting the standard in furniture sustainability with independent Circular Design Certification. The new Carbon Efficiency Estimator allows designers, estimators, and procurement managers to quickly measure the carbon footprint of a design, with 90-95% accuracy, enabling them to create furniture and fixtures with lower carbon impacts.

Taking less than five minutes to take a measurement, the estimator's accessibility and ease of use will expedite designers furniture and fixtures sustainability goals, on the journey to carbon reduction and net zero.

The estimator considers material, weight, sourcing, production location and electrical efficiency comparisons, as well as carbon efficiency benchmarking to the top 50 Design Conformity-approved products by category.

Five years in the making, using data from over 1,000 evaluations from over 70 global brands, the estimator has so far enabled furniture manufacturers to reduce their carbon footprint by 39%\*.

Across all industries consumers



are increasingly seeking sustainable products, and by 2030, medium and large businesses (250+ employees and £36m+ turnover) will have to report the carbon emissions of bought-in goods, including furniture and fixtures.

Design Conformity's Carbon Efficiency Estimator allows the designers and manufacturers to better calculate how sustainable their furniture is and produce self-declaration estimates for their customers. It also benchmarks their products against industry averages of carbon efficiency.

Once the estimator has been used and the furniture design has

been finalised, Design Conformity then offer a third party, independently verified Circular Design Certificate for accurate carbon reporting, giving the furniture its own unique Carbon Efficiency Rating.

Design Conformity is believed to be the first independent quality and sustainability design standard for the furniture and fixtures industry. Manufacturer members receive access to a wide range of knowledge and resources to help them to design and manufacture more sustainable products, reducing the carbon impact of their companies for their customers.

Adam Hamilton-Fletcher, founder of Design Conformity, said: We created the Carbon Efficiency Estimator and dc Certification due to the lack of industry sustainability standards and the need for circular design and carbon reporting. Our ambition is to become the global standard in circular design certification.

"By using this tool and using our certification process, manufacturers not only reduce their carbon footprint, but also adhere to quality standards (UKCA and CE) and commit to sustainable, circular design practice (ISO and GHG) for their customers.

"The team and I are really excited that after many years of devel-

opment, this unique tool is now available and has the capability to fast-track retailers' route to carbon reduction and net zero.

"This is the first of three products that we are working on to deliver carbon reduction in furniture and fixtures by implementing Circular Resource Planning or CRP. This suite of products has never been seen before in the industry and will be essential for manufacturers wanting to reduce their carbon footprint and achieve the dc Certification."

Design Conformity are working on the estimator and Circular Design Certification with over 40 global retail brands, as well as furniture manufacturers and some of Europe's largest interior specialists.

Jim Murray, Vice President of Sustainability at ITAB, said: "ITAB became Design Conformity members because we believe in the value of circular design and see it as part of our long-term business strategy. By working with the Design Conformity team to launch ITAB Sustainable Services, we see an opportunity to strengthen our customer offer whilst protecting and growing our market share."

\*Boots beauty halls, average of 45 brands from 15 furniture manufacturers.

**Design Conformity**  
<https://designconformity.com>



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# Central steps up to a greener future

**EXTRACTLY Ltd has recently completed an extraction system upgrade for Derbyshire-based Central Joinery Group, including a new 55kW Nederman main fan, as well as retrofitting Ecogate® energy-saving equipment throughout the factory.**

Established 30 years ago, Central Joinery now operates two purpose-built manufacturing facilities and, although the company has kept abreast of the latest technology and manufacturing methods over the years, it has also managed to maintain its traditional craftsmanship standards. The company has developed an enviable reputation for the high-quality bespoke joinery and staircases it manufactures and, over the last decade or so, has gained industry accolades from some of the UK's leading housebuilders.

At the company's head office in Swadlincote, an ageing 55 kW main fan was no longer working as effectively as it once did and, for operations director Kyle Archbold, the extraction system's efficiency was beginning to be a cause for concern, as Extractly's sales director, Jake Oldfield, explained: "Extractly had been recommended to Kyle by another customer where we'd recently commissioned the installation of three new fans in conjunction with the installation of Ecogate® 'on-demand' extraction technology. Kyle invited us to undertake a review of the current extraction system at Central Joinery and, as suspected, the old fan was indeed ready for replacement.

"The original 55 kW fan was specified and installed to ensure sufficient capacity would be available to meet the factory's maximum demand for extraction when all the woodworking machines on that line were



*Operations director Kyle Archbold interrogating real-time system performance data on the highly intelligent Ecogate greenBOX® NXT controller which has the capacity to monitor and control an extraction system with multiple main fans and up to 72 individual workstations.*



*As instructed by the greenBOX® NXT controller, Ecogate® Power MASTER Variable Speed Drive units adjust fan speed to exactly match extraction demand on each of the 3 lines.*



*Extractly Ltd retro-fitted over 20 Ecogate® motorised dampers into the existing ductwork system at Central Joinery.*

operating and producing dust waste at the same time — and this was still the rationale for replacing the fan with a new Nederman 55 kW fan. In addition, the factory also runs two high-speed CNC machines, with extraction provided via two separate 18.5 kW fans."

After carrying out an energy survey at Central Joinery it was easy for Jake Oldfield to demonstrate the huge cost savings that could be achieved if Ecogate® technology was installed across the factory. The old 55 kW fan had been running at full power, all day, every day, ever since it was installed; as were the two smaller fans. With Ecogate® controlling the system, extraction fans run only when required, and run at the optimum speed required to deliver the exact extraction volume required.

"There was definitely scope for savings to be made on the cost of extraction for the two CNC machines" says Jake Oldfield, "but the biggest



**Extractly supplied and installed a new 55kW Nederman main fan at Central Joinery Group's head office at Swadlincote.**

savings would be achieved by installing automatic motorised Ecogate® dampers in the ductwork serving each individual machine." Because of the bespoke nature of the work carried out at Central Joinery, the equipment list includes a number of specialist machines that are used on a regular basis, although only for short periods at a time, along with other items of equipment that are required for essential operations, but are only used infrequently. "The varied use of machinery at Central Joinery completely negates the need for extraction to operate continuously at full power", Jake explains: "With Ecogate® technology controlling the system, the fans run at the maximum speed necessary to extract efficiently, but only from machines that are in operation at any one time." It's clear to see that this would reduce electricity costs but, because of the laws of physics (the Fan Affinity Laws), the actual savings are disproportionately high — reducing the fan running speed by just 20% achieves a 49% reduction in the electricity needed to power the motor.

Effectively, for a company like Central Joinery, where all machines are rarely, if ever, in use at the same time, the fans will only use a fraction of the electricity

***Ecogate® motorised dampers, fitted into the ductwork serving each individual machine, open and close automatically as machines come on or off-line.***

consumed by running a fan continuously at full power. Extractly conservatively predict that the savings Central Joinery will make with Ecogate® installed should cover the cost of the capital investment in just 16 months.

"We've yet to receive an electricity bill since the installation was completed," says Kyle Archbold, "but just by walking into the factory it's obvious that the system is running slower, less often, and more efficiently — the noise level has dropped dramatically now the fan isn't running continuously, and the more efficient extraction gives us reassurance that the workspace is a clean and much safer environment for our employees."

Neal Chambers, production manager at Central Joinery, concurred wholeheartedly with the noise reduction: "I've got to admit I was sceptical about the benefits claimed by Ecogate but, in the days following the installation, the factory was so much quieter I had to go and check everyone was still working!"

The benefits for Central Joinery don't stop with the cost savings and noise reduction; reducing fan speeds causes less wear and tear on motors and filter media, and Extractly have also calculated that the predicted energy savings equate to an annual reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of over 26 tonnes — a big step towards reducing Central Joinery's carbon footprint.

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# Emulco succeeds in creating AquaVeg bio-wax emulsions for wood panels suitable for eco-building

EMULCO NV announced the introduction of its AquaVeg bio-emulsion into the panel board industry. The emulsion specialist succeeded in combining its AquaVeg water-based bio-emulsion with formaldehyde free bio-based binders to produce zero-emission panel boards. Recently, Emulco and the bio-based adhesives producer Sestec, showcased the zero-emission panels at the industry leading International Panel Products Symposium (IPPS), organized by the Bio-Composites Center of Bangor University (UK).

Both Medium Density Fibre-board (MDF) and Particle Board (PB) panels treated with Emulco's and Sestec's products passed lab and production tests with flying colours. Particleboards and MDF boards treated with the bio-based solution reached comparable or

even better scores to panels treated with mineral wax emulsions in terms of internal bond strength (IB), modulus of rupture (MOR) and water resistance. All panels produced with AquaVeg emulsion have demonstrated equal or better performances in thickness swelling and water absorption compared to mineral wax emulsions. Since neither the bio-based adhesive nor AquaVeg emulsion contain formaldehyde, the only remaining formaldehyde emissions are the ones produced by the wood itself.

Emulco's AquaVeg is a family of water-based emulsions made from vegetable waxes. They are a sustainable alternative for mineral wax emulsions, because they are bio-degradable and with zero VOC emissions. Now that lab and industry tests are finalized, Emulco has started the commercialisation of its emulsion towards environmentally conscious producers of wood panels in order to bring the new environmentally friendly panels to the market. Several negotiations are currently ongoing, which means that the zero-emission wood panels might be available on the market in the mid-

long term. Construction companies and developers in the ever growing segment of eco-buildings and the health infrastructure sector are natural partners for the use of the new bio-based panels.

Besides traditional panel board products, Emulco's AquaVeg emulsions have also been successfully introduced as a top coating for LVL (Laminated Veneer Lumber) and CLT (Cross Laminated Timber) and other construction materials.

"The possibility to treat MDF and PB boards with a formaldehyde-free combination of our AquaVeg bio-emulsions and bio binders is a great accomplishment of Emulco's and Sestec's R&D capabilities," said Jean Vanhoebost, CEO of Emulco. "The market opportunities are huge, because eco-building is quickly becoming a leading trend in the construction sector. We are proud to contribute to a more sustainable wood and construction sector."

**Emulco**  
<https://emulco.com>

